

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 4, 1972

The House met at 2 p.m.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### STATUS OF WOMEN

#### TABLING OF PROGRESS REPORT ON ROYAL COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS—STATEMENT BY MINISTER

**Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 41(2) I would like to table two documents, one in English and one in French, which in reality are progress reports on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women.

When the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women was tabled in the House in 1970 there was much to be done in creating equal opportunities for and removing discrimination against women in Canadian society. The government set up an interdepartmental committee on the status of women to analyse the recommendations of the royal commission and to determine the best ways that the government should proceed with these recommendations. Mrs. Freda L. Paltiel was seconded from the Department of National Health and Welfare to be co-ordinator of the committee. This interdepartmental committee was composed of representatives from various departments and agencies. Its report was submitted to me in December, 1971. The report of the royal commission consisted of 167 recommendations, many of them falling under the jurisdiction of the federal government, some falling under the jurisdiction of the provincial governments, some joint federal and provincial and others under the jurisdiction of business and industry.

• (1410)

The federal government has taken significant action both administratively and legislatively with regard to the recommendations under its sole jurisdiction and in doing so has played a more important role in leadership. In the Status of Women in Canada 1972 booklet, reference is made to the work done by the federal government. But our work cannot stop with our many accomplishments. We must make more and more significant advances until every man and woman in this country will have equal opportunities in every field of endeavour. The booklet I am tabling is a signpost but not a resting place and we must continue to work together as Members of Parliament and as Canadians to ensure equality for all in our country.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to draw your attention to some of the highlights of the report.

The Canada Labour (Standards) Code has attempted to remove discrimination in employment. The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labour has provided an invaluable service to women who work.

The Unemployment Insurance Act provided universal-ity as well as better protection to women in the work force. The government has provided maternity leave under the Canada Labour (Standards) Code and maternity benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act.

A new family planning division has been set up in the Department of National Health and Welfare to co-ordinate federal endeavours in the field of planned parenthood.

National Health and Welfare, Treasury Board, the Solicitor General and Manpower and Immigration have created senior positions for women in their departments to give advice on programs and activities with regard to women in their mandates.

The Local Initiatives Program, among other accomplishments, has established approximately 90 day-care centres across Canada. Child care allowances are now a deductible expense under the Income Tax Act.

The bill to amend the Adult Occupational Training Act which received first reading last week in the House of Commons will provide women who have worked one year at any time in their lives the opportunity to receive training as well as training allowances for the first time.

An equal employment opportunity office has been set up in the Public Service.

The cabinet has issued directive No. 44 directing deputy ministers to take steps to encourage the assignment and advancement of more women into middle and upper echelon positions.

The Family Income Security Plan, which has now passed second reading in the House of Commons, would provide increases in benefits to low-income families and assist sole support mothers.

The government has also paid special attention to the needs of native women in its supportive training programs and leadership development.

Major grants have been given to planned parenthood federation of Canada and Serena.

The federal government has also recently helped finance the Strategy for Change conference involving women's organizations from across Canada.

Women's groups across Canada, studying the report, have received, when needed, financial support.

The government actively continues to seek out competent women for appointments to boards, commissions, judgeships and other senior posts.