

Government Orders

Before the member responds to these statistics, the polls consistently show that Canadians are against employment equity. Approximately 70 per cent to 80 per cent of Canadians are against employment equity programs, such as this Liberal program.

I want to ask the hon. member how the Liberals can totally disregard the will of a large majority of Canadians and ignore these polls on the issue when they are so willing to accept the results of their own polls on other issues?

Ms. Catterall: Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat that the Reform Party obviously needs to educate itself. The member for Vegreville just said "if discrimination finds its way into the workplace". It is impossible to look at any statistics from the workplace and not accept that discrimination finds its way into the workplace.

I will quote some additional statistics from a recent report by Simon Fraser University. Canadian born Greek males earned 16.2 per cent less than Canadian born males of British background. Even those earnings paled beside the ones for black and Filipino immigrant males who posted earnings that were respectively 21 per cent and 20.2 per cent lower than those for Canadian men of British background. Double jeopardy operates for women. Visible minority immigrant females earned 7.2 per cent less than white Canadian females. I therefore ask the hon. member to please take the if out of his statements about discrimination in the workplace.

• (1230)

Employment equity is not about being able to get a job; it is about having an equal opportunity to get as good a job if the person is as good. It is true that over 80 per cent of employees in the clerical category in the Government of Canada are women. Those happen to be the lowest paid jobs. That may be why there is such a high representation of women. Employment equity is about giving all groups the opportunity to earn the same as anybody of similar competence. Within that group of clerks the top levels are more likely to be occupied by men. Even within that group of clerks women are not allowed to progress.

The member referred to the fact that equity has been achieved. It has not. Notwithstanding the qualifications, we must look at the quality and the rate of pay, rather than simply being able to access the lowest paid jobs.

I sat through a couple of months of committee hearings on this bill. There was only one poll which came forward which said that Canadians were not in favour of equality in employment and it was a flawed poll. If the Reform Party had more polls with more validity to bring forward at any time during those hearings, it had every opportunity to do so, but it did not.

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this country is managed by statistics. The hon. member pulled out statistic after statistic about who is where in our society. I wish government members would go to their ridings and talk to

the people one at a time. Maybe then they would understand more about what is going on in the country.

I am very happy to speak to Bill C-64, the legislation of a Liberal perfect world. It was interesting to hear the debate over the last two days, but it is somewhat disheartening. Let me go back to an issue which is somewhat related to this. Let us look at what the Liberals know about the workplace.

Today in Halifax we learned of how the minister of patronage in Atlantic Canada is meddling in the job market. Surprise, surprise. Once again the friends of the minister have mismanaged millions of taxpayers' dollars at Cornwallis Park Development Agency in what has been called potentially the biggest boondoggle in the last two decades.

Jobs, jobs, jobs. What does it mean to the Liberal minister for Atlantic Canada, the minister of public works? Once again we see that the minister of public works has his own version of job equity. A person has to belong to one of two categories in this country: either donate to the Liberals or become friends with one. That is the only way to have an equal shot at a job in Atlantic Canada.

I do not think the government has any idea of what job equity is. Who a person knows and whom they donate to are what really count.

The seeds of dissension are here among our young. They are not there for lack of a job equity bill; they are there because many of them see themselves as not being able to get jobs because of quotas. Government will deny the use of the word quota. I will explain exactly where I get this terminology: right out of the bill.

• (1235)

This is social engineering at its worst. Ontario has just elected to do away with it. We are not talking about America, as one of our Liberal colleagues over there said. This is Ontario. Apparently there is a mismatch now. The Ontario government says it will do away with it while the Liberal government in Ottawa is about to impose it on the rest of Canada.

It is also interesting that the last speaker from the Liberal Party said that we in the Reform Party talk about affirmative action which is all wrong. However, the Liberal member for Halifax in a partial quote said this morning, "affirmative action would not be necessary if employment equity were in existence" or something to that effect.

Mr. Forseth: What is the difference?

Mr. White (Fraser Valley West): That is exactly what she was talking about and the other one said: "You are talking about it over here".

What is the answer? The answer is: "We will fix it. We will fix it for everybody in Canada. We Liberals have the answer". Let me show what their answer is. Goals versus quotas, are they the same thing? Under the Employment Equity Act, section 6, an employer is not required "to hire or promote unqualified