

their daily lives but a regression to problems that are increasingly hitting them, sometimes in middle life, which is a very critical time, when, as the last speaker so correctly said, they should be able to expect greater security, greater recompense because they are now in what is supposed to be their higher earning years.

We are talking about real people and about the kind of person who writes the kind of letter I have just read. We are talking about people we see often in schools or in hospitals when we go to institutions such as that and we see large numbers of women, the majority of whom are working in those institutions, working as ordinary workers but very few of them being given the opportunity to hold administrative positions. Even if they do hold administrative positions, they are not necessarily being promoted any further.

We are talking about real people in real institutions, banks, schools or hospitals where women still remain often the main workforce but are not being given the opportunity to move upward. Very often, women still say today that it feels like a man's world. We who are legislators must regard that inequality as a challenge.

● (1610)

I cannot accept the passive attitude that in the long run education will solve all these problems and that progress will eventually take place. I am concerned about the comment of the Hon. Member for Capilano (Mrs. Collins) who has said previously as well that she does not always see the value of forcing these issues through legislation. Rather, she feels we must educate people. Education is certainly important, but when it comes to human rights, there is no reason for people to waste their lives while we let time go by in the hope that education will change opinions and attitudes. It is not fair that people do not now have equal rights, and that should be our objective. We should not leave it for education in some future day. Human rights should be brought into effect now.

We may look at the situation statistically. I tried to cite examples of living people in real situations, people working in banks, schools, hospitals, corporations, factories and plants. However, the statistics must also speak to our thoughts. We must realize that statistics speak of real individuals. Women earn 65 cents for every \$1 a man earns. That is a real statistic about real people with real names.

Of all Canadians who are working at the minimum wage, two-thirds are women. Women lose out economically when they leave work to have children because they lose seniority when they re-enter the workforce. We know that that happens to real Canadian citizens. From statistics, we know that 6.7 per cent of the women in the labour force earn more than \$30,000, while for men that figure is 28.6 per cent. There are almost five times as many men as women who make more than \$30,000. This means that women are not yet included in opportunities for promotion.

### *Supply*

Still another fact is that two and a half times as many women as men are forced to work part time because they cannot find full-time work. Seventy-one per cent of all part-time workers in Canada are women. These are the realities faced by real people. These are real statistics about our children, cousins, neighbours, families, friends and people across Canada whom we do not know but about whom we should care.

We know that there is an incredibly high rate of poverty among elderly women. They represent the largest number of people who live under the poverty line. The fact that this is so relates back to just these kinds of economic realities. They cannot earn the kind of incomes they should for the kind of jobs they do and they cannot get the kind of pensions they deserve. Often pensions relate to incomes. Ultimately, that is why the greatest number of people living under the poverty line are elderly women.

One must ask if Government can and should do anything about this. We in the Opposition do not agree with the attitude so often expressed by government Members that these are matters which should be taken care of by the increasingly affluent economy, that if the economy is sufficiently well off, eventually enough people will be hired and the poor will become richer—the trickle-down theory.

During the 1984 election campaign, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) promised to develop a definition of part-time employment and to require employers to "include a pro-rated basis in all employment benefits". When he was electioneering, the Prime Minister was prepared to promise government action rather than to let things happen through education and over time. Of course, this has not been the case.

Louise Dulude, President of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, has said that the Prime Minister has failed to honour his promises to part-time workers, most of whom are women. She says that she rates the performance of the Government so far as poor.

Lisa Avedon of the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women has said the following:

This government's philosophy is fine for those at the top of the system. But for those at the bottom, without access to higher education, it's the pits!

In short, the Government has a responsibility. It has a task to perform. We in the Opposition call upon the Government to do more than it is doing to meet the needs and concerns of women.

There has been a failure on the part of the Government to set an example. It calls upon the private sector to do things it is not prepared to do itself. For example, we know of the Government's record in hiring young people. Huguette Labelle of the Public Service Commission, a very respected person and a Deputy Minister, indicated yesterday that the number of Public Service appointments going to people aged 24 and under dropped in the past year. She pointed out that barely 4 per cent of public servants are 24 or under. During the summer, the Government calls upon the private sector to hire