

*Private Members' Business*

directors of the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

[English]

**Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Madam Speaker, I feel privileged to have the opportunity to speak on this Private Member's motion presented by my colleague, the hon. member for Hamilton West.

I want to start by addressing the hon. member opposite, the member for Montmorency—Orléans. In his speech he asked the question: "Are we doing this for partisan reasons?" I want to tell him straight off that this is not an issue with which we can afford to play partisan politics.

This centre for occupational health and safety has been useful not only to the constituents of the hon. member for Hamilton West, but it has probably been used by constituents of every member of the House.

Before I came to speak on this private members' motion today, I reviewed the annual report of the centre. There are, perhaps, a lot of Canadians out there who do not know what the Centre for Occupational Health and Safety does. It is a centre which provides Canadians with information about occupational health and safety which is trustworthy and comprehensive. It is there to facilitate responsible decision making, to promote change in the work place, to increase awareness of the need for a healthy and safe-working environment, and to support education and training.

The hon. member mentioned in his speech that the centre has been open for 10 years. During that period it has developed a trust, not only nationally but internationally. It has been putting out publications and providing tips to various publications. Every year the centre has been touching close to four million Canadians who work in the workplace.

The centre has developed relations with Agriculture Canada to provide regulatory information about pesticide products, as well as with the Australian Centre for Health and Safety, the Canadian Hospital Association, Environment Canada and universities across Canada.

This institution was built over a period of many years and is a corner-stone for business and labour in our country. The motion comes from the hon. member for

Hamilton West and one may think that, because it is a private members' motion, it involves just his riding. That is not so. It is a national service as well as an international service.

As the hon. member opposite stated in his speech, I realize that we do have a deficit and a debt problem in this country. He should never think that we on this side of the House ignore that.

When looking at making cuts in the national government, it becomes a game of options and priorities. It seems to me that one of the priorities of the government, alongside fiscal responsibility, is a deep and passionate commitment to matters environmental.

I read last week the Minister of the Environment's framework for discussion on the environment, the *Green Plan*.

**Mr. Gardiner:** It probably didn't take you long.

**Mr. Mills:** It took me a fair bit of time to read it.

I, for one, think that the Minister of the Environment is deeply committed to this issue. I found him to be sincere in trying to get his head around how we can get people involved in an activist way with the environmental issue. It is not an easy job.

My own experience in my own riding has been that there are a lot of people who talk about getting involved in the environmental movement but, generally speaking, it is mostly the children in the country who get involved. It is tougher to get parents and adults motivated.

I concede that he has a tough job. But in his objective paper, the Minister of the Environment stated: "To reach this objective we believe that the Government of Canada must lead by example. We believe that a healthy environment and a strong economy must be recognized as being mutually dependent."

The minister talked about his impatience to act and how we have to make up for decades of environmental oversight. This is all pretty good as far as I am concerned. He stated further that the Government of Canada plans to upgrade its ability to provide more timely and effective warnings of natural hazards such as blizzards, tornadoes and marine storms, and hazards that are themselves linked to pollution emergencies. He talked about improved techniques for understanding and detecting these