

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, May 13, 1985

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S.O. 62—CANADIAN WOMEN

**Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam)** moved:

That this House, recognizing the continuing economic inequality of Canadian Women, demands that the government incorporate into its forthcoming budget the following initiatives, the:

1. reform of the tax system rather than the introduction of further public spending cuts which impact most adversely on women;
2. provision of job creation and training programs targeted to women, and funding sufficient to enable the Canadian Human Rights Commission to enforce equal pay for work of equal value legislation, and develop an effective enforcement mechanism for affirmative action programs;
3. provision of more transition houses and services for women and children who are victims of family violence; and
4. provision of increased funding to ensure access to quality daycare to meet the urgent needs of Canadian parents and children.

She said: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that we should have this motion today because, quite coincidentally, today is the day of the annual general meeting of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. Indeed, we in the New Democratic Party have just come from our meeting with representatives of the National Action Committee.

As Members of the House know, this is a voluntary umbrella organization of 370 women's groups representing over 3 million Canadian women. Their particular concern this year is the continuing economic inequality of women. Indeed, their weekend debates, although covering a number of subjects, did centre on this issue. They called their meeting a Canadian women's economic summit.

● (1110)

One would have hoped that after the Leaders' debates on women's issues, and above all on women's inequality, which were held last summer and after the commitment then made by the Progressive Conservative Party which now forms the Government to taking strong initiatives in removing the economic inequality of women and indeed all the other inequalities that women continue to face in Canadian society, we would have seen more action taken than has been taken. The Government can, however, redeem itself in the forthcoming

Budget and indeed it is in the context of the forthcoming Budget that this motion was moved.

Dealing with the specific area of economic inequality, we can look at job creation, job training and job security. In each of those three areas, we see that the Government has not in fact lived up to its promise of giving equal access to women. Dealing with job creation, for example, the Government has allowed for expenditures of \$2.2 billion, only 5 per cent of which is targeted toward helping women and in fact toward helping women and youth. That is only \$125 million out of \$2.2 billion targeted to women and youth.

Regarding the Challenge '85 summer employment program for students, there is no affirmative action requirement that approximately half of that program's funds should go toward job creation for women students. Indeed, when my colleague, the Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Ms. Mitchell), questioned the Minister of State for Youth (Mrs. Champagne) on March 5 of this year regarding why a specific affirmative action plan for women was not embodied in the summer employment program, the Minister of State for Youth replied by saying the following:

—when we were working on "Challenge '85", that there was no need for a quota, that women, young Canadian women would themselves seek their due and take the necessary step to obtain their full share of available summer employment.

That is a revelation on the part of the Minister, and indeed on the part of the Government as I expect she does speak for the Government, indicating that there are no barriers to women seeking employment in either the Challenge '85 program or elsewhere and indicating that women started at the same starting gate as men. I had thought that the outcome of the Leaders' debate and other activities which took place last year would have told the Conservative Government that there is not equal opportunity for women and that women do not start at the same starting gate but start well behind. We have documented that time and time again. If, as the Minister was suggesting we do, we simply let nature take its course, women will not have anything like the same number of jobs from any job-creation program. In other words, there has to be affirmative action to ensure that they will be fairly and equally represented in job-creation programs.

The area of job training is the second area in my initial triad of areas of job creation, job training and job security. The Government did in fact end very arbitrarily the program called "Women Into Non-traditional Occupations". Perhaps it was not a very effective program but it was the beginning of the encouragement of women through apprenticeships in non-traditional occupations, and that program was cut last December. Is there going to be anything in the Budget which will once