

*Supply*

sharp directional change in employment strategies will guarantee the women of this country the economic security necessary for individuals to find their balance, for families to be healthy, and for people to enjoy respect. This government has its work cut out, but it remains to be seen if it will have the courage to get down to business.

**Hon. Sheila Finestone (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to add a few comments and make some observations. First, it is not the credibility of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women which is being questioned here, but the operating costs, the duplication costs. We are talking about a third of the budget being used for three full time employees, the president and two vice-presidents, and some thirty former part-time employees appointed by order in council. I must say that one third is too much. For the rest of the money that we will keep, that the Canadian Council will keep, we will make a review and consult women to determine how to put that money to good use. I believe this is a better way to ensure that many of the questions you raised on certain points, some important questions, will get at least a technical answer. That is another story.

To conclude on your colleague's speech on health issues, my other mandate, that of multiculturalism, has showed me that we should deal with that shameful and hateful issue of genital organs mutilation through education and not only through a judicial and criminal approach. It is through education that we can reach multicultural groups and various ethnic communities and start an information process. We are making a film on that subject for doctors, nurses, families and centres, and I hope this will also help.

Finally, I would like to bring to your attention the fact that it is not the Advisory Council which studied the issues and data on violence which you mentioned several times in your comments. That research was done by a group on violence appointed and paid by the government. It is also Statistics Canada which conducted a comprehensive research effort, known world-wide, and studied the treatment of women in the context of criminal law. These are the people who brought that to our attention.

• (1630)

And it is I, as the minister for the Status of Women, who brought these data here, with my team. Do not create confusion for society at large. What was the role of the Advisory Council on the status of women? What is the role of the status of women, which I am in charge of? What are the roles of various groups in society at large?

I think that some answers to these questions could clarify things a little bit, so that we will know that equality of women will finally be coming. We know that a strong economy and the participation of women are the key to their independence. That

independence is very important. Do you not think that, in the future, if we cannot be treated as equals, if we do not have the right to equal salaries, if we do not have the chance to be equal in society, we could be the victims of violence?

**Mrs. Dalphond-Guiral:** Madam Speaker, I just want to direct a comment to the hon. secretary of state. She talks about very high administration costs, saying that some women were paid outrageous salaries. When will highly paid men see their positions cut, too?

We are talking about education and communications. Since the hon. secretary of state maintains that the council's credibility was recognized, I wonder if the members of the Council on the Status of Women were consulted on the best way to review the overall handling of women's issues.

Women are being short-changed, in terms of equality. In the 1994 budget, there was the whole infrastructure program. I would like to know how many women got jobs in connection with the infrastructure program? And, if some of them did, it would still have been part time jobs.

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for supporting my motion and for giving us an overview of the various areas in which the government is being criticized for its inaction. As far as day care centres are concerned, Quebec receives \$35,000; and day care needs in Canada are said to amount to \$2 million. As far as pay equity is concerned, women earn 72 per cent of what men earn.

I thank my colleague, and I would like to ask her if she agrees with the hon. secretary of state's comments during this week's budget debate. She said that—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** I am sorry to interrupt. The time is up, but I will give you 30 seconds to answer.

**Mrs. Dalphond-Guiral:** Madam Speaker, I have a slight problem. She said that—Not having heard the end, I cannot answer. Since you wanted to give me the time to respond, please allow her to complete her sentence.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** I would like to give the hon. member for Québec a short explanation on what is happening, because I see that she was slightly annoyed. When a member of the opposition has the floor, I must also give the other parties the opportunity to respond. If none of them rises to ask a question, I can recognize one of your colleagues.

Resuming debate.

**Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to start by commending the hon. member for Québec for giving the elected members of this House an opportunity to debate a most important and relevant issue, in my opinion.