

Routine Proceedings

and disease occur not only in storage facilities but along the railways, inside factories and at the office desk. No one is immune to the dangers of unsafe work environments. One in every 10 workers still suffers from work-related injuries. There are medical costs and there are incalculable costs in human suffering. We all pay for occupational health and safety fatalities. In 1988, worker fatalities and injuries represented a loss of some \$22 billion to Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Canadians have demonstrated their deep concern for the environment. The workplace is an occupational environment where the majority of Canadians spend their adult lives. This is why, among other things, Mr. Speaker, the safety and health of workers should not be endangered as a result of exposure to hazardous chemicals, nor should office workers suffer the consequences of poor indoor air quality.

We all share the objective of promoting healthier and safer work environments. This year has shown significant progress in the promotion of cleaner and safer workplaces. The Non-smokers' Health Act and its regulations came into effect last December 29. It is important to protect workers and Canadians from the harmful effects of second-hand tobacco smoke.

[*English*]

Several important amendments have been proposed to the Canada Occupational Safety and Health Regulations, regarding the levels of sound. The consequences of loss of hearing, because of exposure to unacceptable levels of sound are devastating. The amendments reducing the maximum permitted levels and duration of exposure to sound, should have the effect of reducing compensation costs for occupational hearing loss in the workplace by \$37 million, based on the estimated reduction in the number of compensation claims over the next 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, the government promotes co-operation and consensus in all important matters affecting the lives of Canadians. This spirit of partnership has carried over to the workplace, where labour and management participate more and more in the decision-making process affecting the health and safety of workers.

[*Translation*]

Miners in Cape Breton are the immediate beneficiaries of such pragmatism, Mr. Speaker. The newly established Coal Mining Safety Commission ensures that workers are given a say in the decision-making process.

This spirit of partnership is also evident in the government's relationship with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. A Business Plan has been prepared by the Centre's Council of Governors which confirms that this excellent organization can become self-sufficient. The government's commitment to the Centre has been renewed, and the Centre has met this challenge of a new financial direction.

[*English*]

It is my firm belief that occupational safety and health is a state of mind that requires education and training to nurture. It is too late to talk workplace safety to a machine operator trapped in the wheels and axles of his engine. Safety must be preventive and anticipatory. Governments and laws are there to regulate, but it is the workers and employers who prevent workplace deaths and injuries.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about occupational safety and health, let us keep in mind the suffering and dying workers of Canada. Let us not forget the gruesome malignancies caused by workplace hazards that disfigure the soul and body of honest workers trying to make a living.

We must remember that together we can and do make a difference. But let's make sure that occupational health and safety becomes a reality for all of us.

[*English*]

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank the Solicitor General for providing an advance copy of his remarks on the National Day of Mourning.

Tomorrow, April 28, Canadians will pause to remember those working men and women who suffer from industrial-related injuries or illnesses and those who lost their lives while on the job. We all know there are many risks involved in helping to keep this country going, including working at jobs that are sometimes dangerous