

Order Paper Questions

Tofino, Denman Island, Parksville, Ahousat, Surrey and Malahat.

The petitioners point out that there is a great danger of accidents while nuclear armed and/or nuclear powered ships are in Canadian ports. There is a threat to the environment and to Canadian citizens. Therefore, the petitioners humbly pray and call upon the House of Commons to urge the Government not to purchase nuclear powered submarines for Canada.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

TOBACCO PRODUCTS CONTROL ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed from Monday, November 23, consideration of the motion of Mr. Epp (Provencher) that Bill C-51, an Act to prohibit the advertising and promotion and respecting the labelling and monitoring of tobacco products, be read a second time and referred to the Legislative Committee considering Bill C-204 (Non-smokers' Health Act).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The question on on the motion of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time and referred to the legislative committee considering Bill C-204 (Non-smokers' Health Act).

* * *

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT, 1971

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Gerry Weiner (for Minister of Employment and Immigration), moved that Bill C-90, an Act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker and Hon. Members, today I am pleased to begin the debate on Bill C-90. This Bill is an amendment to the Unemployment Insurance Act to extend the variable entrance requirement, the VER.

According to the provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act a person applying for UI benefits must have a minimum of 14 weeks to qualify. But since the late 1970s the VER has been used to make this requirement more flexible and responsive to the needs of unemployed Canadians, especially those numerous Canadians who lose their jobs and have 10 to 13 weeks of insurable employment to their credit. According to the VER, the number of weeks that an unemployment insurance claimant needs to qualify depends on the rate of unemployment in the region where he or she lives. Therefore, in regions of high unemployment claimants can qualify for benefits with as few as 10 weeks of insurable employment.

As Hon. Members know, the present VER legislation is in effect only until January 3, 1988. We propose to renew it again in order to enable thousands of Canadians living in regions where the economy is weaker to qualify for UI benefits.

Statistics show that the Canadian economy is doing well. The country as a whole has gained an extensive new lease on life since the recession and it is continuing. However, in some regions economic recovery is slower and the rate of unemployment remains higher than the national average.

The principle of the VER recognizes that it is more difficult to find and keep a job in a region of high unemployment. This is, in fact, one of the most important aspects of the UI program since it takes into account the labour market conditions in each region of the country. If the VER is not renewed, Mr. Speaker, all claimants will, as of January 4, 1988, have to show that they have 14 weeks of insurable employment in order to be entitled to unemployment insurance benefits. This means that more than 100,000 unemployed Canadians could be unable to meet the entrance requirements