

Employment Equity

going to be achieved. Neither is there any indication or likelihood that it will be achieved unless this Government brings forward some proper sanctions.

I think the idea of the Bill and the statement of what we would like to see brought forward and achieved in it is a laudable one, and I commend the Government for that. I am very much concerned that we have this Bill before the House at the present time, and we have stated what we would like to see achieved, but I am very concerned that it is not going to be achieved.

It has been said in debate in this House, "Well, here we have Bill C-62, and this is a start, this is something that we can build on, this is more than we have had before". I do not see it that way. I am concerned that the opposite will be the case, that by passing this Bill into law, Members of the House and the Government are going to say, "Well, that is that subject out of the way. We can put this question of employment equality aside for a while and get on to other things", when actually this matter has not been dealt with adequately.

To delude ourselves that this Bill is going to allow us to push this question aside and to get on with other things I think would be a travesty. In fact, there is so much that needs to be done for the visible minorities, women, native peoples and the handicapped that this Bill does not scratch the surface.

We are not even putting our own house in order as a federal Government and as a federal jurisdiction. The federal Departments and agencies are not all being brought under the auspices of this Bill. We have got to create an example in the federal jurisdiction. We have not done that and this Bill is not going to do it. If the Government is not going to set the example, how can the Government possibly expect others to adhere to what this Bill would like to see achieved?

None of the requests or objectives of the four minority groups that this Bill hopes to cover have been met. All four groups have appeared before the committee relating to this Bill and have asked for a stronger Bill, for more stringent provisions, and certainly sanctions that would allow this Bill to be followed the way we all would like to see it followed.

We owe a great deal in this country to the groups that are mentioned here, and I think that by giving this question such a cursory glance and such cursory attention we are really doing a disservice, not only to the groups but to our country. We have heard so often about the problems that exist with respect to the disabled. We have had an excellent task force on the disabled which presented a report during the last Parliament called *Obstacles*. I think it brought to our attention and to the attention of Canadians in a much more detailed fashion the problems facing the disabled today. The disabled have a right to achieve equal opportunity in the workplace and in the market-place.

We must certainly do a great deal more. I know we have given special attention to entrance and exit requirements, to special parking requirements, and to service requirements for the disabled, and these are very important. These have been

very sizeable steps in recent years. This Act does not complement these advances. This Act does not add anything further to what has been done, because what we need now is to be able to give the disabled the assurance that they are going to be treated fairly when it comes to gainful employment.

Another group that is mentioned here are native people. A great deal still needs to be done. Many of the problems have been historical problems that we have created. I think that trying to deal with the problems that have been created from past attempts, albeit very noble and well meaning attempts to deal with the needs of our native people, trying to address and correct these problems here with this Bill, is only going to make the situation worse. It is going to indicate to our native people that by bringing this Bill forward in the form that we have it we are not sincere, we just want to make a cosmetic attempt. This is wrong because it deserves much more attention.

What I have to say about the first two groups applies as well to the visible minorities and to women whose problems and needs have been emphasized and discussed already in the House. There is a great deal more that needs to be done. There needs to be some way of getting to the problems and ensuring that the problems are going to be corrected. We cannot let employment equity take place on an honour system. It is far too important. We must create an example by imposing sanctions to show that we, as parliamentarians, mean what we say and are determined to improve the situation of these groups.

• (1750)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I know there are some Members who may be disappointed that the House is not ready for the question, but they will have to listen to one more speech and, hopefully, many more.

An Hon. Member: The Bill disappoints you.

Mr. Keeper: I hear the cries of disappointment across the way and they bring joy to my heart because they indicate that we must continue the debate. Perhaps if we repeat the points that must be made government Members will begin to see the error of their ways and realize how this Bill is deficient. Perhaps they will decide to withdraw this Bill and introduce adequate legislation.

Mr. Nystrom: With new ideas.

Mr. Keeper: More than anything else, the Government needs new ideas and new initiatives. It must begin to take real action on the problems facing Canadians.

Mr. Nystrom: They're Conservatives.

Mr. Keeper: Of course, it comes as no surprise with a Conservative Government that it fails to take effective action