

about putting these social justice issues on the parliamentary agenda.

● (1620)

I would refer the Minister to another piece of legislation which her Government brought forward, namely, Bill C-62, the Bill dealing with employment equity. I hoped it would have teeth in it in order that it could actually promote the role of women, native people, immigrants and the handicapped so that they could obtain justice and equity. Unfortunately, all the right words are there but the Government has taken no concrete action. When legislation has no teeth in it, nothing remains but hollow promises. I hope the Minister will watch this area over the next year and bring forward the type of amendments that will put the needed teeth into it, especially in terms of punishing people for not acting as opposed to not filing a report.

I would now like to deal with the child care program. I see across the way one of my colleagues who sat on the committee which prepared the *Equality for All* Report. The committee travelled across the country at great cost to Canadians. It was an important undertaking. We heard about the basic building blocks to allowing women, in particular immigrants and native women and families, the partners in society, the right to equal access and equal opportunity. That right comes with child care, regardless of the type. Quality affordable care enables these women to enter the market-place. It is well known that a family today needs two incomes to meet the family budget. Our task force looked at the subject, as did the Cooke task force. It has been under consideration since Senator Florence Bird chaired the Royal Commission on the Status of Women which was set up in 1968. Since that time it has been a major plank in the discussion, and one about which we are still talking. I know that we each build on the strength of the other, but since the release of the last task force report, the time has come to promise at least some new dollars, not recycled ones, for the area of child care.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member. Will the Minister please reply.

Mrs. McDougall: Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the Hon. Member for the hopefulness that she expressed concerning my role in the Government. I can assure her that it is well placed—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. McDougall: I was about to go on to say that it is well placed because I know I have the support of my cabinet colleagues for the measures we wish to undertake, and the support of the Prime Minister.

In dealing with the Hon. Member's last point first, let me say that the Government and I regard child care as a major priority. It is an issue which has been around for a long time in my life, even before the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. It was a silent issue for many years. I agree with the

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Hon. Member when she says that it should be a priority of the Government. It was very much a forward looking part of the Speech from the Throne. I would be disappointed if the Hon. Member expected the Government to move ahead of the parliamentary task force which, as I understand, is doing some extraordinarily good work in this area. I am looking forward very much to seeing what will be contained in the report. I think it will round out the examination which can be carried out at our level. It is something on which the Government is fully committed to move forward. I agree with the Hon. Member that there is no point in having equal pay for work of equal value if one cannot get out the door. There is no point in having good training programs if one cannot get out the door. This is an issue which we fully intend to look into.

The Hon. Member raised the issue of employment equity and of there not being any teeth in the program. We are somewhat ahead of the Hon. Member in that we are monitoring the progress of the program, and we will continue to do so. I am proud to say that this approach is working. Things are happening. Putting teeth into legislation without allowing people a chance to respond is inappropriate. The Hon. Member knows as well as I do that once something is put into legislation it is difficult to remove it. The Government's hope is that by the time the Hon. Member and I are older and looking back on our political careers this type of action will not be necessary. At that time Canadians will take it for granted that women are equal participants because of the things we are doing today, things which are being done by this Government.

Mr. Robison: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Minister on her appointment as Minister responsible for the Status of Women. It is obviously a key portfolio. I have two brief questions for the Minister.

The Minister referred to the Government's commitment with respect to pornography legislation. Specifically, she referred to the Government's intention to move forward in terms of violent and degrading pornography. Does this mean that the Government will not proceed with the other element in the Bill of the former Minister of Justice which dealt with what has been called explicit erotic pornography involving adults in which there is no violence and no degradation but consensual adult activity? Is it the intent of the Government to move away from the repressive proposals in the Bill put forward by the former Minister of Justice?

My second question is in respect of another area of glaring inequality affecting women. I refer to the current abortion laws in Canada, laws which effectively deny women in the Provinces of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, as well as many women in other parts of the country, access to safe therapeutic abortions. Instead of being coached by the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) perhaps she could address these two important concerns of Canadian women.

Mrs. McDougall: Mr. Speaker, with regard to pornography, as the Hon. Member knows, and I thank him for raising this