

[Translation]

We must acknowledge the problems of current legislation and pass the measures necessary to improve the situation.

[English]

Let me now introduce some of the proposed improvements to the current tax law. We should remember that the combined impact of income tax and child support policies must be measured by its impact on the standard of living of the affected family.

There are a number of changes that could be affected through federal legislation and policy measures. The avenues this government needs to explore are several. The Income Tax Act could develop child support guidelines that reflect the cost of raising children and that are compatible with revamped tax treatments of child support payments.

This act would support the efforts of lone parent families in Canada, specifically the single mother. We could follow the lead of the American tax system and not include child support payments in the calculation of our taxable income. This would treat child support costs in the same manner for tax purposes for custodial and non-custodial parents. This would also result in equal treatment of child support costs in families in which parents live together and in those in which parents are separated or divorced.

As insurmountable as these problems may appear, we must attempt to reform the existing tax on child support payments which, quite frankly, is the government's punishment to those women who, for whatever reason have separated from their spouses.

The current law is extremely limited as a means of distributing tax relief for the benefit of children and in most cases it is detrimental. Women and children are its victims. I hope all members will join the women and men in this House who hope to right this injustice.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** We have about a minute left.

**Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhon (Winnipeg North):** Madam Speaker, I too am delighted to rise in support of the motion of my Liberal colleague, the member for Nepean.

The motion states:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should amend the Income Tax Act so that child support payments are no longer considered taxable income for their recipients.

We heard a lot of presentations earlier and I agree that the motion raises the issue of fairness. Is it fair to tax support payments earmarked for children? In that question is inherent as well the question are we committed to the children of our country, the children who are the future resource that will help build our nation even stronger, the children who cannot vote but

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nevertheless who need our help? We have a duty and an obligation to support them.

As well, this motion is a commitment to single parents and our commitment to eliminate poverty in this nation as this House did on November 24, 1989, unanimously adopted. In conclusion, I would like to state that we have an obligation to our nation's children, to support them and make child support payments no longer taxable in the hands of the recipients.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the order is dropped to the bottom of the list of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

• (1855)

[Translation]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

### CANADA LABOUR CODE

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve):** Madam Speaker, I understand that you are giving me the floor regarding a question I asked the Deputy Prime Minister, on February 18, about the POWA Program.

I will remind the House that, on February 18, I asked the Deputy Prime Minister what her intentions were regarding the support program for workers affected by collective lay-offs. The POWA Program is a joint federal-provincial program 70 per cent of the cost of which is covered by Ottawa and the remaining 30 per cent is paid by the provinces. At that time, the Deputy Prime Minister was, unknowingly I believe, in the wrong when she said that this program was in some way connected with the Canada Labour Code, which is totally false, of course.

I rise today to point out that the POWA Program, which replaces the Workers Assistance Program created in 1988, discriminates against workers in the Montreal area. Everybody knows that, under the terms of this program, for workers to be eligible for benefits, which are half-way between unemployment insurance and social assistance, there must be a certain number of workers laid off. In the Montreal area, with a workforce of over 500 000 people, the administrative agreement says that at least 100 workers must be laid off for them to be eligible for benefits.

However, with its clothing and textile sectors, the industrial fabric of Montreal is such that most businesses that would apply for the POWA Program have a workforce of between 20 and 30 people. It is so true, so disturbing and alarming, that 83 per cent of all applications made by Montreal companies under the POWA program, the Program for Older Worker Adjustment