

I wonder if there is a short comment from my colleague on that matter.

Mr. Karpoff: Mr. Speaker, the question is very appropriate to those of us in Surrey where we have experienced what happens when there is privatization of post offices.

We had a Shoppers Drug Mart that had a postal service in it. Some of the women had worked there for up to 11 years. They were earning \$9 an hour. It was not much, but was better than \$5 an hour. A new owner took over and disregarded these women who had worked there for up to 11 years. He said they would have to take an across the board cut in wages. Their hours would be controlled so that long-term people would only get part-time work, and friends of the owner would be brought in to work the other hours.

These women organized and went on strike. To teach these women a lesson and make sure other postal outlets did not organize, the drug store company left them out on strike for nine years. It finally closed the entire branch of the drug store in order to ensure that women did not gain the fundamental right of free collective bargaining within the postal service.

That is going on repeatedly across this country.

I would agree with my hon. colleague. If we are really going to protect the rights of women, we have to protect their fundamental right to free collective bargaining and adequate wages.

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, it is not hard to stand in this House to support its resolution condemning the government for its failure to protect and promote fundamental rights of Canadian women, especially as reflected in the 1992 budget.

If this government intended to enable women in this country to have the rights and protection they are entitled to, and be able to pursue opportunities of employment they are entitled to, it would develop a plan which would ensure this would happen.

That plan would ensure there was an adequate child care system across this country so that women who are raising their children would have the opportunity to put

Supply

them in accessible, quality child care over which they would have some control, so they could then explore opportunities in the work place.

In 1988 in this House, the Prime Minister recognized the importance of child care in this regard. He said that one of the most important factors contributing to the persistent and persisting inequality of women in this country is the lack of affordable, flexible, quality child care.

He said later on that same day in August 1988 that by creating an additional 200,000 quality child care spaces, many more mothers will have the opportunity to participate in the labour force. Yet what does this government do in this budget? Does it even make the pretence of saying it is still interested in child care? Does it even begin the process of implementing the national child care strategy in Canada as promised in 1984, so women can take their rightful and full place in the work place?

In this budget, the government finally said what most of us have known for a long time. It has no intention of introducing a national, quality, accessible, affordable child care program. Indeed, the Minister of National Health and Welfare responsible for this program acknowledged in this House: "I have the privilege to be the killer of child care". He is not the builder of child care.

We have a long-term commitment on the part of this government from 1984 to introduce a child care program which everyone, including the government from time to time, recognizes is critical to the enhancement of the rights of women in Canada.

The final death knell from this government regarding child care has received the sort of criticism you would expect from across this country. One child care worker in the city of Vancouver said: "This announcement does not surprise me at all. It frustrates me to no end that the Tories just do not understand what is really happening to children and families in this country."

A single mother with a 4-year old child from Winnipeg said: "I guess it really does not care. If it was concerned about children, it would be doing something to help us."

The director of the Manitoba Child Care Association said: "Now we know exactly where it stands. It chooses not to support working women."