

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, April 2, 1990

The House met at 1 p.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS – MOTIONS

[*English*]

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

FUNDING

The House resumed from Monday, March 19, consideration of the motion Mr. Keyes:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of reinstating funding for the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

Mrs. Dorothy Dobbie (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, I rise today in this debate because I believe the government is doing the right thing in controlling our spending to reduce the national deficit. Contributions from all participating parties in the country are needed in this very important and vital exercise.

There is really nothing new about the principle of charging a nominal fee for exchanged information. This is a practice that has been carried on for ages within various government departments and agencies. It is not at all unusual for one department to charge for the services of another department.

Indeed, the proceedings in this House as produced in *Hansard*, the draft bills of legislation passed by the House, *The Canada Gazette* and other government publications are all produced at a cost and some of these costs are recovered by the users.

Therefore the products of the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety are, without question, valuable and essential to all of Canada and are definitely in demand by other nations. There is obviously a need

for these products, and that is why we are witnessing this debate in the House.

We agree that the information on occupational health and safety is of value to all the partners and to their constituents, whether they be individuals and unions concerned about occupational hazards, employers requiring information on toxic chemicals, governments and standard setting bodies developing or interpreting legislation, or other parties that might be interested in information on environmental pollutants, for example.

All this costs money to produce. It costs money to produce, package and distribute information products, and that is an unavoidable fact of life. In the past, however, these costs have been borne principally by only one of the partners in the arrangement. That creates a very stressful burden and an unfair situation. Therefore, if all the other partners are interested in continuing to provide these information services to Canadians, then they must devote some serious time and consideration to devising ways and means of paying for them and creating a more equitable situation.

This government is dedicated to building a constructive partnership among labour, business and governments. We believe that process will be ever more important as Canadians strive to address the challenges brought on by rapidly changing economic and social conditions that we are going through both at home and abroad.

At every opportunity we promote and facilitate active and vibrant partnerships among labour, business and governments as we develop public policy and pursue economic development. Together in this partnership we can and we must move forward in addressing the economic and social challenges that we share. However, shared responsibility and accountability must go hand in hand with that co-operative effort and that co-operative approach to decision making on national issues.

Since its creation in 1978 the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety has been provided with financial support to get itself established and to develop a variety of useful information services on matters of occupational health and safety. The federal government