

Non-smokers' Health Act

Mr. Corbeil: Mr. Chairman, in response to the concerns of the Hon. Member with regard to the ventilation of smoking rooms, I would like to state that the draft regulations to be discussed with industry and labour representatives in the next few days will include provisions for the air to be exhausted to the outside without being recirculated for designated smoking rooms. New buildings will need to meet the specific technical requirement for independent ventilation. Designated smoking rooms in older buildings will need to meet it to the extent reasonably practicable.

As far as the second question is concerned, I will repeat my answer. Part II of the Labour Code of Canada provides that any employee who finds that it is unsafe for him to work in an area where people have been smoking will have the possibility of refusing to work, with the proper grievance procedure to be applicable.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Chairman, I just want to say on behalf of the New Democratic Party that we appreciate the responses and the assurances that the Hon. Minister has given us.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported.

Mr. Corbeil moved that the Bill be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): When shall the Bill be read the third time? By unanimous consent, now?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Corbeil moved that the Bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party is very pleased that finally the Government has seen fit to bring back this legislation which has been in limbo for almost a year.

Once and for all Parliament is recognizing that the safety of Canadians from the hazard of smoking is truly there. It is known that smoking affects not only the growing child and adults but that it affects equally the unborn child in the womb of his or mother.

One particular point I would like to emphasize is the matter of addiction to cigarettes. It is one of the fundamental harms that can come from smoking. With this harm comes a series of harms. One of them is the

propensity or determination of the smoker to continue to smoke. In fact, he finds it difficult to stop smoking.

With these continued habits we know, as I indicated earlier, that the cost to Canadians is measured not only in terms of costs to physical health and costs to mental faculties but as well there is a tremendous cost to our health care system.

That this Bill would have been delayed for a year tells of the lack of commitment of the Government to such a fundamental concern as the health safety of Canadians.

A national campaign on tobacco was started last month. I hope that the Government in trying now to redeem itself from its hesitancy to proclaim this Act for a year would utilize every resource to ensure that the very intent of this law is carried out. One of the challenges to the Government will be to introduce and to provide programs that will help our teenagers in the many schools across the country. The real challenge to Government is to provide funding for our schools so that education against smoking and its hazards is given to all teenagers and other school children from coast to coast. The Government cannot be allowed to make the interest of industries paramount over the safety of Canadians.

I am delighted indeed that the Non-smokers Health Act will finally become law. Hopefully, we will start to see a decrease in the number of deaths which ensue from this serious health hazard, smoking.

Smoking is a scientifically proven health hazard, according to the advertisement by the National Campaign for Action on Tobacco. There is no longer any scientific controversy about tobacco being a proven health hazard. Tobacco causes many diseases which lead to serious illnesses, disability and death.

Again, I am very pleased to say that, finally, the Non-smokers Health Act is about to become law.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I too rise to support this important Bill.

As we have known for a very long time, smoking is very dangerous to the health of anyone who smokes. Many people have attempted to quit smoking in recognition of this health hazard. We are told that 30,000 Canadians died prematurely from diseases caused by tobacco smoke. There is one disease that we know of, lung