

Supply

part-time jobs and the Government must certainly deal with this problem.

As for planned parenthood, we learned three weeks ago that the Department of National Health and Welfare had closed down its Family Planning Division, with the result that we can no longer obtain any family planning information from the Department, which poses a threat to the funding of all planned parenthood clinics in Canada. We have to wonder about the decisions of the Government because we know that, while there is not even a birth rate plan for the country and teenage pregnancies pose a problem, there are no services available at this time, because if the Family Planning Division disappears, our young people as well as adults, but especially our young people, will be deprived of educational services, since the major problem is that of teenage pregnancies and absolutely nothing is being done about it.

Of course, I would also like to say a word about pensions for people between the ages of 60 and 64 other than widows or widowers. The Members opposite will tell us that 85,000 people receive the pension for widows and widowers in Canada. This is all very well, but the majority of people are separated, divorced or single. We know—

Mr. Speaker is telling me that I have only one minute left. I shall therefore complete my comments.

In conclusion, I would like to say that true economic equality for women will not be attained in three years or in 25 unless corrective action is taken immediately. Yet, the problem is not a lack of research. The Economic Council of Canada has just published the proceedings of a seminar on the economic status of women in the labour force called *For a Fair Share*. If the Progressive Conservative Party does not change its attitude towards women, 52 per cent of our population might lose patience.

● (1610)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Questions and comments. The Deputy Whip and Hon. Member for Gatineau (Mrs. Mailly).

Mrs. Mailly: Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to remind the Hon. Member for Outremont (Mrs. Pépin) of the past but since she is doing it herself and seems delighted to do so, I must stand up and speak out as well. I think that the Hon. Member for Outremont was involved in the issue of the status of women because of the Axworthy case, when the minister responsible for the status of women in the former government told women who wanted equality that they had better postpone their intervention on the Constitution and the Charter of Rights so as not to undermine the political standing of his party. I had the privilege, Mr. Speaker, to attend that conference and . . . I see some other women across the way who were also present . . . and fortunately, in spite of the fact that the previous Liberal minister wanted to establish priorities that were not in line with those of Canadian women, we still have been able to do our job.

As a second reminder of the past, since she is pleased about it again, the federal Government has imposed its will on the provinces, it argued with them, did not respect their independence and their responsibilities and their rights, though they represent the Canadian citizens as much as the federal Government; because of this lack of respect for another level of government, progress has been slowed down on many issues, including women's issues. The Hon. Member, for instance, refers to the amended legislation on the rights of native people saying that despite the efforts of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Crombie), the children of some native women who will at last be equal under the law will not recover their rights. But she forgets to indicate that this responsibility falls upon the Native Nations themselves and not the Government. Those nations will decide what the status of people living on Indian reserves will be.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to point out those inconsistencies and oversights, some of which are certainly unintentional. Moreover, I wish to refer to another inconsistency. The Hon. Member said that the Minister had got his fingers burnt when he met with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and vice versa. She should make up her mind. Well, if it is so, it is because something has changed. I also want to remind her, since she has reminded us that amendments to the Divorce Act were brought about in part by the previous administration, although most of the new provisions are very different from the old ones, I want to remind her that it is the Clark Government which, in 1979, introduced the new concept of spouse's allowances and that this government quickly moved, after its election, to extend this benefit to widows and widowers between 60 and 64 years of age. We would certainly want to give much more to all the elderly poor, but it is a spouse's allowance. It would amount to extend family allowances to older people because they are poor. Our programs must be consistent.

Second, the previous administration had not earmarked any funds for the elderly, so that we had to establish a fund in an attempt to offer at least this allowance.

Therefore, I wish that in her passionate effort to defend the achievements of the previous administration, the Hon. Member really remembers where all these things came from. Mr. Speaker, I also want to ask her whether when she was appointed to the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, she found the job more pleasant than Mrs. Doris Anderson did when she was there.

Mrs. Pépin: I welcome this opportunity to reply to my colleague because I feel that anyone who indulges in personalities at this time cannot have much to say for women. We are here to pass legislation on women's issues, not to make personal remarks on each and every one of us. However, I am very happy to tell you that, as regards Section 15 of the Charter of Rights, I can still claim that we worked very hard at that time to have it adopted, and the Council played a very important role. The Council is also responsible for having Section 28 passed and for organizing all provincial and women's groups so that pressure could be brought to bear on all three parties.