

*Routine Proceedings*

perceived by far too many to be a group infringing on the natural domain of men.

Is there hope? Of course there is. But the hope lies in progress, courage and government action. The hope lies in such government action that is honest, consistent and progressive. The hope lies in government that shows its true commitment to gender equality and acts rather than congratulates itself for work which is still unfinished. The hope lies in the recognition, some day in the future, by this government and by all governments that women truly do hold up half the sky.

**Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby):** Mr. Speaker, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women has requested that this day be a day of national mourning for the 14 young engineering students who were massacred in Montreal. I would like to support the call for that day of mourning and also the request that Canadians make donations to their local rape relief centres, to organizations that are working toward ending violence against women, and I would urge members of Parliament and all Canadians to take that day of mourning seriously and to perhaps make donations if they are able.

The minister focused her remarks on the progress that women have made toward equality, and I congratulate the women of Canada for that progress. But on this tenth anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, I would like to look closely at the Convention and point out here what still needs to be done in our country.

The minister has said that Canada can be proud of its record on women's rights. I wonder if the government is proud of spending \$17 million on 38 strip clubs in Canada while still withholding the bulk of \$22 million that is earmarked for Project Haven, a capital grants program for shelters for battered women, because of regulatory red tape.

It is ironic that Article 13(b) of the convention asks signatories to observe equality in credit lending. Women are still discriminated against in terms of bank loans and credit, while this government invests in strip clubs.

Also ironic is this government's recent and rather flagrant violation of Articles 2(c) and (d) and Article

11(d) which deal with equal pay for work of equal value. Pay equity is what the federal hospital workers, mainly women, have been demanding since the early 1980s. They had to take this government to court and they won. The government still refuses to entrench fair wages in the collective agreement. Instead, within the past couple of weeks, we have witnessed the sorry sight of these unfairly treated workers being legislated back to work.

The government's abortion law, introduced this year, contradicts Articles 2 and 16(1)(e) of the convention. This proposed abortion law will discriminate against women because it controls women's reproduction and not men's. It limits women's choices. It targets women's fertility by imposing arbitrary regulations on women's decisions whether or not to bear children.

In Canada it is illegal to discriminate against women because they are women. Yet Employment and Immigration's language training programs for immigrants contain an inherent bias against women that has not yet been addressed by this government. In fact, the government is being taken to court again over its human rights violations.

One in 10 Canadian women is not covered by the Canadian Human Rights Act. In Canada's second report to the convention, on its progress toward equality it mentioned the 1985 *Equality for All* report. The recommendation to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination is still being ignored by this government some five years later.

Article 7 of the convention guarantees women's rights to participate in the formulation of government policy and to participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country. The Conservative government responded to this by slashing the Secretary of State's program for women by 15 per cent and funding to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women by 50 per cent.

I am glad that our party, the New Democratic Party, has contributed to the government's next report on the participation of women by being the first national political party in North America to elect a woman as its leader.