

Private Members' Business

being penalized by the tax system. As has been explained, this is the case at present and that puts us in the untenable position where parents are better off paying for child care outside their homes.

At the same time, they have to put up with many other drawbacks because of this, but they cannot afford to make other arrangements. I believe that the measure before us is interesting from that angle.

However, we have to wonder about the government's attitude vis-à-vis all the measures which would promote family life, children's development, formal education, job opportunities and, ultimately, a satisfying life. Is it normal that a government member, in particular, would unsuccessfully table several motions of this type to integrate such a measure into the government's policy? This makes us wonder about the true values of this government.

Given the costs involved, it is obvious that the government could have drawn the necessary money from the banks' profits, among other sources, to finance such a measure.

Does the government not realize that the short term costs of this measure would have major long term benefits, even from a financial point of view? Indeed, there would be many fewer problem cases and curative measures involving children who did not have a fair opportunity to get an education allowing them to thrive and to achieve?

I think that the motion put forward by the hon. member should make all Quebecers and Canadians think about fundamental family values. These values have taken a beating in the last 10 to 15 years. They did not necessarily change as a result of popular will but much more because of a lack of real government action.

When we think about the commitment by the former Tory government and the current Liberal government to put in place a national child care program, a commitment which was rejected and forgotten in both cases, it is a little insulting, especially to women since they are the ones who look after the children in most cases. This does not mean that it should remain that way, but the fact is that women continue to bear most of the responsibility for child care.

It is a little disappointing that other measures are considered to be more important, that we do not feel obliged to meet our commitment to human development, which is the real fundamental criterion for evaluating a society.

We are more sensitive to the lobbying efforts of those who finance our election campaigns than to the representations made

by people who simply aspire to a decent life, a balanced family life and development opportunities for their children. When we question people in our ridings, we realize that such concrete measures would make a difference.

In conclusion, I think we can say that the hon. member's motion is interesting, that she shows tenacity. I invite her to ask her government why this matter was not included in the budget currently under discussion.

• (1755)

[English]

Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Middlesex, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise in the House today to speak on Motion No. 339 sponsored by my friend and colleague, the member for Mississauga South.

The member has been in the forefront throughout the 35th Parliament attempting to convey the value of work in the home and the importance of building a strong relationship with our children during the formative years, a value I too strongly support.

Families are changing in the riding of Lambton—Middlesex as they are throughout Canada. We all recognize that. According to the figures supplied by the Vanier Institute of the Family, a national voluntary organization dedicated to promoting the well-being of Canadians families, no one type of family dominates the statistics today as did the single wage earner family of the 1950s. There is now a large majority of husband and wife families that rely on two incomes.

We tend to forget that the typical nuclear family composed of married parents with their children continues to be the norm in Canada. The figures might be decreasing but they still represent 52 per cent of all families, according to the Vanier Institute.

As the mass media concentrate on the trials and tribulations faced by families, the life of a two-parent nuclear family is often taken for granted.

Yet one easily forgets that today's family must cope with a host of external influences and the social, economic and psychological upheaval encountered in contemporary life.

• (1800)

The nuclear family has a relatively short history in our society. Its model was forged in Victorian England when the upper middle class women could afford to stay at home to raise their children while other families looked up in envy.