

Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission. In effect, there is no mechanism whatsoever to guard against plans which may be poorly devised and wholly inadequate to meet the needs of target groups. We have examined the response of the Government to the unanimous recommendations of the equality committee.

I see that the Hon. Member for Surrey—White Rock—North Delta (Mr. Friesen) is present in the House. I know how strongly he supported the recommendations of the committee on equality and I know that he will want to have a chance to speak on that at the appropriate time. The committee recommended far more effective legislation. It recommended that the Government give teeth to Bill C-62 and ensure that there are adequate employment equity enforcement mechanisms. Those mechanisms are not there and I deeply regret that. Certainly the groups affected by this Bill regret that very much.

The Bill makes no reference whatsoever to equal pay for work of equal value. Here both Judge Abella and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women recommended that concrete and specific reference should be made to the important principle of equal pay for work of equal value and that it should be included in the legislation itself.

As well, there are no provisions for mandatory contract compliance for firms which may be doing business with the Government. Clearly the experience in the United States has shown that contract compliance can be a very effective tool in changing discriminatory practices which may be followed by firms selling goods and services to the Government. This was a major recommendation of the *Equality for All* report and the Government has chosen to ignore it.

The Abella Commission's recommendation No. 27 states that contract compliance should be imposed by legislation. The Government has ignored that important recommendation. In Bill C-62, we see that contract compliance only applies to firms with 100 or more employees and only if the value of the contracts exceed \$200,000. Moreover, failure to comply with the equity proposals of the Government does not result in loss of a contract but only means that in the future, such a firm may be removed from competition. That is not much of an incentive to comply with employment equity. I know that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) has fought a vigorous battle within Cabinet to strengthen this Bill but unfortunately was beaten back by the right wing of the Tory Cabinet and caucus.

The provisions with respect to employment equity and in particular contract compliance are set out in the report entitled *Equality for All*. The unanimous recommendation of the committee composed of five Conservative Members, one Liberal Member and myself was that contract compliance be a part of the employment equity legislation. We noted that in the United States, a similar executive order enforced by the office of federal contract compliance programs applies to contracts worth \$50,000 or more granted to firms with 50 or more employees. The unanimous recommendation of our committee was that the ceiling of \$200,000 and 100 employees

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is too high. That was a recommendation made unanimously by the committee with respect to this legislation that is now before the House. I know that some Hon. Members from the other side of the House fought for this but obviously lost out.

There were recommendations in other areas about which the Hon. Member for Surrey—White Rock—North Delta felt particularly strongly. I know that he fought hard in those areas. However, the reality is that that particular voice was not heard, and in some instances, perhaps we might breathe a sigh of relief that that was the case. However, I know that the Hon. Member himself may wish to comment with respect to his views on this important report.

Much of the wording of Bill C-62, particularly that of Clause 4 which deals with the duty of employers, is very loose and ill defined. What, for example, is the effect of not defining reasonable accommodation or positive policies and practices? This crucial question should surely be the subject of negotiation between employers and employees. Instead, there has been some vague process of consultation and even that was only included as an amendment later in the day.

Finally, the fifth major concern we have with respect to this Bill is that federal Government departments including the RCMP and the Canadian armed forces must be included within the scope of the legislation. Once again, this was a recommendation made very clearly by the special committee on equality rights. We said that the legislation on employment equity should apply to all federal public-sector employers and to employers under federal jurisdiction. Despite that unanimous recommendation, the Government once again told us to forget it, that it is not prepared to implement that important recommendation.

I think we can understand why the Government did that if we read an extract from the Government's response. The Government has said that it attempts to balance the needs of the designated groups against the Government's desire not to interfere unduly in the operations of employers. It is a pretty skewed balance and one which has left the groups which should be assisted by employment equity legislation, women, native people, the disabled and visible minorities, very critical indeed of the legislation.

The Government argued that federal Departments and agencies are covered by the 1983 Public Service policy on affirmative action. I would remind the Government that that policy does not apply to members of the RCMP or the armed forces. We know that those employers are some of the most reactionary and sexist employers in the country. We hoped that they would have been included under this legislation, weak though it may be.

I would like to conclude by reminding the House once again that during the 1984 federal election campaign, Conservative Members raised the expectations of groups which had historically been disadvantaged, groups which had hoped that the Government's promises would be kept. Rather than that,