not exactly lived up to that one either. The effort has been pretty poor.

Another promise was to hold an economic summit to establish national objectives. It may have been held, but I do not think it has been successful. Also it was promised that at the conference the question of barriers to women's economic equality would be a top priority. People watching the television last weekend and listening to what the government had to say on various issues discovered that this was not a priority by any stretch of the imagination.

In order to achieve equality, we must start by offering the financial equality to which I referred earlier. As well, we listened to a discussion of the issue of spousal abuse. Of course, spousal abuse is a euphemism for wife battering. As we know, in about 95 per cent of the cases the victim is the female and the aggressor is the male.

• (1150)

While a Member of the Ontario Legislature, I had the opportunity of serving on a parliamentary committee which looked into this very important issue. It is indeed a sad one. The Hon. Member for Broadview-Greenwood raised this issue. She indicated that one in 10 women were beaten regularly by their male spouses. That is quite true, but I would like to add to that. The operative word here is "regularly". The real figure is even worse than the one we heard referred to a little earlier. The prospect is actually sadder than some of us would think it is and that is unfortunate.

Perhaps we must remind ourselves very frequently of the important issue of spousal abuse. The issue of financial equality to which I referred a while ago is closely tied to that issue. It is not tied into the fact that the wife is the victim but it is tied into the fact that the wife is the victim regularly. Many times a woman is in a situation which is almost inescapable, as we learned while sitting on the parliamentary committee. There are many occasions on which women leave their households but because of financial pressures and all kinds of other pressures, they must return to places where they are being battered because there does not seem to be any other alternative offered.

There are a variety of other issues as well which I do not wish to deal with any deeper at this particular point in time. Wife beating is nevertheless just another way of describing that general malaise that will not correct itself until we begin by having financial equality for women. We start with financial equality and then we will worry about the other issues. It is only through financial equality that we will begin to accomplish anything.

I heard the Hon. Member for Gloucester say that the equality rights of the Charter at the present time do not refer to marital status. Of course, as we know, the list in Section 15 of the Charter of Rights is not exhaustive. In other words, it describes the protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination, but it is not an exhaustive list. I am sure all of us here in the House today and all Canadians want to end any discrimination in terms of marital status as well.

I would like to speak very briefly about age discrimination because I think it is an increasingly important issue. I know that a few of us here are losing a few hairs or are getting a little grey on top. I think it is about time that we started to worry increasingly about that particular topic. The baby boom generation is getting older and older. This issue has always been an important one but the numbers are so significantly larger now that the retirement age legislation that now exists is not only discriminatory but very soon will be totally impractical.

When looking at some of the so-called major amendments to these 50 pieces of legislation, we see that the Pilotage Act has been amended by deleting the age factor in the calculation of intervals between examinations. In other words, the frequency of medical examinations will not increase with age. However, we see no reference in the amendments to changing the mandatory retirement age of 65. If we are going to amend that piece of legislation in reference to age, why amend only part of it and not the other? It would seem to me that the most discriminatory thing of all is the fact that compulsory retirement age remains 65.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, Government is facing difficult decisions with this Bill—no one will deny that. However, the Government was elected to make difficult decisions, and a review and referral of the question to a parliamentary committee is unacceptable. I do not really have anything against the amendments as proposed, but I must point out that they are cosmetic rather than of any real substance. We do intend to support the Bill, but we would like to see amendments that go much farther than the present ones, so that Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms will become effective as soon as possible, to protect the rights of Canadians.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member did not have a chance to talk about the consultation process, in the little time available to him to discuss the Bill's shortcomings. I would like to put a question to the Hon. Member, who is well aware of this Government's tendency to launch consultation projects. What does the Hon. Member think about the consultation being proposed, in the absence of any decision by the Government to act responsibly with respect to equality issues?

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, personnally, I think the time for consultation is over and has been for quite some time. Canadians have appeared before the parliamentary committee in the past, so there has already been consultation. I fail to see what we would accomplish today by having Canadians take part in the debate and voice their claims again in order to obtain their rights. In drafting the text, Mr. Speaker, we already agreed that these were rights and not privileges.

If we ask them to take part in another round of consultations and to make representations, are we not in fact saying that these rights are not rights but privileges, Mr. Speaker? I think this is entirely unacceptable, and I would like to add, and