

In 1975, according to Cabinet decision 564-75 which I will read, the federal Government came up with a policy to offer employment opportunities to men and women alike, and to ensure that within a reasonable period of time the representation of men and women within the public service would be roughly proportional to the number of interested and qualified applicants of both sexes. Proportional is the key word, Mr. Speaker.

The goal then was quite clear, but now Bill C-62 falls far short.

In 1977, pursuant to Cabinet decision 144-77, the federal Government adopted a policy to increase Indian, Metis, non-status Indian and Inuit participation and representation in all occupational groups and at all public service levels. I urge Hon. Members to see for themselves that it has been done, Mr. Speaker. All those groups are now represented within the public service.

In 1977, the Liberal Government adopted the Canadian Human Rights Act to ban discrimination based on sex, another fair and constructive achievement.

Under Treasury Board decision 775694 of 1981, Mr. Speaker, we implemented a policy to ensure that more physically and mentally handicapped Canadians would be able to join the public service at all levels. This was done because the political will was there, because we wanted to see results, and we did that with our own employees. I fail to see why Bill C-62 should be so weak and not reflect the same political will to make sure that all Canadians feel at home throughout this country and all employees are given fair treatment.

• (1120)

[English]

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to make a few remarks at report stage of Bill C-62 with respect to Motion No. 1 affecting the purpose clause. This motion attempts to bring the purpose clause in line with the reality of the Bill. Like so many other Conservative measures, this Bill uses the right rhetoric but does very little to achieve the stated goals. For example, we hear a great deal of talk from the Conservatives about fair taxes. They discovered that concept in the middle of the leader's debate in the last election. They talk about tax reform but we have seen nothing which will lead to tax reform. In fact, we have seen quite the reverse. More taxes are being loaded on low and middle-income people while upper-income people are getting more of a break. We have had a legislation which is supposed to introduce more competition in the market-place and result in the protection of the consumer, but when you look at the legislation closely it just does not materialize in the way the rhetoric says it will. In other words, we have Bills with a lot of talk but very little action.

In Bill C-62 the talk is about employment equity. Judge Rosalie Abella, in her Royal Commission report *Equality in Employment*, defined the larger context in which employment

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has to be seen with regard to each of the four target groups, women, visible minorities, native people and the disabled. Concerning native people she said on page 4:

For native people, equality in employment means effective and relevant education and training, accommodation to cultural and geographic realities, a primary voice in the design of the education, training, and funding programs established for their benefit, meaningful support systems, and the delivery of services through native-run institutions.

When we look at specific measures for employment equity she emphasizes that they all require enforcement. On page 10 she says:

Equality demands enforcement. It is not enough to be able to claim equal rights unless those rights are somehow enforceable. Unenforceable rights are no more satisfactory than unavailable ones.

In spite of good intentions, Bill C-62 lacks the concrete steps necessary to achieve its goals. It has absolutely no enforcement mechanism.

There is an interesting passage in the letter of James in the New Testament where James asks if someone sees a brother or sister who is hungry and lacks clothing and shelter and tells them to go in peace, be warm, be clothed, God bless them, more or less, but does nothing to actually put clothes on that person or food in their belly. What good is that? What we have here are good intentions, but there is nothing to put clothes on the backs of people, nothing to put food in their belly, nothing to give them any real chance for employment equity. Obviously the Conservatives believe that the road to re-election is paved with good intentions.

This House is a place where we should speak the truth, a place where we should call a spade a spade. Motion No. 1 calls a toy shovel a toy shovel. Instead of pretending, as does the present wording of the Bill, that the purpose of the Act is to achieve equality in the work-place, the amendment says that the purpose of the act is to promote and encourage equality in the work-place. I am sure the Government would like to promote equality in the work-place. That is not enough given the reality of today's situation for women, native people, visible minorities, and for the disabled. It is not enough to encourage employment equity. It is not enough to encourage employers to do away with discrimination. There has to be some measure of enforcement.

• (1130)

What the Bill does is call on employers to identify and eliminate those practices which create employment barriers. It calls on employers to put in place positive policies to give designated groups at least proportional representation in their firms at different levels. It calls on employers to draft a plan outlining the goals and timetables by which they seek to do this. There is no enforcement mechanism for any of these practices. The only part of the Act with any sanctions at all calls for employers to file annual reports with statistics indicating what they have been doing. The first of those reports is not even due for another two years, June 1, 1988.