

Routine Proceedings

direction to official development assistance which will cause further difficulties for many women.

• (1545)

Even the minister's own Conservative colleague on that side of the House, a former cabinet minister who has also served as ambassador to Ethiopia, calls the government's actions stupid. Those are his comments.

Closer to home, I have become increasingly amazed at how much energy Canadian women must expend just to fight the system in order to achieve equality of opportunity due to poor government policy. Women are still fighting the advance rather than advancing the fight.

In 1970 women earned 60 cents to every dollar earned by our male counterparts. In 1990 that figure had risen by only seven cents. In 23 years it rose by 7 cents to 67 cents for every dollar.

Women are over-represented in low-paying, part-time jobs and are often denied promotions, job security and standard employee benefits.

The minister talked about what her government has done for women in Canada. I would like to know why her government issued directives to Treasury Board and Justice Canada officials to use stalling tactics before the human rights tribunal established to hear federal Public Service pay equity complaints. I would like to have the minister's response as to why her government, as an example, will not respect the equal pay retroactivity entitlements provided under the Canadian Human Rights Act. Why will the minister's government not abide by the tribunal's decision? Those are three simple questions.

Finally, I would like to know why the minister's government will not support amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act to provide for proactive implementation of pay equity within specified time frames for the 500,000 working women in the banking, transportation and communication industries in the federal Public Service.

Of even deeper concern is the issue of violence against women. One in four women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime, half of them before they reach the age of 17. Every five days a woman is shot to death in Canada and usually by her male partner. The trends will not

reverse on their own. The approach to resolutions must lie in an interrelation of government policies at all levels.

Violence against women does not exist in isolation. The main contributing factor is that social attitudes condone it and poverty confirms it. Women are often forced to remain in violent situations because in all too many instances they must rely on a male partner for their economic well-being. The cycle perpetuates itself. Children who grow up in this environment will live it.

By taking a stand against such offences and working toward policies to strengthen a woman's position in society it would be clear that tolerance of acts against women is unacceptable. Today would be a good day to take the first step.

This International Women's Week of 1993 is a time and an opportunity for all of us, not only all of us in this House but all of us as Canadians, both male and female, to try to right the wrongs and ensure that women move forward to their rightful place in our Canadian society.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, International Women's Day is a time to celebrate our achievements and re-examine our vision for the world.

Too often, both in the House of Commons and outside, we deal with the details and not with the overview. A volunteer who takes crisis calls at a shelter for battered women or a sexual assault centre or a volunteer at a women's centre helping a family find child care, all of these acts that we do each and every day are a part of a larger movement toward full social, economic and political equality and empowerment.

My vision, which I share with many, is of a world in which men and women live in harmony, peace and equality and where no one is beaten or tortured. It is a world in which no one's work goes unpaid or underpaid and unrecognized. It is a world in which we are not divided into rich and poor. It is a world in which no one is persecuted because of their gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs. It is a world in which our children can breathe fresh air and play and live without fear, secure in the knowledge that whether they are male or female, aboriginal, black, white or any other race or colour, they will be respected and valued for who they are. It is a world without war.