is look at their social policy. As we remember, under Trudeau, they spoke of a just society, an extraordinary society. I think that today's Liberals put all that aside and are now worse than the Tories.

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, once again, it is with great pride that I rise during an opposition day totally dedicated to the situation of women, and more specifically their economic equality.

For the second consecutive year, the Bloc Quebecois, through the hon. member for Québec, tables a motion dealing exclusively with the situation of women. Special days like this one are essential, since they provide us with an opportunity to take a look at our place in society and, hopefully, further our cause.

Today's motion reads:

> 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.

First, I want to denounce a recent decision made by the Liberals which clearly shows the relevancy of our motion. I am referring to the merging, as of April 1st, of three women organizations. Indeed, the Secretary of State for the Status of Women announced that she will lump together the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the womens' programs of the Department of Human Resources Development, as well as Status of Women Canada.

That announcement made by a woman is very disappointing. It clearly shows a lack of seriousness and respect for women. The secretary of state should be ashamed and go into hiding for making that decision.

By grouping these services under Status of Women Canada, the Liberal government abolishes the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. This is yet another centralizing measure of the Liberals, who do not know any better.

By merging the CACSW, the government is depriving women of an independent organization which conducted research and promoted education for women, not for the government. The independence of the council was essential to allow it to fulfill its mandate. The council could exert pressure on the government. It could point a finger and denounce the government's inaction regarding the situation of women.

As of April 1st, this so–called Liberal government will have total control over that organization. Women will be gagged.

April 1 will be a sad day for women. I trust that Liberal women will stand up in turn to denounce this decision. Solidarity among women is much more crucial than solidarity at a political party level.

I will not say more about this anti–women decision.

As for unemployment, according to the February 1995 statistics, 642,000 women were unemployed in Canada, or 9.5 per cent. In Quebec, the rate was up to 11.6 per cent, or 187,000 women. There were also 280,082 women on welfare in Quebec.

What is the federal government doing to lower the unemployment rate among women? Nothing. It sits tight and puts its trust in the economic recovery. It has adopted a laissez faire strategy.

Where are the jobs that Liberals kept promising? Where are all the training and upgrading programs for women? Where are the services promoting women's presence in the labour market? None of these promises have been kept. The only measure touted by Liberals as contributing significantly to job creation is the infrastructure program which was to create 45,000 temporary jobs over a three year period.

• (1315)

The Liberals bragged about this so–called beneficial program. They said it would help men and women get back to work.

The results have been rather disappointing. Seasonal temporary jobs. This program only provided short–term jobs to people already in the labour force and did nothing to create new jobs for the unemployed.

This program completely ignored women on unemployment. Indeed, women's groups had asked the minister concerned to establish certain rules that would allow women to have access to some of these mostly non–traditional jobs.

To my knowledge, the minister did not grant what seemed to be a legitimate request.

Despite all the promises made by the Liberals, we still have women on unemployment, women who work for a while on some project or program, then go back on unemployment and end up on welfare. These women are caught in this vicious circle and will never be able to get out of this difficult situation for good.

The federal government is not helping women, worse, I really think it is harming them. The federal employment, training, upgrading and unemployment programs are not up–to–date, they are not flexible nor creative. The programs, services and conditions have been the same for years now, even though the labour market is constantly changing.

The results of this rigid system are terribly disappointing. Women cannot meet the needs of the labour market rapidly and effectively.

I would like to give you a very concrete example which demonstrates how inefficient the federal system is. A few months ago, I met in my riding office a woman who is a single parent living on a meagre $170 a week unemployment insurance benefit.