

obliged to interrupt him. It has nothing to do with the substance of his remarks.

It being five o'clock p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private Members' Bills as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS--BILLS

[English]

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East) moved that Bill C-289, an Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (list of ingredients), be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the opportunity, as do most Members of Parliament, to meet with some young people from my riding. They were from Prince of Wales School, and they wanted to know what we did in Parliament. I tried to explain to them—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the Hon. Member, but I hope that when she explained it, she had the support of all Hon. Members as to just exactly what we do here.

Ms. Copps: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I tried to explain to the students that as well as the work we do in Question Period which is often the cut and thrust of debate, we do work in committee and we try to pass laws to help the people of Canada. I think this Bill that I am proposing today, Bill C-289, an Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act, is probably a very good example of how Parliament and in fact all Members of Parliament can work together to promote a law which will actually save lives.

I must say that I owe this initiative to a real tragedy which occurred in my area. If it is permissible, I would like to dedicate my efforts in this regard to the memory of a young man by the name of Christian Taylor. He was a 17-year-old young man, a student leader in his community and a volunteer worker. He was probably the kind of son that every parent would be very proud of. He had only one problem. Christian Taylor suffered severe food allergies, allergies so severe that every time he ate outside his home, he was engaging in Russian roulette.

Christian was very careful. He made sure that when he went to a fast food restaurant, he inquired if nuts, a product to which he was extremely allergic, were present in any of the foods he would eat. Unfortunately, like many 17-year-olds, he had been out playing a hockey game and he and his friends made their way to the local Arby's Restaurant. There was a

Food and Drugs Act

big lineup at the restaurant and one of his friends picked up an apple turnover.

Christian had never eaten an apple turnover at Arby's before, but he had eaten an apple turnover with no side effects at McDonald's and he had also eaten an apple turnover at Harvey's. He assumed that an apple turnover was an apple turnover. He did not realize that in fact, the apple turnovers at Arby's actually include invisibly ground up hazelnuts.

Christian took a bite of the apple turnover, and as soon as he ate it, he started to have a reaction. He had been told by his physician that if he ever had an allergic reaction to food, he would always have time to be treated, so he immediately hopped on his bicycle and rode home. By the time he got home, he collapsed in his father's arms. His last words before he died were: "Daddy, help me," and he died in his father's arms.

His mother came to see me. She told me that she had been lying asleep on the couch after having watched a soap opera or a television show and she was so sad because she did not even wake up before her son died. She asked me why the Government does not pass legislation that will let people know what they eat when they go to fast food restaurants. It seemed rather simple to me. We get involved in many long and onerous debates relating to everything from free trade to the issue of abortion. Many questions are not so simple, but I thought that it would help if I spoke to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp).

When the regulations to the Food and Drugs Act that require the labelling of food sold in grocery stores were originally drafted, it was done because most people ate primarily home cooked meals. In 1988, with the way society has changed, almost half of all meals are eaten outside the home. I asked the Minister if he would consider moving an amendment to the Food and Drugs Act that would deal with fast food.

This food already comes in very expensive prepackaging. The major chains spend a lot of money on very elaborate packaging to try to draw the customers to their particular products. I asked the Minister if he could pass an amendment to the Food and Drugs Act, by regulation, not necessarily by law, to require the major chains to label the food that is prepackaged. This would provide that those who bought Big Macs, as well as seeing the fancy lettering on the package, would see stamped on the side in not very large letters a list of the ingredients. If I go to buy a pizza at the grocery store, by law that pizza has to have the ingredients listed. This seemed to make sense to me.

When I spoke to the Minister, I did not want to make a political issue out of this. The Hon. Member for Burlington (Mr. Kempling) has been working very hard on this issue because the young man who died was in fact from his riding. I thought, as did the Hon. Member for Burlington, that this was the kind of issue that need not be a partisan issue. We do a lot