

*Adjournment Debate*

time cutting back on clerks and stenographers and program officers who make the department work?

I asked the question on April 29 in good faith. I was asked to do so by both veterans and employees. They deserve an answer. We all agree that a program should be maintained but Canadians have come to learn that the words spoken by members of this government are often very hollow.

The answer I got effectively did not do what I wanted it to do. I ask the parliamentary secretary: What are the plans for veterans programs and what are the plans for employees of the department? I am sure the parliamentary secretary will stand in this House and assure us that neither programs for the veterans nor jobs in the department are in jeopardy.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to remind Canadians that our veterans have the most generous package of services and benefits of any veterans in the world, and to assure them that our veterans will continue to receive these programs and services. In fact, the proof can be found in our Main Estimates for this year. We have a record budget of \$2.2 billion, which is \$77 million higher than last year's budget. Despite strenuous efforts to eliminate wasteful spending and improve the efficiency of departmental administration, we are still committed to serving our veterans, as evidenced by our increased budget.

We are continually seeking ways in which to improve our services to veterans. For instance, at the end of this month we will begin implementing changes to the pension process which are designed to reduce, by as much as four months, the time necessary to rule on an initial pension application. I am grateful to the hon. member for giving me the opportunity to remind the House of this recent initiative.

However, I regret that he continues to alarm employees of Veterans Affairs, many of whom are his constituents. I know how important the Veterans Affairs headquarters are to the economy of Charlottetown and Prince Edward Island. I take this opportunity to repeat to

the hon. member that his claim that 400 headquarters jobs will be cut is simply not correct.

[*English*]

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I was dissatisfied with an answer provided to me by the government about violence against women.

I asked why the government was spending millions of dollars on research about violence against women while cutting back on shelters for battered women and women's organizations.

The research is telling the government that the problem is even more serious than it would admit. Yet it continues to cap billions of dollars in federal funds to the Canada Assistance Plan which funds shelters for battered women in addition to child care, social assistance and other programs. What is the point of putting millions of dollars into research when it takes billions of dollars out of much needed programs?

The minister answered that the panel on violence against women is necessary and is doing good work. If that is so, why has the government chosen to ignore the immediate challenges for action outlined in the panel's preliminary report?

• (1805)

Many of these immediate challenges such as mandatory violence prevention and education at every level of schooling and for judges and professionals are remarkably similar to the June 1991 report of the House of Commons Subcommittee on the Status of Women report *War Against Women*. Those recommendations have still not been implemented.

The minister answered that we should give credit for the work women have done over 20 years and the advancements we have made, and we should not be shouting at each other over these issues. Women do deserve credit for years of unsupported and poorly supported work in crisis centres and shelters. They have put this issue on the public agenda and now the government has punished women's organizations with deep and drastic cuts.

Her government has chosen, led by the member for Vancouver Centre, to spend almost \$6 billion on 50 military helicopters while cutting shelters to battered