

and the Republicans in the United States Congress put forward a tax reform which raises corporate taxation in that country by \$120 billion while reducing personal tax rates. We could have that kind of fair tax reform in Canada as well.

We need a commitment for a real war on poverty to wipe it out of Canada before the end of the century. We need a commitment for action rather than just studies and speeches to stop the needless concentration of the business sector which has put so much of the wealth of the country in the hands of a handful of irresponsible corporate families.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, we need a firm commitment concerning the economic equality of women in this country; more than sheer rhetoric, more than toothless legislation which will do precious little to improve the condition of working women, we need a commitment supported by Canadian legislation so that women in this country will indeed achieve real equality.

[English]

I believe that we need to talk about genuine economic democracy. It is time that we abandoned 19th century ways of organizing the workplace and conducting relations between management or employers and employees. When I talk to working people I ask them whether their employers tell them what is going on, whether they know the situation of their enterprise, firm or government Department. I ask whether they are given responsibility, whether decisions are shared in their workplace. Overwhelmingly the response is no. We are moving into the 21st century, yet businesses in Canada are still being run as though this was the 19th century.

We are in a very difficult competitive situation, not only with our friends in the United States, but with Japan, Taiwan, Korea and every other country. We have to act now to involve the abilities, the brainpower, the ingenuity and the commitment of every Canadian in that competitive battle to keep standards of living high in this country, to achieve the other priorities that I have talked about and to ensure that we have democracy, and not only in our social and political lives. By curbing the power of big business and the concentration of power we give power back to the men and women who make Canada great. That commitment in economic democracy is extremely important.

I would like to conclude by saying that there is an opportunity for another amendment to the Throne Speech. A number of themes that I have put forward are shared with me by my Party. That is why I wish to move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap (Mr. Riis), that the following be added to the address:

That this House regrets that the Government has failed to provide leadership on major issues of social justice affecting average Canadians including the need for action to provide greater protection for battered women, a commitment to legislate pro-rated benefits for part-time workers, the majority of whom are women, a refusal to establish and work towards lower unemployment targets for Canadians, and the failure to pursue a serious tax reform that would eliminate the unfairness, the complexity and unaccountability of the present system.

The Address—Mr. Cassidy

I ask all Hon. Members to support me in adding this amendment to the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne which represents priorities which we feel cannot be shoved aside until 1988 or 1990 but must be addressed now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will reserve for a few moments my decision as to the acceptability of the amendment. I will recognize the Hon. Member for Don Valley East (Mr. Attewell) for questions or comments.

Mr. Attewell: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a few of the points that the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) brought up. He knows that Throne Speeches are always thematic in nature. They cannot be entirely specific. I hope he realizes that. I am very proud of the very progressive statements contained in the Throne Speech. I would like to recount a few things that have occurred which I think will be at variance with several things the Hon. Member said.

Tax reform is long overdue in this country. The Government is going to tackle some of the specific issues the Member spoke of with regard to fairness. I hope we can reduce the tax brackets. I know that we can wipe out some of the inequalities which have occurred. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) has already taken great strides in that. However that is not something that we could be very specific about in the Throne Speech.

Great strides are needed in this direction, but this is not simple. I am not sure what the exact strategy will be. It may occur in two phases. However, there is a very strong commitment on this side of the House to deliver for average Canadians. There will be a shift in the burden of taxation away from individuals and toward corporations. Major steps have already been taken to shut down some of the loopholes.

With regard to new regulatory reforms for the financial institutions, the Member has served as an alternate on the Finance Committee and knows that a very comprehensive review has already been done by the Finance and Economic Affairs Committee. I am sure that in the near future we will see some most progressive reforms in that area.

Corporate concentration is a topic on which I have spoken on a number of occasions. I share some of the Hon. Member's concerns, but I do not share his pessimism with regard to what the Government will do. The Member knows that not many months ago we brought in a new competition law which had been waiting for decades to be introduced. There is a tribunal now in place that would take care of excessive decisions that would limit competition in the market-place.

● (1230)

I give the Hon. Member some credit and share his view that we will need to go further as a Government because there are some 32 families in this country who control an enormous amount of wealth and we need a structure in place so that it is not abused.