

Education in Canada must not be only for the elite. We must not follow the proposal made by the Minister of Education in British Columbia. I am ashamed to say that he said that poor students should not apply to university if they cannot afford it. He reflects the Social Credit philosophy, as followed by the present Premier who was previously the Minister of Education. He thought that the only thing we needed in education was reading, writing and arithmetic, and even that was to be of questionable quality.

There is no way that we want to move backward in programs for youth. Members of the federal Party as well as the NDP leader in British Columbia have proposed a youth guarantee program that will guarantee two years of education, training or a job for a young person. That seems to be eminently reasonable. Why should we not invest in young people, particularly when they are at such risk and are so likely to get involved in other things if they do not have an income and if they have no hope for the future? Surely this would be a sound investment for the future.

In closing, I wish to speak up for Canadian women. Canadian women care deeply about family benefits, social programs and jobs for their children as well as for themselves. Once again, Canadian women were very disappointed in the Speech from the Throne because it provided no real measures to move us closer to equality. There are no measures in the Throne Speech to enforce equal pay for work of equal value, nor are there measures to require employers to remove the systemic discrimination which I am sorry to say still exists in many of the places in which women work.

Although the Prime Minister mentioned and deplored the situation of battered women in his speech, when questioned later he did not really make a strong commitment to help relieve the desperate plight of battered women, or to help with transition houses and related programs designed to support them when they are trying to move, with their children, out of violent situations.

● (1630)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Could I ask the Hon. Member to speak on Bill C-11.

Ms. Mitchell: I thought that in my initial remarks I was relating the child tax credit, which is a social policy, to a comprehensive social policy which includes the programs for women.

Women continue, in increasing numbers, to carry the triple load of raising children, doing housework and working full time—if they are lucky enough to get a job, which usually is at very low wages. Often there is no spouse or partner to assist.

Substantial government initiatives for child care and family support services are long overdue. More generous family benefits, including more generous child tax credit that is fully indexed and covers families up to the average income is another policy that is long overdue.

Income Tax Act

In conclusion, I want to say that we have indicated our agreement with this Bill, while registering our continuing concern that more must be done to assist Canadian families in a more comprehensive way.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I take part in today's debate on pre-payment of the child tax credit.

Mr. Speaker, this was a clear commitment made by the Conservative Government, a commitment which I think was very important since the purpose was to help low-income families with young children.

Mr. Speaker, I remember the day after the Budget was brought down in February 1986, when I had a chance to travel across the province of Quebec and meet people from all walks of life and all regions to discuss Mr. Wilson's Budget. Everywhere I went, Mr. Speaker, starting with the beautiful riding of Trois-Rivières and going on to Roberval, Abitibi and the riding of my hon. friend, the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret), and I even met people from the riding of Montreal—Sainte-Marie, and they were unanimous in their view that this was a fine initiative on the part of the Conservative Government—

Mr. Desrosiers: That's true.

Mr. Vincent:—a fine initiative, Mr. Speaker, and for two reasons: first of all, we raised the tax credit by \$70 for 1985-86, by \$35 for 1987 and by another \$35 in 1988. So of course everyone was delighted with the increase and also with the kind of measure it was because it dealt with the problem of low-income families, in other words, families with an annual income of less than \$15,000, which in this way will be able to receive \$300 per child starting in November of the current year. Three hundred dollars per child for a family earning less than \$15,000 is a lot of money, and just before Christmas and just before the winter, which is always a difficult time, that money is particularly welcome.

Mr. Speaker, those are the two points people made throughout the meetings we had on the Budget. And I think that today, we should congratulate the Minister and the Minister of State and avoid turning this welcome announcement into a game of petty politics. I think it is good news for families across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I can see the Hon. Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) laughing on the other side of the House—

Mr. Desrosiers: He objects to everything.

Mr. Vincent:—but he cannot object to this measure, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure that this time he will have to be positive. He cannot be against this measure, that is just not possible. If he does object, Mr. Speaker, it would be like going