

*Restraint of Tobacco*

the athlete who did not smoke, and who has attained fame, than by forbidding young people to buy cigarettes.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order, please. Is the hon. member risen for the purpose of asking a question?

**Mr. Mather:** A question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I just want to point out to the hon. member who just concluded her remarks that my bill has nothing to do with prohibiting or regulating the sale of cigarettes to minors. That is the old act that has been administered by many governments since 1908. My bill is an amendment to it which would give the government power to control cigarette advertising. There is quite a distinction.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** The hon. member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Ethier).

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Ethier (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather) in saying that we must find a solution to the excessive use of tobacco, considering its deleterious effects on the health of smokers. We should perhaps forbid the sale of tobacco completely.

[English]

There is no doubt in my mind that smoking endangers one's health and also contributes to a large extent to polluting the air. It is injurious even to the health of non-smokers. But, Mr. Speaker, Bill C-42 is simply an amendment or a bill to restrain the use of tobacco, and in my view would have no beneficial effect whatsoever. Such an act has existed for well over 40 years, the Tobacco Restraint Act, but still there has been a steady increase in tobacco smoking through the years.

When one considers what has been done in different ways to restrain the use of tobacco, one has to admit that restraint is not what is needed. We have had the advertising code of the Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers Council, the 14 clauses of which have done nothing to halt the alarming increase in smoking. In my view, the only effect of this advertising code was to save fabulous amounts of money for the tobacco manufacturers.

Even the health warnings which appear on all tobacco products have not produced the restraint we expected, nor did the statistics to prove that the major causes of heart attacks and lung cancer are related to smoking establish any positive effect. There was an anti-smoking program in the Soviet Union which proved futile. Many other countries have adopted similar anti-smoking programs or warnings of danger to health, but still they show an increase in smoking. Even if prices were higher, people would not deprive themselves of tobacco. Attempts have been made to encourage smokers to give up the habit, but we notice that those who try to give it up become heavier consumers afterwards.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, the whole problem is a matter of education. As legislators, we should do everything in our power to encourage parents to take a very active part in an educational program to prevent young people from starting to smoke. I will cite a few of the questions that

[Mrs. Morin.]

smokers ask before they stop smoking, to show that they do not really want to stop: "Should I stop suddenly? Why do I get so nervous when I try to stop smoking?" He wants a reason to keep on smoking. "What about the physical symptoms I experience when I try to stop? What causes these? Are they dangerous? How long will they last? What can I do to avoid gaining weight? Is there a safe number of cigarettes to smoke?" All these questions show that they do not want to stop smoking.

Let us have an educational program to prevent people from starting to smoke. For the benefit of all Canadians I think we should think of the effect that smoking has on the health of non-smokers; we should think about pollution, about the fires caused by smoking and even the deaths. Mr. Speaker, with the good will of all Canadians, and with the thought of protecting the lives of others, I believe we should overcome the smoking habit and, more important, even prevent people from starting to smoke.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Hull):** Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased to discuss the matters raised during the hour set aside for private members' business. I know that the bill now before us is the work of a knight errant, as far as the problem of tobacco in Canada is concerned. I know that the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather) has been fighting for years in every imaginable way and it must be admitted that he has shown a great deal of imagination since he has been here to have adopted various bills to the effect that the government of Canada should make a concerted effort to show Canadians how harmful the effects of tobacco are.

So far, I know he has worked like a crusader, and that his efforts have perhaps met with some success. I agree with him that he has not been successful enough, and I hope that one day legislation will be enacted that will make it possible for Canadians, although life in Canada is now quite pleasant, to go beyond this happy state and to enter an earthly paradise, by asking people to stop killing themselves by continuing to smoke as they do.

● (1650)

I also hope that when my good friend the hon. member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Ethier), who took the floor before me, is on his way home tonight, although the roads aren't too good—because he has to take quite a few detours to get home—will throw his last package of cigarettes out of his car window.

And knowing him as I do I know that he will do it, and he will then be able to join the ranks of those who, for the past few years, have perhaps gained a bit of weight, but who at least feel much better.

There are so many other hon. members who worked on the committee in 1970, when we studied the famous problem of the use of tobacco in Canada. Besides, we produced an excellent report, and as chairman of that committee, I can assure the House that I had the co-operation of all my colleagues from all sides of the House. We produced a report which has already made its way around the world. In fact, I remember that New Zealand and Australia asked for copies of it.