

That notwithstanding any order of the House, that any recorded division to be taken today during Private Members' Business be deferred until Tuesday, March 21 at 5.30 p.m.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—ECONOMIC EQUALITY OF WOMEN

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ)** moved:

That this House denounce the government for its insensitivity and its inaction regarding the adoption of concrete measures to promote the economic equality of woman in federal areas of jurisdiction.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour today of tabling a motion regarding an issue related to International Women's Day.

In my opinion, the motion is urgent, given the government's recent actions. The motion is as follows: "That this House denounce the government for its insensitivity and its inaction regarding the adoption of concrete measures to promote the economic equality of women in federal areas of jurisdiction".

I would have preferred not to have to table such a motion before this House, but its goal is to make my colleagues and Canadians and Quebecers aware that Liberal decision-makers have failed to act on the fine words bandied about within these four walls.

A year ago, I tabled my first motion on the issue, which stated that, firstly, it was important to recognize the principle of economic equality between women and men, and, secondly, that measures must be implemented to guarantee equity in employment, wages and living conditions for women. It was most unusual and remarkable, but government members supported the official opposition's motion.

However, I must admit that they stopped at the first part of the motion and have never gone on to the second. How else can the current situation be explained with the same people in play? How else can we explain the decisions recently taken by this government which purports to be concerned with the economic inequality of women?

How else can we explain the decision to go ahead with the cuts to grants for women's rights organizations which were announced by the previous government? All the while, the Minister of Finance tried to reassure us regarding this issue and, just before the last budget, stated that his government was fully aware of the issue, that

### Supply

the last budget proved it and that the government intended to prove it again in the next.

I recall that the minister then mentioned the important role that organizations play in promoting women's rights and in improving their living conditions.

How can we explain that, in two weeks, the government will cut funding to the initiative against domestic violence, which finances pilot projects, research, public awareness and education campaigns, etc.?

• (1030)

And yet, the Secretary of State declared last March 3: "Violence against women, sexual harassment, inequalities and inequities in employment opportunities, the wage imbalance and gender discrimination must all be addressed. I am pleased the government is continuing to push forward on all these fronts".

Everyone knows that unfortunately little progress can be made without money. How else can we explain the government's policy of tying financial compensation due a woman to her husband's income? Both these trends are obvious in the proposed unemployment insurance and old age pension reforms. And yet, the Minister of Human Resources Development stated last October: "We are putting forward major proposals concerning the problem of family work and the manner in which part-time workers, the majority of whom are women, can be given a certain degree of protection with respect to unemployment insurance and other income security programs".

Since when is a woman's economic equality acquired through dependence on her husband? Women do not accept this approach, nor should they. What explanation is there for the complete absence of references to child care services in the last budget, when the same minister stated on that same date that in the green paper consideration was being given to major child care programs and a national strategy, requiring funding amounting to some 700 million dollars. Where are the budgets needed to create new day care spaces, where are the transfers Quebec is calling for in order to develop its own network? Why is there no interest in finally resolving the thorny issue of pay equity in the public service, when this issue has languished before the courts for several years now, depriving thousands of women of money that is rightfully theirs?

And yet, the President of the Treasury Board said last June: "As an employer we are concerned about pay equity. We would like to resolve this problem as quickly as possible, in order to cut short the long drawn out legal proceeding instituted by the preceding government". Noble words! How does this explain the offensive transfer carried out by the Minister of Finance onto the backs of the provinces, the inevitable result of which will be