

or performing tasks that could have dreadful effects for workers and their families.

I, too, would like to note that it is our duty as legislators to help reduce the risks of injuries at the work place and to provide as much information as we can so that workers will recognize and be fully aware of the hazards involved.

There are thousands of jobs in the country which have potentially dangerous consequences if not carried out properly. Sometimes accidents are a result of mechanical failure which is a reality of the modern world which we have created. However, there are also the human factors—fatigue, exposure, and a host of other problems to contend with.

The Solicitor General has just moments ago stated that in 1988 workers' fatalities and injuries represented a loss of some \$22 billion to Canadians. In 1987, 894 Canadians died as a result of occupation-related accidents. Twenty-five million person-days were lost due to accidents and injuries. Obviously, this is not an insignificant problem. Over \$7 billion are spent in Canada annually to cover medical costs ensuing from accidents, including costs for pensions, insurance, and loss of earnings.

The minister has just explained to the House that one in every 10 workers still suffers from work-related injuries. I believe that this number is probably much higher than that. Recognizing the problem is not enough. It is not enough for the government to rise to pay tribute to injured workers.

An important debate was held in the House a short time ago concerning the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. For 10 years we noted that the CCOHS has provided Canadian workers with impartial, unbiased information on occupational health and safety topics to help workers and employers avoid the pitfalls of accidents. However, the government has decided to remove its funding and has begun a process to privatize the centre whose goal it will be to favour the production of markets as opposed to the delivery of services, and that is a direct quote.

I remind Canadian workers of what the Solicitor General said just moments ago. He asked us all, including members of Parliament, that progress and economic growth should not be made at the expense of the

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well-being or the lives of workers. I will pray for those Canadian working men and women who suffer from industrial related accidents and for those workers who lost their lives while earning their daily bread.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to rise in the House in recognition of tomorrow as a day of mourning for workers who have been killed or seriously injured in the workplace.

I would like to repeat the statistic that in 1987, the last year for which we have figures available, 894 people were killed while at work. In addition to that, 614,011 people received disabling injuries while at work in 1987.

What is interesting about that number is not only the horrendous number itself, but the fact that in the 1970s only between 400,000 and 500,000 Canadians who received disabling injuries. In other words, the trend is going up in workplaces across Canada.

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There are many statistics that can be used to discuss what is happening to Canadian workers when they go to work each and every day. We can talk, not only about the deaths and the disabling injuries, but about the long-term disabilities and injuries that these people face and the suffering that goes on in their families, and, because of the nature of workplace contaminants, the suffering that takes place in the community as a whole.

For example, in the city of Flin Flon, in my constituency, not only do the workers have a much higher risk of dying and being injured at the work site, but the people who live in the city as well experience a much higher incidence of cancer and other very serious illnesses causing death or permanent disability.

On that particular issue, I would like to point out that the Hudson Bay Mining & Smelting has been trying for years to get federal government funding for modernization of that plant. Even though there were encouraging words from the federal government prior to the 1988 election, nothing has taken place to date. We still have that very ancient, dilapidated system in Flin Flon and no real action from the federal government. Whether in my riding or across Canada, we can show examples of the federal government failing to act on this very important matter.