

would have benefited by this increase two months earlier. I do not, therefore, believe that the fault lies with the opposition, but rather with the government, for not having presented this bill at the desired time and thus causing the veterans to lose at least two months of their pension increase.

Mr. Chairman, it is my belief that our veterans are worthy men, and I am very sympathetic towards them, for whenever soldiers have been needed they have received many promises and today it is important that they be assured of a suitable pension based on the cost of living, enabling them to live decently with their families depending on the seriousness of their disability incurred during active service.

I do not want to be too long because, like my colleagues, I would like to see the bill passed on second reading, that it can be studied by the Senate next week. But before closing my remarks, I would like to make a suggestion. On reading the bill, I asked myself a question because, since I have been sitting in this House, I have noticed that from time to time similar bills are introduced to increase veterans' pension as a result of inquiries. Commissions of inquiry are appointed as well as joint committees to look into the veterans' problem; this almost inevitably leads to an increase in pensions.

I agree on that point, but I wonder whether it might not be possible to adjust the veterans' pensions to the cost of living index, as is the trend in the case of other pensions or salaries for instance. I feel it might not even be necessary to appoint, every year or two, a commission of inquiry to study the veterans' problem.

I believe the increase proposed by this bill will enable the veterans to take better advantage of what life has to offer, in that sense that they will have more purchasing power to buy the consumer goods and services society has to offer them.

I therefore agree with this bill and, on behalf of my party, I would say that we are in favour of it.

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 1 carry?

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): It being four o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely, public bills, notices of motions, private bills.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, in order to save the Clerk at the table from having to read 17 of these items, I think it could be indicated that there is agreement to deal with order No. 18, which is Bill C-42.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Restraint of Tobacco

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

HEALTH

MEASURE TO RESTRAIN USE OF TOBACCO

Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey-White Rock) moved that Bill C-42, to restrain the use of tobacco, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is now nine years since I first introduced this bill in this place. At that time a proposal of this sort was contained in a bill the effect of which was to give the government control over cigarette advertising and thereby protect the public from cigarette-induced disease. At that time, nine or ten years ago, I suppose such a proposal was looked upon somewhat in the same way as many years earlier some people regarded those who proposed that there should be purification of water or pasteurization of milk as something pretty far out. I am happy to say that at least to some degree times have changed since the first time this bill was introduced, and in the last nine or ten years in Canada some progress has been made legislatively.

● (1620)

The United States Surgeon-General describes cigarette smoking as North America's greatest single killer. Progress has also been made in grappling with what he states to be "the greatest cause of illness, disability and premature death, cigarette smoking". Since this bill was first introduced we have eliminated cigarette advertising from radio and television. We have stopped couponing, that is, the promotion of cigarette sales and resulting disease through giveaway prizes. We have the beginning of health warnings on cigarette packs and in cigarette advertising, and we have some money, although not nearly enough, in the federal and provincial governmental spheres to educate, particularly our young people, against the consequences of smoking such as lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

While these steps are not without significance, particularly if you take into consideration the immense and deep rooted habit which persists not only in this country but in most countries in the world, and if you also consider the immense revenues of the tobacco industry and of the associated advertising industry, as well as the revenues of the government, in the sale, manufacture and advertising of tobacco products, particularly cigarettes, the steps which I have enumerated as having been made are not without significance. However, they do not go far enough and it is my purpose, in bringing forward this bill again, to try to stimulate interest in taking these additional steps. I think it is becoming more and more evident that they are necessary.

The Canadian Medical Association says:

The story of the health hazard created by cigarette smoking represents an unrivalled tale of illness, disability and death. The potential benefits to be derived from the cessation of smoking place it at a level of importance in preventive medicine with pasteurization of milk... the purification chlorination of water and immunization.