

Petitions

Mr. Dingwall: Belleville, Ontario. I also have a petition signed by residents of Savary Island, British Columbia, and they call upon the Government of Canada to withdraw Bill C-22, the amendments to the Patent Act, because they believe it will negatively affect senior citizens who need to buy prescription drugs.

I have a petition signed by residents of Lethbridge, Alberta, one signed by individuals from St. Nicholas, Boxton Falls, New Brunswick, one from residents of Moncton, New Brunswick, one from individuals from Swift Current, Saskatchewan, and another one signed by individuals from the Province of British Columbia and the Province of Quebec. All six of the petitions I mentioned call upon the federal Government to withdraw Bill C-22, the amendments to the Patent Act, because they believe that it will cause an increase in the cost of prescription drugs.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I must say to the Hon. Member that the petitions were the same and therefore he should have lumped them all together and told us where they were from so we could carry on with the business of the House.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, thank you for your direction. I am attempting to abide by your wishes in that regard. I do not want to read out all the communities listed in the petitions because I think that would unduly delay the workings of the House, but I thought I would give a brief summary in accordance with—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Just the provinces would be sufficient.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, these petitioners wish to call for the withdrawal of Bill C-22, amendments to the Patent Act, for they believe it will cause an increase in the cost of prescription drugs, negatively affecting Canadians.

OPPOSITION TO CANADA POST CORPORATE PLAN

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I have another petition with regard to Canada Post. Again, this petition is signed by individuals from the Province of New Brunswick, primarily the Restigouche area.

I also have another petition on the same subject matter signed by people from Shediac, New Brunswick. They too call upon the Government of Canada to withdraw the corporate plan which they believe at this time will have extremely negative effects on rural post offices in Canada and will create two classes of mail service.

REQUEST TO WITHDRAW TARIFF ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE BOOKS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by Canadians from the Toronto area who point out that the Government of Canada has imposed a retaliatory tariff on imported books in the English language which has limited the access of Canadians to literature and information and that the tariff has little negative effect on the

publishing industry of the United States yet penalizes Canada's consumers, book-publishers, booksellers, distributors and Canada's culture. They say that rising book prices have placed a strain on the book acquisition programs and policies of our nation's public and specialized libraries. The petitioners therefore pray and call upon Parliament to rescind this tariff, which threatens irreparable harm to the Canadian book industry and compromises federal policy on cultural industries in respect of fair trade negotiations which are part of this program.

Mr. McDermid: Presenting a petition that late, you should be ashamed of yourself. It was changed two months ago.

OPPOSITION TO CUT-BACKS TO NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL BUDGET

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, one of the precious privileges of a Member of Parliament is the one of fulfilling the function of presenting to the House petitions from citizens of Canada. I would like to note that the petition that was just read, although it arrived late, illustrates one of those rare instances of the Government in fact recognizing what citizens have requested. Because there were those who were willing and able to fight on their behalf, there was a change in an arrangement that offended Canadians.

I have a number of petitions to present. The first is from petitioners who live in this very region, and I would like to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that it conforms to Standing Order 106. The petition is signed by a number of residents of Canada who wish to avail themselves of their ancient and undoubted right to present a grievance to the honourable House and they point out, Mr. Speaker, that there has been—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. I would hope that the Hon. Member would summarize the prayer and come to the point at the end of the petition.

Mr. McCurdy: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was about to attempt to do that. I am sure you realize that there is no intent to do anything but ensure that the concerns of the citizens are properly and articulately presented. The petitioners are concerned about the cuts that were imposed upon the National Research Council, cuts which have disrupted scientific activity there, threatening the economic future of Canada as well as the health and safety of Canadian citizens. They say that the cuts will cause the loss of irreplaceable scientific expertise. Therefore, these petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to rescind the funding cut-backs in the budget of the National Research Council including all consequent terminations and cut-backs in research activities and to provide funding for the space program from sources other than the NRC budget—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. I would like to bring to the attention of those Hon. Members who have only been here for a short period of time, and particularly to