

*Private Members' Business*

long-range effects that those substances will have on their health. There are 863 deaths a year in Canada and 20,000 disabled workers a year. That is shocking in a nation that has so much to offer.

It is shocking for the government to say that it is not going to protect those workers and that it has no responsibility to those workers in the workplace. Workers depend on the government to care about them. Workers have a right to believe that this government will take care of their safety, as they go out every day and build the wealth of this nation.

For example, the CCOHS has become a world leader in knowing what the impact is of pesticides on our environment. Only today on CBC Radio it was announced that household pesticides, which many of us treat quite indifferently and feel are quite innocuous, even in the tiniest amount can affect people with allergies, from a sniffle to death. This is something we have only learned. Yet this government thinks we should be abandoning our commitment in the workplace.

My father worked for 40 years at Cominco in Trail in a zinc and lead non-ferrous smelter which was, for many years, the largest in the world. He worked in the zinc plant machine shop. It was a dirty hole. People are taken on tours there and they cannot get out fast enough. It is full of dirt, dust, lead and asbestos. Neither he nor his colleagues were aware of what these conditions would do to them, what would be the impact of these conditions in their 40 years of working life in their retirement.

Well, let me tell you what kind of retirement it led to. It led to emphysema. It led to my father not being able to walk to the end of the street without having to stop and catch his breath. It led to my father not being able to garden. I have seen my father lying on the lawn pulling weeds because his breath is cut off and could not bend.

That is the kind of protection that workers have a right to receive. It is protection that our mothers and fathers did not have, and that our children must have.

There is no excuse not to spend \$10 million today when we will spend millions and millions of dollars tomorrow trying to remedy the carnage that is happening in the workplace.

I am a printer. I started my apprenticeship in the hot metal days of the printing industry. When I was an apprentice only 20 years ago we were encouraged to take calcium pills and to drink plenty of milk because there was lead in the room. Hot metal days in the printing industry meant that lead was used, as it still is in some shops. It turns out that that was the absolute worst thing that we could have done for our health. If had not been for research and the seriousness of the impact of lead exposure, we never would have known that.

I do not want my children to come out of the workplace full of carcinogens and chemicals that nobody has bothered to label or even to have considered as a serious health effect. I do not believe that any member in the Chamber would want their children exposed to that.

It is important for us to think about the thousands and thousands of Canadian workers who have died from asbestosis which comprised a large portion of the last generation of workers. We can find little excuse for not reinstating the funding.

Privatization of the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety is not the answer. I do not want to cast aspersions on any researcher, past or present, but I do want to say that it has been proven over and over again, particularly in the United States, that research can be bought. It is absolutely vital to workers in Canada that the research going on at this centre be clearly above any possibility of having been bought by industry.

One of the main concerns of every Canadian right now is the environment and our concern for the environment has to begin in our workplaces. The protection of our workers has to be one of the first key steps to the protection of the environment, our children, and our future.

**Mr. Gilbert Parent (Welland—St. Catharines—Thorold):** Madam Speaker, I have been eagerly awaiting this debate on the motion put forward by my colleague, the hon. member for Hamilton West.

The fact that the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety is in his riding is very important, not only to that hon. member but to all Members of Parliament.