

objectives to the provision of housing for low-income people. Is that popular? One would like to think so, but I continually have to resist pressures across the country to shift our direct emphasis back to providing housing for the middle-class or to place low-income housing projects somewhere else, in some other neighbourhood.

• (4:20 p.m.)

So, what I am saying is that governments can lead, and this government has done so, but until we Canadians stop our rhetoric and participate through our own pocket-books and through changing our own built in attitudes, progress will be slow. Until we do that, the exclusion of and discrimination against many groups from participating in our society will continue. But I believe that a climate for such change is developing in Canada. However, this process is slow and painful. The government will help the process along with regard to women. I would say in passing that all members will appreciate the fact that when you are in the business of encouraging a major social upheaval—and that is what any real inclusion of women will be, an upheaval that will change institutions from the family through to the Public Service Commission—life can, and probably will, get quite complicated.

Policy solutions are not as immediately obvious as one might think. Take for instance the subject given considerable and justified attention in the debate so far, the question of day care centres. It is increasingly obvious to most of us I think that day care centres add immensely to the quality of life, both for children and for parents. They are more than parking places for kids, or certainly should be more than that. The best means of providing children with superior care must be found, ways that involve parents in the operations of the centres. Right now, through the Canada Assistance Plan, this government shares the operating costs of day care centres with provinces which regulate and administer the centres. But we recognize that some drawbacks in the legislation and the programs are becoming evident. For instance, the initial capital required is difficult for many groups to raise. The wellbeing of Canadian children is certainly a national responsibility, and we are exploring ways to improve the legislation.

The recommendations of this royal commission directly affect the programs of 25 federal departments. Actions on the recommendations can easily be counter-productive, tending perhaps to cancel each other out if they are not very carefully co-ordinated. This government wants action, as the priority pledge of the Prime Minister indicates, but it does not want a mish-mash. So, there has been established a central co-ordinating function within the Privy Council office. I might go so far as to say that if our friends in the opposition will help us get through the government reorganization bill, it might even happen that the minister chosen to handle this subject will be appointed. In the meantime, an interdepartmental committee is being established to examine all the recommendations and to draft policy suggestions for the cabinet.

Status of Women Study

I might add here that in seeking the best brains available for the committee and its working parties, the chief co-ordinator herself is seeking, wherever possible, women of competence who may not, as yet, have quite pushed to the front of the public service. This is part of an emphasis directed toward women that this government will continue. A decision to seek out wherever possible women for Order in Council appointment is another instance of this emphasis.

The interdepartmental committee to which I referred will submit to cabinet immediately, as they become available, the policy alternatives that it supports from five working parties. The working parties cover the following areas: First, the economic participation of women, what the federal government can do regarding women as investors, homeowners, producers of goods and services as well as employees. The second area covers women in political and judicial life. I might say here that the government is already planning to attract more women into citizenship programs, into the administration of corrective institutions and other areas recommended in the report we are discussing. The third area is a workshop dealing with education and training of women. This will include such issues as formal professional education for women, occupational education, and continuing education.

The fourth area is family and community services. Here, policy recommendations and guidelines will be in the areas of abortion, family planning, day care centres and other matters. The fifth working party will be particularly attending to the problems of disadvantaged women, in which we include the aged, the disabled, the poor, women who are the sole support of their family, women of minority groups, immigrants and geographically isolated people.

The cabinet expects to have policy recommendations before it well within this year. We have already seen considerable progress. The Canada Labour (Standards) Code, to which amendments were presented to Parliament today, will be of special interest to women. Amendments to the Fair Employment Practices Act are under consideration. The white paper on unemployment insurance proposes broadened coverage and the provision of benefits for interruption in employment owing to sickness and maternity. We plan legislation removing discrimination against women with regard to citizenship.

The report recommends the establishment of information and referral services at the local level, which is certainly in harmony with some of the aims of Information Canada; in fact, some pilot projects are under way now.

In my own area of housing, there will be a change made in the national housing loan regulations in line with the first recommendation of the report. It will remove the discrimination inherent in any federal regulations against women as creditworthy mortgage borrowers. Last spring we made provision for an allowance for one parent families in the calculation of income to which