

*Petitions***PETITIONS****MR. WRIGHT—COMPANY PAID PREMIUMS ON HEALTH CARE AND DENTAL PLANS**

Mr. Bill Wright (Calgary North): Madam Speaker, I have the duty to present a petition on behalf of my constituents in Calgary North. The purpose of this petition, signed by 449 citizens of Calgary, is to indicate to the government that the citizens of Calgary North protest the November 12 budget proposal as it affects company-paid premiums on extended health care plans and dental plans. The nature of the petition is to demand that this government review its proposal of the budget and withdraw it from the budget. The petitioners hope, Madam Speaker, that in your examination of their petition you will find the petition in order, sense the urgency and desperation of their concerns and that you might use the discretionary powers vested in your office to have this matter referred to the appropriate committee.

● (1510)

MR. HEAP—TESTING OF CRUISE MISSILE ON CANADIAN SOIL

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Madam Speaker, I have the honor to present a petition on behalf of the citizens of the city of Toronto requesting Parliament to request the Prime Minister to refuse to allow the testing of this new generation of weapons, the Cruise missile, on Canadian soil.

MR. DOMM—IMPOSITION OF METRIC SYSTEM—REQUEST THAT PETITION BE READ

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Madam Speaker, I have a very brief point of order arising out of petitions presented in the House. I realize that I am appealing under Standing Order 67(8) that the petition may be read on request at the discretion of the Speaker. I advised the Speaker on this same point of order that on April 5 I sent a letter to Dr. Koester, Clerk of the House, which stated very briefly:

Please be advised that I intend to present the petition on Tuesday, April 6, 1982, during routine proceedings and before introduction of bills. May I ask that the petition presented to the House on April 6 be read by the Clerk according to Standing Order 67(8) upon your tabling of the report of the Clerk of Petitions.

I request at this time that the main body of the petition be read into the record.

The second point for which I would like to ask your consideration is that because of the urgency of the matter and because of precedent Citation 695 in Beauséne, I would like to move, on your ruling of acceptance, for unanimous consent to have this petition referred, because of its urgency and the way it is affecting jobs and business in Canada, to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs in order that we might be able to call witnesses from across Canada to discuss the urgency of this petition that now totals 180,000 signatures collected over a period of 12 months.

I plead with the Chair to give consideration to this matter, due to the number of citizens from coast to coast who would

urgently request the House to refer this petition to the appropriate committee in order that witnesses may be called and a proper assessment of the seriousness of the situation can be made by this government.

Madam Speaker: We had received notice from the hon. member that he was going to present a petition. In fact, we received several notices. I would remind hon. members that we appreciate receiving notices as a matter of courtesy to the Chair because it makes the Chair better aware of the fact that several members will rise at the time petitions are called. I thank the hon. members for sending me those notices.

Now the hon. member would like his petition to be read. I just remind the House that this can only be done with the unanimous consent of the House. Therefore I ask the House; is there unanimous consent to the proposal by the hon. member that the petition be read?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Madam Speaker: There is no unanimous consent.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): David Smith said no.

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POINT OF ORDER**MR. NIELSEN—READING OF PETITIONS**

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order which I have raised before. In submitting to you that the Standing Orders are clear that obtaining unanimous consent is not the only way that a petition can be read. I have submitted to the Chair previously—and I believe the Chair has agreed with me—that the discretion lies with the Speaker. If the Speaker chooses to exercise it by requesting unanimous consent, that is a discretion that is properly within the jurisdiction of the Chair. However, I submit to you that obtaining unanimous consent is not the only way in which the Chair can exercise that discretion. If the Chair chooses to do so, as it has done today, and seeks unanimous consent, that is one way of exercising its discretion, but I would not like to establish the precedent that the only way of doing it would be by unanimous consent.

Madam Speaker: Pursuant to the Standing Order there is no discretion except in the case where a petition claimed some personal grievance requiring immediate remedy, in which case the matter contained therein may be brought in for immediate discussion.

From what I read in the Standing Orders and in Beauséne, there is no discretion on the part of the Speaker. The Standing Orders are quite clear. I will read standing order 67(7) to the hon. member which says:

On the next day following the presentation of a petition, the Clerk of the House shall lay upon the Table the report of the Clerk of the Petitions—