

*Adjournment Debate*

Finally, almost half of all poor families in this region has a household maintainer who has not completed high school.

That is why I wanted to bring this issue to the attention of the government so that we can implement some action plan by the year 2000 to eliminate child poverty.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jim Edwards (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Ottawa Centre has suggested that the proposed child tax benefit will make families on welfare worse off. This is not true.

In addition to thousands of dollars per child in social assistance benefits, families on welfare will continue to receive at least the same level of federal child benefits under the child tax benefit as they are now receiving under the current system.

Some families on social assistance will receive higher benefits if they have three or more children, or more than \$3,750 in annual earnings.

Families on welfare will also gain from having their full child benefits paid monthly. For example, in January 1993 their monthly child benefit payments will more than double from the current \$35 per child to at least \$85 per child. Since the child tax benefit will be paid in a timely matter, welfare mothers will no longer need to sacrifice benefits to tax discounters.

The hon. member has also suggested that the government does not care about child poverty because the child tax benefit is indexed to changes in prices in excess of 3 per cent.

The child tax benefit is being automatically indexed in the same way as the rest of the tax system. I would like to point out that this new benefit will automatically increase total federal assistance to children by \$2.1 billion over the next five years. In addition to this automatic increase of \$2.1 billion in child assistance, the government is committed to reviewing child benefits over time and further increasing payments as fiscal conditions permit.

The hon. member conveniently ignores the fact that since 1985 the government has demonstrated its commitment to helping children by enriching the refundable child tax credit five times. These enrichments have

ensured that the average level of federal child benefits paid to low-income families has more than kept pace with inflation.

[*English*]

Madam Speaker, in conclusion I would like to associate myself with the salutations to yourself, to the Table Officers, and to the pages who have served us so well this season.

**Mr. Harb:** Madam Speaker, having listened to my colleague with his eloquent French I would like to take such an—

[*Translation*]

—opportunity to congratulate him for his very good French. This is extraordinary.

On behalf of my colleagues, I wish you a good holiday. I congratulate you, as well as all the people who have helped you.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** I thank the hon. member. Pursuant to Standing Order 38(5), the motion that this House do now adjourn is deemed adopted.

However, I would also like to thank all those who are with us here, and particularly the young people who may be spending their last day in the House of Commons.

[*English*]

Despite all the work you had to do while studying and having exams and so on I do hope that you enjoyed your stay in the House of Commons as much as I and each and everyone of my colleagues appreciated your work at each and every moment.

Have a nice summer and good luck in your careers, whatever you choose to be. Hopefully, one or two of you may come back to the House. I hope you did not find it that bad after all.

[*Translation*]

Since this is June 23, I want to take this opportunity to wish all Quebecers a happy Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, and Canadians from the Atlantic to the Pacific to the Arctic, a happy Canada Day.

It being 6.37 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday, September 21, 1992, at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Orders 24(1) and 28(2). I wish a good summer to everyone.

The House adjourned at 6.37 p.m.