

Supply

which the Minister talked about that was the issue of retraining. The problem today for women in large measure is a retraining problem, but at 15 years of age we are not talking about retraining, we are talking about initial training. At 25, 35, 45 and 55 years of age we are talking about retraining, and we heard no new announcements about retraining today. We have some token programs out there but that is what they are, token programs. There is no sincere, large-scale effort on behalf of the federal Government to provide retraining for women. That is the reality.

Now, Mr. Speaker, recommendations in that area were made by an all-Party task force back in September, 1981. The report of the Work For Tomorrow Task Force brought to the attention of this Parliament that there was a problem and something needed to be done about it. However, when you look at the budget of the Minister of Finance which followed soon thereafter, there was nothing in it which told us the Government paid any attention to any of the recommendations. The record of this Government is to fund a study, a report, and now we have the referral of that report to Donald Macdonald for three years at \$800 a day so he can read it.

Mr. Kilgour: He has to eat.

Mr. Hawkes: Yes, the man has to eat. What about pensions for widows, Mr. Speaker?

This morning the Minister responsible for the status of women stood in the House and quoted some remarks of the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands which dealt with spouse's allowance. If you read that very closely, the Minister was talking about the spousal deduction in the income tax system, and she was reading a speech of the Hon. Member for Kingston and The Islands who was speaking about spousal allowance. It is time the Minister learned the difference between an income tax deduction and the spousal allowance. The spousal allowance is something which goes to women between the ages of 60 and 65 because their husbands are 65 years of age and over. The converse can be true. It provides income support to married couples when one of the partners has hit the age of 65 and the other has not. That is what the spousal allowance is all about. That is what the Hon. Member was talking about. We have a Minister responsible for the status of women who does not understand that very basic, universal program and the difference between it and income tax deductions. There is a massive difference, Mr. Speaker, and after two years it is time that the Minister learned the difference.

This is a good time, Mr. Speaker, to remind Members of the House that the Clark Government, in its brief nine months in office, took that spousal allowance and put it into the law of this country so that if the older spouse dies, the younger spouse still gets the allowance. That was an achievement on behalf of women, indeed on behalf of all Canadians. It was an action which was promised, and it was an action which was taken.

I see you rising, Mr. Speaker, so may I just conclude by asking Members opposite to look at what their Ministers have done with planned parenthood. There are two female persons

in the Cabinet, only two out of some 30-odd. Look at what your own Ministers do; be critical of what your Ministers do. If you truly believe in equality, we have a long way to go and no Member of this Chamber should be proud of the progress we have made to this point. We should not be proud, we should be ashamed.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Tardif: Could the Hon. Member tell this House whether he is aware of the amount paid to the National Action Committee, and if not, whether he feels that \$191,000 is something considered marginal?

Mr. Hawkes: If the Government did listen to the Council, that money will be of benefit to women, but in this case the Government did not listen to the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. That was so much money wasted.

Mr. Cyr: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to ask a question from the Hon. Member who just resumed his seat. In his statement, he suggested the Hon. Minister was making pretty nice speeches but that the Government never took any action either on them or on representations made by various committees that have been meeting these last few years. Is the Hon. Member aware that in the Department of Employment and Immigration, there are programs that have been introduced in recent years? I will list a few that are known as—

[*English*]

—the Women's Employment Counselling Centre, the Outreach Programs, wage incentives to the private sector for non-traditional job training, institutional training incentives, and Affirmative Action Programs in the Public Service.

[*Translation*]

It is the responsibility of the Canadian Government to look after on-the-job training, or post-university training. In his speech, the Hon. Member has apparently suggested that the Canadian Government should call on community colleges and universities in order to dictate to the provinces what kind of courses they should give women so they could later on be accepted in the work force and find employment. He also referred in his speech to the new Constitution adopted last year, right here in Canada, as enacted by this House and Parliament. Is the Hon. Member not satisfied with the training programs we put forward? Is he suggesting we should amend the Canadian Constitution in order that we might then dictate to the provinces what courses should be given in universities and colleges?

• (1600)

[*English*]

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, I think it is about time the Liberal Government began to respect the Constitution of Canada. That would be a big improvement. That is the first thing.

Second, I appreciate the comments of the Hon. Member. I can tell him he has been doing an excellent job of reading the