

*Canadian Arsenals Limited*

[Translation]

**Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Motion No. 2 which reads as follows:

That Bill C-87, be amended by adding immediately after line 34 at page 5 the following:

"12. An employee of the Corporation, as of the day prior to the date of transfer, will have the right, on transferring to the new employer, either to:

(a) choose to remain and continue as a contributor to the federal superannuation plan, and the employee will pay both the employee's and the employer's shares of the required contributions to the plan; or

(b) become a contributor to the pension plan as described in the agreement of the purchase and sale between the government and the new employer."

Mr. Speaker, I should like to draw your attention to the fact that 50 per cent of the employees of Canadian Arsenals Limited are women. Closer scrutiny of the Bill reveals that if ever the Government were to prevent the employees from contributing or maintaining their pension plan, this will have a double impact on women. Since 50 per cent of the employees are women and that, as a rule, women do not have as much seniority as men do because they had to quit working for a while to raise their children, they will be taxed twice as much because they have been unable to accumulate the same number of years of pensionable service.

They will be taxed as well—most of those employees are under 35, or between 35 and 40, and if they are prevented from maintaining their pension plan, because we know that under public service regulations the wife and children are entitled to a pension when the husband dies, and that means that the wives or the female employees of 35, or between 35 and 40, will not be entitled to a pension in case of death. I might simply remind the House that most women are poor, and we have debated the pension issue long enough to know that a woman cannot get 50 per cent of her husband's pension benefits because there is no such provision in the private sector. Therefore, taxes would be imposed on 50 per cent of the wives of men who work for the corporation and they would not be eligible for pension benefits.

Then as employees women would be doubly taxed because they would also lose their retirement pension. That is why I think the Government has to change the procedure related to pensions, and Motion No. 2 must be accepted, otherwise women employees and the wives of male employees will be doubly taxed.

For quite some time now we have been debating Bill C-62 on employment equity. Since the Conservative Government is supposed to do everything right, I was wondering if, during negotiations, someone considered negotiating what is known as the contract compliance issue. Since Bill C-62 on employment equity will eventually become law, did the Government think about including in contract negotiations the question of employment equity with respect to people who will be hired by or who now work for the corporation?

Something else is also very interesting. I am now a member of the committee on daycare. We have had the Katie Cooke report on daycare which was tabled recently in this House. The

Government is being asked to encourage companies to provide daycare space or to open daycares centres.

We have also been told that this will be a priority for the Government. In that case, this was the time to do something about it. If this is really a priority, did the Government consider the fact that 50 per cent of these employees are women and a large number of them have children? Did the Government discuss the fact that it would have been possible to create employment equity as well as provide spaces in daycare centres?

If not, this shows that we are dealing with mere amateurs approach, because the contract was prepared hastily and the Government has been remiss in its duty. We are told that all the matters we are now discussing in this House are the result of conservative amendments, but I would like to point out that all this is a result of what the Liberals suggested in committee. That is very important. These are the amendments now under discussion.

I ask the Government to act and not simply to put up a smoke screen. This is one of the first times that we see that this Bill deals with the privatization of a company. Was employment equity discussed as one of the conditions of purchase? Has there been some provision to protect the spouses of the workers? Also, as concerns women, will they be hit by double taxation on their pensions?

I would like the Government to show us that it is being serious for once instead of relying on rhetoric. If indeed it is serious, I must support Motion No. 2.

Mr. Speaker, I do not simply want to have a discussion with my Conservative colleague who says that the Liberal Government did not pass any legislation to achieve employment equity.

The Liberal Government passed some excellent laws on the status of women. Canada has been one of the most progressive countries in this regard.

You always tell us that you are doing a lot for women, for instance that when appointing new board of directors. Well! You appointed 16 men out of 17 members. On another board made up of ten members, you appointed ten men. You should start by practicing what you preach. This is the best proof we could have! You should put this principle in practice in the case of a privatization and show that you are able to protect the rights of women. If the Conservative Government can do so, I shall publicly recognize it, but for the moment, I think that you are making a mistake. Especially in view of what you are doing in Bill C-62, you would have had a chance to do better with this Bill, but the Government continues to use an amateurish approach, as it has been doing all along.

[English]

**Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador):** Mr. Speaker, the question before us today is not one of privatization but one of human rights and employee rights. It is a people or personnel problem rather than a