

Government Orders

Mr. Kristiansen: I would remind the member opposite that if he wants to talk about who will pay for it, nobody pays for it more than the people who pay the tobacco taxes in this country.

An hon. member: If you want a special privilege you pay for it.

Mr. Kristiansen: If you talk about the cost of health care, we also die earlier, improve the actuarial tables and save you a lot of money on pension plans. So do not worry about that aspect of it. They cancel each other out.

I come from a different world than a lot of members here. It is called heavy industry, lumber and mining. Related to that, I can remember some cancer maps of Canada a few years ago. You do not see them very often now. However, the incidence of cancer across Canada was always much higher in mining and smelting areas, pulp and paper industry communities than it was anywhere else in the country.

I do not think there were ever any statistics that suggested that people in those areas smoked more than anywhere else. One thing a lot of us who worked in heavy industry are fed up with is what used to be common practice in industry and that is to make everything an individual guilt trip and cracking down on individuals instead of cracking down on industry.

The emphasis in industry used to be that everybody had to be dressed like the Six Million Dollar Man with ear protection, respiratory protection, gloves and hard hats instead of protecting the worker from the hazards at source.

One thing that is comfortable for politically correct people on this moral crusade that anti-smoking has become is that they can keep attention on that if society concentrates all its anger and all its feelings against individual habits. It is a con job. It was a con job in industry and I suspect it is still a con job.

When there are researchers going out looking for facts to support a given conclusion, which is what a lot of them appear to be doing, how much attention is paid now to the chemicals in the potato growing industry in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. I know that nobody in my family will buy commercial potatoes any more.

If you talk to people who work in those areas, it is obvious that lot more of them are dying from cancers produced by the food everybody is forced to eat without

warning labels than die or get sick from cigarettes or tobacco products.

• (1310)

I always told my kids that smoking was dumb and that the people who smoked were dumb. Fine. I still think that is a choice they are able to make. To move as we constantly do in the direction of deregulation of industry, deregulation of the collective and an increasing regulation of people's private lives and private habits is not my idea of a free society.

So much of the research is to steer us away from any of the other very real health problems that plague everybody in society without warning labels.

Just on the point concerning the House of Commons, I think it is a bit too much. There was a fire in a dustbin that took place hundreds of feet away from the one area where a lot of people in this House smoke. It was under the kitchen garbage chute at the back. It is a bit much that they should have cracked down on and not have proper ventilated smoking areas within this House for the significant number of people who are still encumbered with that bad habit. It is a bit much.

If we want to look at health effects we should look at the effects of bad administration, bad government and bad practices. We would do a lot better to ban booze from Parliament Hill and the rest of these precincts than we would with tobacco.

If we look around the country at the costs on family breakdown, of death and injury from alcohol, I suspect we would get very close if not in excess of what we lose every year from the bad habits that result from the smoking of tobacco products.

Nobody is suggesting that we ban booze from the Hill. It is part of our culture, but the least that people here ought to be able to expect is that there are some ventilated smoking areas for those who are still encumbered with this bad habit.

Those are some things I wanted to get off my chest. While I am probably the only politically incorrect enough person to voice some of the objections and the feelings that I have mentioned here today, they are representative of a lot of other members of this House, a lot of people who work on this Hill and a lot of people around the country who just do not believe the kind of research b.s. that we have been getting for the last few years.