

Private Members' Business

There is considerable irony in the fact that here today the Liberal member is calling for a national child day. However, when pushed to put into action those policies that truly benefit children, we find the Liberals lacking and in fact, doing just the opposite to what this bill is all about.

I listened to a member from the Liberal benches on an open-line show in British Columbia. He talked about economic policies that would create even worse situations for children currently living in poverty.

On Monday, September 25, 1989, I introduced a private member's motion concerning a suggested child protection commission. It read: "That in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of negotiating with the provinces to provide a comprehensive bill of rights for children which would standardize laws throughout the country and that this bill of rights include a child protection commission and an emergency hotline which children could contact in times of crisis".

People might be interested in knowing that the hon. member who sponsors this bill not only did not speak for

or against that private member's motion but in fact he could not make his way from the city of Ottawa to this Chamber to vote for it.

In addition, we have been told over and over that private members' business is non-partisan and should be non-partisan, that there should be a free vote. However, when we came into this House to vote on that private member's motion, the government Whip turned to his members. The government voted against a child protection commission and a children's bill of rights.

Again, I speak in favour of this bill. I am sure the hon. member and the member from Don Valley North both feel that what they are doing is going to help children. I hope they are right. But to have a child day without child policy and policy that will protect children is not going to solve the problems of children in this country.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being 3.23 o'clock p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday, March 22, at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 3.23 p.m.