

*Food and Drugs Act*

sonally, being a physician, I cannot understand why Canadian physicians should prescribe considerably more than those in the old countries.

I am still wondering whether there has been evasion in the distribution of this drug used especially by pregnant women.

I recognize that in governmental organizations the procedure to be followed is slow. I agree it is very beneficial.

I remember reading in the *British Medical Journal* for two years about the beneficial effects of butazolidin, in cases of rheumatoid arthritis, that drug was supposed to have such phenomenal effects that I wanted to use it myself. Yet I had to wait for two years before the national health and welfare department decided to authorize that drug and I believe it was wise, because drugs can often leave secondary effects, and the government did not want to take any chance. But there remains the undeniable fact that it takes ages.

Earlier we were told that two thousand drugs were examined in 11 years. In some cases authorization to use is very long in coming and sometimes the drug involved is considered harmless. But in other cases, things happen very fast, nobody knows why.

I am not here to proffer charges, but in my opinion, some cartels muster enough power to use coercion, if not on a government, at least on some civil servants. I am referring to them today because we deal with health and drugs, but I cannot help thinking that those remarks could apply to various other fields.

I should like to take this opportunity to talk about certain firms which sell more cheaply products known by what is called generic names. It is said that these firms can sell cheaper because they do not have any research laboratories. Obviously, those companies do not have such laboratories. However, the large firms, the monopolistic firms, the international corporations show in their budget enormous amounts, to be used for experimental studies, in order to protect the public. I wonder if the sums affected to that research are adequate and if they are not used rather, in some cases, for advertising purposes among the doctors, the pharmacists and the hospitals, in order to promote the sale of their drugs. Here is another example

[Mr. Marcoux.]

that supports our views when we, Social Crediters, say that we must reach a happy medium.

I have nothing against the quality of the monopolistic companies nor against that of the firms which sell generic name products, but, in my opinion, the government should be more flexible, it should restrict the former and help the latter perhaps a little more. We are all aware of certain investigations that have been carried out. It has been said that profits are excessive and that large amounts of money are being spent on experiments. I believe we should link the one with the other.

Somebody mentioned a little while ago certain drugs used against cancer and which should not be withdrawn completely from the market because of their beneficial effects. That is true. But on the other hand, we know that the use of those drugs for the cure of certain diseases is precisely the cause of cancer. The fact has been proved.

Mr. Speaker, the authorization of a drug is a very serious and most important matter. That is why, in my opinion, we should not leave it for the government to decide alone because we have already had a sample of the fact that a government cannot always meet the needs of the people.

In conclusion, there is a point I would like to stress, that is the widespread impression among the public that it is always safe to follow the advice of the minister of national health and social welfare. Caution might not be useless at times.

I am thinking about phocomelia, a disagreeable and extremely painful experience not only for parents but especially for the children, the babies who were born crippled.

As I was saying a while ago, I feel that the drug companies which claim to spend fortunes on the testing of their products, should cooperate with us to give some financial assistance for the care of such children.

Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, for not having read a written statement, as did the members who spoke before me; still, I believe I have covered the subject pretty well. I noticed that the phrase peripheral neuritis was mentioned. All drugs have secondary effects, and that is quite unavoidable. The question always remains whether the favourable effects are more important than the unfavourable ones. That is the only criterion upon which a drug is to be judged. We know that there are lethal