

*Adjournment Debate*

will never support legislation that tries to fight the deficit by cutting not only the flesh off the bone but goes to the marrow of the bone itself. It affects every person in need in this country. It affects the essential services for the destitute and those who are truly in distress within our country.

This bill is simply a way for the government to cut a few corners, to shave off a few more dollars. It is unacceptable to the Liberals. Look at who would be affected by the cuts in this act. The list is extensive. First off, in every province, the homes for the aged, the annual contribution made not by the federal government but by the federal government to the province and the province, eventually, down to the municipality.

As we all know, we have a great habit in this country, both provincially and federally, of passing legislation that puts the onus of responsibility for paying for that legislation on to the municipalities, to the real property owners. I do not think there is a municipality around anywhere in this country that can afford any more of those obligations which higher levels of government are forcing them to pay for those services.

I see, Mr. Speaker, that my time has run out. The House is to adjourn. I understand I will get some time tomorrow morning.

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## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

### THE MINT

**Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, the strike at the Royal Canadian Mint in Ottawa and Winnipeg has gone on for far too long. The Minister of Labour took far too long to get involved and to carry out his obligations to support good labour relations in this country.

Employees were on strike over Christmas in some of the worst freezing weather that this city has seen in many years. It was even worse in Winnipeg. They are still on strike today. The demands of the workers are not unreasonable, they are simply asking for the same treatment that their managers at the Mint have already received.

The 1990 profits at the Mint were \$10.4 million. That money helped reduce the deficit and produced revenues that benefited taxpayers. These revenues are in jeopardy because of the strike that has been going on for over four months in Winnipeg and two months in Ottawa. The Mint's every day treatment of its managers is costing taxpayers money, paying for free lunches, free parking and free vans to transport them into their place of work. It is costing money by paying for the storage of gold outside of Mint property. It is flying Ottawa managers to Winnipeg and back on a regular basis. This is costing taxpayers money because all of this comes off the profits of the Mint, which reduced borrowing requirements for the Government of Canada last year to the tune of over \$10 million.

Every day the Mint strike continues is costing us money, jeopardizing foreign contracts and the quality of products for which Canadians have become known. It is unconscionable that those who are responsible for this situation have given themselves increases of up to 8.5 per cent but refuse more than a 3 per cent increase for the people who produce those revenues for the people of Canada. It is unconscionable that a government that approves full cost of living increases for judges making eight times as much as many of these Mint workers directs the Mint's management to get tough with employees.

Nobody can understand why people earning higher salaries, the managers in this case, can give themselves double increases over what they are prepared to give their employees, especially when the cost goes directly to the taxpayers. These employees are not a drain on the public purse. They are making money for Canada that helps reduce the tax burden and cuts the need for government borrowing, again by over \$10 million a year.

All they are asking for is fair treatment. We hope that the strike will be over as of tonight. We plead with the government to please intervene and make sure the quality of production at the Mint is maintained and that people are back to work with a fair salary and fair treatment after the strike is over.

**Mr. Ken James (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I would like the hon. member for Ottawa West to know there have been several developments in this labour dispute since her December 9, 1991 intervention.

The hon. member will be aware that a mediator was appointed to assist the parties on December 13, 1991, following a formal request for mediation assistance from the employer, as the minister mentioned he would do.