

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, April 23, 1990

The House met at 1 p.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—MOTIONS

[*English*]

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

FUNDING

The House resumed from Monday, April 2, consideration of the motion of Mr. Keyes:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of reinstating funding for the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiaq): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased today to have the opportunity to speak in favour of the motion of my hon. colleague from Hamilton West urging the government to reinstate funding for the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

As the Centre for Occupational Health and Safety is located in Hamilton, the concern of my colleague from Hamilton West is obvious and well-founded. The fact that this motion was selected by the Standing Committee on Private Members' Business as a votable motion suggests that my colleague's concern is shared by many other members of this House.

The issue is the government's decision to withdraw funding from the centre. Established in 1978 by an act of Parliament, the centre has evolved into an internationally recognized institution.

In 1986-87, the government began cost recovery measures. Cabinet decided that the centre should be self-sufficient by the beginning of fiscal year 1991-92. The centre has been increasing its revenues through user-

fees, and the government has been withdrawing its funding.

The centre has been operating on a budget of about \$10 million a year.

This year the Centre for Occupational Health and Safety will try to recover \$5.3 million of its operating costs through service fees and sales of its products.

The mandate of the centre is to promote the fundamental right of Canadians to a healthy and safe working environment.

A tripartite organization, the centre's governing council, consists of a chairman and governors representing governments—federal, provincial, territorial—employers and labour.

The centre is the national information resource in occupational health and safety. It responds to inquiries. It provides a cross-Canada electronic service; and it produces and distributes publications.

Its clients are labour, management, government, health and safety organizations, media, educational institutions and professionals.

It collaborates with Canadian and foreign organizations in developing its data base collection. The centre's INFO disc was selected by the World Health Organization and the International Development Research Centre as the information vehicle for an international poison control project.

The World Health Organization has requested copies of the centre's publications to assist a series of discussions aimed at international terminology standardization. The Occupational Health and Safety Information Agency of the International Labour Office wants to distribute the centre's information throughout the developing world.

• (1310)

The centre's objectives are to provide Canadians with information about occupational health and safety which is trustworthy, comprehensive and intelligible, to facilitate responsible decision-making, promote change in the workplace, increase awareness of the need for a healthy