

Employment Equity

Government of Canada and Crown corporations of the Government of Canada. Then Clauses 5 to 7 talk about an employer who has to file a report, a report on what, Mr. Speaker? A report not only on the occupational groups, but also on the salary ranges of employees. Why are salary ranges of employees there? Suppose for a moment that the salary ranges of employees of the federal Government had to be reported. What happens? A copy is therefore sent to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Obviously the salary ranges would be submitted to determine whether there is discrimination within that particular group of employees.

● (1730)

Suppose there was a group of people hired in Canada who did the same job but received different wages in every town and city throughout the country. Suppose they were working for the same employer in the same job classification and performing the same work, but all received different salaries. I can list several occupations in Canada which earn different salaries from the same employer. According to this Bill, the employer has to report the salaries he pays. The Official Opposition is saying that the Government of Canada and Crown corporations should be included in that reporting. Suppose that the wage paid in Edmonton was below that paid in Calgary. Suppose the wage paid in Saskatchewan was lower still, but the wage paid in Manitoba was higher. We are doing a lot of supposing, Mr. Speaker, but the punch line is going to come very shortly.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton): We suppose.

Mr. Baker: Suppose, Mr. Speaker, that the salary paid by the same employer in the Yukon and Northwest Territories was substantially higher for the same job in the same classification. Suppose that the wage paid by the same employer for the same job classification and absolutely the same work was \$2 higher an hour in Halifax and Moncton than in Newfoundland. Suppose, again, that three separate wage rates were paid in British Columbia and that six different wage rates were paid in Ontario.

I am reading to you, Mr. Speaker, from a negotiated settlement agreed to by the unions which was announced on Friday by the Government of Canada, this is after the Charter came into effect last year, after the Human Rights Act came into effect, and after this Bill, which I believe is incorrectly called the employment equity Bill, came into existence.

I am bringing this up because it is what came to my attention when I looked at this particular Bill and saw that government Departments and Crown corporations were excluded, as defined under the Financial Administration Act. The Financial Administration Act lists dozens and dozens of Crown corporations. If the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonal) were to appoint a commission, it would be excluded as well because it is defined under the Financial Administration Act as a corporation.

Someone looking at this impartially would ask why a person in Newfoundland is paid \$2 less per hour for doing the same job as a fellow in the next province is doing. In the Province of Ontario a person in Ottawa is paid a different wage from that of a person in Toronto. This is the case after the Charter of Rights was proclaimed and after royal commission reports. That only covers 16,800 federal employees.

I will give you another example, which is even worse. In another branch of the federal Government the one hundredth and second line of longitude separates a high salary from a low salary. Picture two icebreakers tied up at Victoria Island in Cambridge Bay as there will be next month. One icebreaker is from British Columbia and the other is from Newfoundland, Quebec, or one of the Atlantic provinces. Both ships are tied up at longitude 105o. One ship's crew is getting \$200 more per month than is the other ship's crew for doing the same job in the same job classification for the same employer.

These people look at the Charter, at the employment equity Bill which is before the House, at all of the other legislation and at the Human Rights Act. Section 11 of the Human Rights Act says: "It is a discriminatory practice for an employer to establish or maintain differences in wages between male and female employees employed in the same establishment who are performing work of equal value in assessing the value of work".

Mr. Orlikow: Those are all men.

Mr. Baker: The hon. gentleman says that these are all men, but that is not exactly true, because some members of the ships' crews are women. However, he has a point that most of them are men. We get into a problem when we talk about equal pay for work of equal value. The law says that there must be equal pay for work of equal value, but there is no law in Canada with regard to equal pay for equal work. I do not know how the Canadian Human Rights Commission or the courts could not interpret equal pay for work of equal value to mean equal pay for equal work, but that is the interpretation. I cannot find anything that says "equal pay for equal work", but I can find "equal pay for work of equal value".

My point is that the 16,800 employees who fall under the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the general labour and trade group, the over 20,000 employees in the services sector, and the 3,000 employees in the ships crews sector look at the concepts of employment equity and equal pay for equal work or equal pay for work of equal value, and say that the Government, after the enactment of the Charter and all of the legislation, is not making much sense.

● (1740)

Let me conclude my point by explaining what the problem is and how it evolved. We must be honest when we consider this in the historical context.

This problem emerged several years ago when the unions and the Government suggested that employees should receive