

Status of Women

Has he made self-righteous, patronizing speeches? Has he patted women on the back and used them as pawns in this House of Commons? No, he has not; he has worked for them.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Appolloni: Far be it from me to enter into the empty rhetoric which has assailed my ears today. I want to prove how this minister has worked for the status of women.

This is a time when we are cutting back. The Tories are the first to tell us about the desperate financial state we are in and about our dreadful deficit. Hon. members opposite should not deny this. They tell us. What does the minister responsible for the status of women do at this time of financial restraint? He increases from \$700,000 to \$1.2 million the amount spent on women's programs to promote the status of women. That is an increase of 70 per cent in, I repeat, a time of cutbacks. The minister supports the Canadian national association of sexual assault centres and its annual conference to discuss sexual assault legislation. The list is long. I could go on, but I want to stop on that point.

Mr. Nielsen: Please do.

Mrs. Appolloni: This minister has not only shown interest in the status of women in Canada but, by his own initiative and forcefulness, he has also pinpointed one of the main problems of women, and if you guys are sincerely interested in what the women of Canada are facing, perhaps you could do me the courtesy of listening.

Mr. Knowles: Order.

Mrs. Appolloni: The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Clarke) said that women are offended because people call them ladies.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We are not a bunch of guys. We are hon. members too.

Mrs. Appolloni: The hon. member's remarks lead me to my next point. The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra was incensed at the insensitivity of the minister responsible for the status of women and at what he had done to women. What has he done for women? He "allowed" the Prime Minister of Canada to call the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands "the hon. lady". Is she incensed? Frankly, I would be thrilled if the Prime Minister of Canada called me a lady because, despite my anger at this moment, that is one thing I want to be. I want to be a lady.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Miss MacDonald: Bully for you.

Mrs. Appolloni: However, that is not the point. My Prime Minister, who recognizes qualities we sometimes wonder about—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Appolloni: He recognizes qualities, and he is accused of being a sexist because he calls a female member a lady. After a tiny bit of research I found that on the same day, recorded on the same page of *Hansard* quoted from by the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra, the same Prime Minister of Canada called the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) "the hon. gentleman".

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Oh my, the Leader of the NDP is called a gentleman. I do not hear the NDP standing up screaming "sexist". I do not hear anybody screaming "sexist". My Prime Minister—and I call him mine because, by Jove, I also elected him and I am proud of him—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: You can have him.

Mrs. Appolloni: My Prime Minister, with his discerning qualities, called the hon. member for Oshawa a gentleman. Frankly, I might not agree with the leader of the NDP, but I have to agree that he is a gentleman.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Appolloni: Do I hear objections? The point I am sincerely trying to make is that women in Canada and women all over the world do have problems—of course we do, and men have problems too—but we are not asking to be treated so specially that when people disagree with us, we pick up our buckets and spades and run away because we do not want to play the game any longer.

We want to be listened to, we want to have our views considered, but if we lose the argument, by Jove, we do not go running off, or we should not go running off, and giving up everything. That is not what this life is about. As members of Parliament in particular, we know darn well we are going to lose arguments. We lose arguments daily with the opposition, and even sometimes with our own party. So what do we do? Do we resign? In this case, the vote was 10 to 7. So what happened to them? The ten who were defeated resigned. If it were a case of losing votes and resigning, then I think the Tories should have resigned long ago because they have lost votes, and they will continue to lose votes long into the future. Are they going to resign every time there is a vote?

In essence, that is what we are talking about. We are talking about freedom of expression, and that freedom of expression has to extend to a cabinet minister. I hear the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands saying something that I cannot catch, but I think I have the drift of it. She too was a cabinet minister. I am sure that she too in her job—which she did very responsibly, I think—had to listen to advisory councils of various kinds. Is it because she was afraid to reject their counsel that she and her leader made such asinine mistakes as when they tried to shift the embassy to Jerusalem? Is that the kind of government we have, a government which has to accept all the advice it gets from advisory councils? What are