

If we are going to address unwanted pregnancies we need to deal with the sexual abuse of young children. What are the results if we do not deal with these things? The results, as we are seeing now, are 66,000 abortions a year. The cost is not only money but tremendous agony.

We are seeing again young women dropping out of school, living lives of poverty, and damaging their health.

It is a straight case of gender discrimination if we do not deal with preventing unwanted pregnancies because boys do not get pregnant. Boys can walk away from an unwanted pregnancy. It is the young women who bear the economic, social and health costs. The cost is their future.

We only repeat that cycle when we have children having children and trying to raise them. It is not surprising that we still have trouble dealing with this as a public policy issue. Believe it or not, it was barely 20 years ago that it became legal in this country to sell or even distribute information on contraception. If we had an AIDS epidemic 22 years ago you would not have been able to walk into a drugstore to buy a condom.

It is not surprising that we still have trouble dealing with what our public policy should be on pregnancy planning and on family planning. Health plans in a number of our provinces do not even cover the cost of contraceptives, yet we wonder why we have unwanted pregnancies.

We need to talk about prevention. Yet, there is a cutback in funding to provincial programs that deal with issues of poverty and issues affecting the young women I have talked about.

We have fiscal restraint in health and welfare resulting in cutbacks in the kinds of programs the hon. member just spoke about. In fact, we are cutting back on preventing drinking and driving. We are cutting back on preventing alcoholism. That is because of cutbacks in both funding and people in that department.

These preventive programs are being sacrificed. We are cutting back on employment programs in the summer, which is one of the reasons some of the young people I talk about are able to return to school in the fall. Without the summer employment programs, they never go back to school.

### *Private Members' Business*

Finally I want to talk briefly about letters I have written to the several Ministers of National Health and Welfare asking: "Why is there not research on contraception?" We set up a Drug Prices Review Board that is supposed to monitor drug prices and how companies that have received new protection for their profits spend their research dollars.

Yet, the Minister of National Health and Welfare is not interested in why that money is not being spent on research into contraception and pregnancy prevention.

We owe our children information. We owe them knowledge. We owe them programs. We owe these especially to our young women to make them feel like worth-while human beings independent of their sexuality. We need to make them independent of the need to become sexually active just to feel like a decent human being.

We need to address those kinds of issues as we talk about programs to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

I hope the House will endorse this motion. Hopefully it will start us on a program to allow more of our young people to lead their lives fully and completely without unwanted pregnancies.

**Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound—Muskoka):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak briefly on this very important matter.

In the area of teenage pregnancies, the government has taken a comprehensive approach to sexual and reproductive health. We address concerns of this nature through programs that promote responsible decision making and responsible sexual behaviour. The government agrees that there is a need for action to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancies in Canada.

We know that some teenagers begin sexual activity at a young age. According to the Canadian Youth and AIDS study, one in five 14-year-olds and one in two 16-year-olds said they had sexual intercourse at least once.

In 1987, 36,000 Canadian teenagers became pregnant. This is too large a number of teens who have become pregnant before they are socially, economically, physically and emotionally prepared. The negative effects of early parenthood have been well documented and may have serious adverse consequences for the teenagers