

the extremely important role played by women both in war and in peace, a knowledge he does not share with me. I can tell him that I was very proud to have served for ten years alongside women in our Armed Forces, something which that hon. gentleman cannot say.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gauthier: You would send kids to war?

APPEARANCE OF ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL BEFORE SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence. First I would like to tell the Minister that it is very nice to know he worked with women in the Second World War. There were no women in the House in the Second World War. Women's roles in the Second World War were very different from today. There are some changes one has to take into account.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Finestone: The Minister earlier refused to allow the equality rights committee to hear views and to take testimony from individual members of the Armed Forces who requested to appear before the committee. Is the Minister going to allow liberty, or enforce silence, for the individual members of the Armed Forces? What possible basis does the Minister have that women cannot appear as individuals? Why is the Minister neglecting their freedom of right to speak? It is not a national security issue. Will the Minister allow individuals who wish to do so to appear and to testify before the equality rights committee?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): It is simply not true, Sir, for the Hon. Member to say to me that I have refused to allow members of the Armed Forces to appear before the committee, whether they be women or whether they be men. That is not true. That is not a fact. What I will inform her and Members of the House is that the conduct of all members of the Forces, be they women or be they men, among other things is governed by Queen's Regulations and Orders to which all members of the Forces must adhere.

With respect to that question which was raised initially by the Hon. Member for Burnaby, I am having an examination made of Queen's Regulations and Orders to see whether, for the maintenance of good order and discipline in the Forces, it might be possible for that appearance. I very much doubt though that that would be the case.

COURT CHALLENGES

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of National Defence. The interpretation of the new Charter of Rights would indicate, I hope, a much more open spirit when the

Oral Questions

Minister examines those rules and regulations in those instances.

If the Government continues to show the desire to muzzle the voice of women in the military, will the Minister be prepared to support and finance those cases which will have to be challenged in the courts so women can earn their equality rights, something which the Minister does not seem ready to give?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the accusation of the Hon. Member with respect to muzzling is both inaccurate and untrue. If that were not enough, it is also false.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: To say nothing of being offensive.

Mr. Nielsen: With respect to the whole question of equality, I have informed the House that it is my undertaking, my commitment, as Minister responsible, to appear before the committee and to answer all of those kinds of questions.

An Hon. Member: Why don't you?

Mr. Rossi: Go back to sleep.

Ms. Copps: Zipper up.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* * *

CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS

PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY—PAYMENT OF ROYALTIES

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Yesterday after he tabled the Eastman report he made the observation that he was concerned an increase in the royalties paid by the generic companies would mean an increase to the consumer and he did not want to see that.

Is the Minister aware that the highest price paid by consumers for prescription drugs, and the highest profits made by the multinational companies, were in those years when the multinationals had the exclusive right to produce and sell prescription drugs?

Is the Minister not favourably impressed by Dr. Eastman's recommendation that the period for which the multinationals have exclusive rights to sell the products, be reduced to four years?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): In answer to the question, Mr. Speaker, I can tell my colleague that the general recommendations of the Eastman report are acceptable to us, to the extent that they advocate