

on this nation". I agree it is a very heavy burden, yet this minister and his government have decided to withdraw the main source of funding for the centre completely. They want to turn it into a full cost recovery enterprise with no assistance at all from the federal government.

The government has informed the centre that it is to recover 15 per cent of its budget in 1989-90, 50 per cent in 1990-91, and 100 per cent in 1991-92. This plan was devised by the government unilaterally, without any consultation with the centre. The government is clearly showing its true colours here. It is not worried about the centre and it is not overly concerned with occupational health and safety. Instead, its mind is focused on the money it will save.

The government must realize that it cannot address the deficit it has managed to accumulate due to its economic mismanagement with the money it gets from cutting the centre's funding. Far from it.

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety has earned its keep. It is no coincidence that since the centre has been in existence, the work accident rate in Canada has gone from 1 in 8 to 1 in 10. The centre can be attributed to having had an impact in the reduction of this rate. The centre has consistently and effectively provided a wide range of up to date, preventive accident and health information and it has paid off.

The services provided by the centre have come to be relied upon by both labour and management groups across the country. As well, a multitude of health and safety organizations, educational institutions, professional groups and all levels of government have benefited from using the centre's resources. We have a need in Canada for such a centre, a centre devoted to the health and safety of Canadian workers.

The Minister of Labour has also pointed out in this House that in 1987, 894 Canadians died at work and 25 million person days were lost due to work accidents and occupational injuries or diseases. We should remember as well the \$17.5 billion which we have to pay as a result.

Why then does the centre have to lose all of its financial support from the federal government and go it

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alone? Why does the centre's research and operations have to be put in jeopardy along with the welfare of the Canadian worker? Does the government actually believe that the money could be best spent elsewhere or used in vain attempts at deficit reduction? No, the total withdrawal of funding will only serve to inhibit the centre in maintaining its respected and valued contribution to occupational health and safety in Canada.

On February 5, when this motion was being debated in the House, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour stated, and I quote:

As a result of receiving government funding only—although it had a good reputation and did a good job—I think that a lot of people did not know what the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety did. There are a lot of school boards and fire departments and so on which did not know.

The hon. member went on to say:

Were we really spreading the word? As a result of not having to worry about where the funding comes from there may have been a less than an adequate job done on that.

I can tell the hon. member that in my riding of Stormont—Dundas, the Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry public school board is well aware of the centre and its work. In fact, the legislative committee of this school board believes that the centre has "Proved to be a valuable resource tool for educators both for educational purposes and for the implementation of the provisions of various acts". The board also supports the Metropolitan Toronto School Board in its efforts to have the centre's federal funding maintained.

In a letter to the Minister of Labour, dated March 7, 1990, the Stormont—Dundas and Glengarry County Board of Education stated: "This board of education has relied upon information provided through the centre and was distressed to note the withdrawal of funding by the federal government and the goal of effecting 100 per cent of cost recovery by 1991-1992". The board goes on to state: "We urge you and your colleagues to look further at funding for the centre and its activities in light of legislation such as the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System, which legislation leads directly to a further rise in the real number of enquiries for all categories of users of the centre".