

Employment Equity

Mr. Redway: The Hon. Member knows quite well that under Clause 6 of the Bill there are provisions for the plan and the report. The subject matter of the plan has to be filed with the Minister and filed in the House. Then, as the Hon. Member is quite well aware, if the plan is not filed, under Clause 7 of the Bill it is an offence and subject to a fine of some \$50,000. First, there is a clause for requiring compliance with the plan, as the Hon. Member well knows. Second, one of the problems with this area previously when it was considered by the Canadian Human Rights Commission has been that it has no information in front of it to deal with violations of the requirement to treat people fairly in employment. By passing this Bill and by requiring that the plan be filed, then the evidence will be available in order to provide the Human Rights Commission and—

Mr. Rodriguez: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect, I know that the Hon. Member for York East (Mr. Redway) would not want to leave on the record information which could be misleading and which is misleading. In fact, there is no penalty for not filing the plan. There is no penalty?—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member. That is not a point of order, it is a point of debate. The Hon. Member for York East (Mr. Redway) has the floor.

Mr. Redway: Mr. Speaker, just to respond to the Hon. Member's non-point of order, if I may. Clause 6 of the Bill requires the filing of the report and Clause 7 imposes a penalty for not filing it.

To go on, once the report is filed the information is then available, information which has been lacking in the past, for the Human Rights Commission to go ahead and deal with the matter. Quite clearly, the Hon. Member, and all Hon. Members in the Opposition, know this. They know it in their heart of hearts. If they were coming clean with the House, as they always tell members of the Government to do, then they would be telling us that this is a great Bill. It is the first time that federal legislation of this sort has come forward. It certainly did not come forward when the previous Government was in office. It has an enforcement mechanism in it. It will do the job—the job it was intended to do.

Perhaps Hon. Members want to go one step further. Perhaps they would rather put people in jail. Perhaps they would rather not achieve employment equity. Perhaps they are not interested in making sure that all of the target groups, that is, women, native people, the disabled, and the visible minorities, have fair employment equity. Perhaps they are not interested in that. Certainly, I do not think members of the Party of the former Government were interested in that since they never designated visible minorities as a target group in the Public Service of Canada. In fact, it was not designated as a target group until our Government came to office in 1985.

Ms. Copps: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. We love to hear the Hon. Member for York East (Mr. Redway) speak. But, for Heaven's sake, when he speaks he should speak the truth. That is an absolute falsehood and he knows it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): That is debate. It is not a point of order. If the Hon. Member wishes to participate in debate she will have an opportunity. The Hon. Member for York East.

Mr. Redway: I certainly hope the Hon. Member will repeat that outside the House, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Copps: With pleasure. Sue me and I will see you in court.

Mr. Redway: I will be looking forward to it in the same way I looked forward to her tabling some documents in another debate which she said she would table and never did.

Just to conclude—

Ms. Copps: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. If the Hon. Member understood the rules of the House he would recognize that ordinary Members do not have the right to table documents.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I cannot believe that today, after the National Prayer Breakfast, and the fellowship which was expounded this morning, that on this beautiful Thursday we are now entering into this type of debate. I am surprised that we do not have compassion in the House. The Hon. Member for York East has the floor. If the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps) wishes to participate in the debate then she will have that opportunity.

Mr. Waddell: We have now had the benediction, let's have the speech!

Mr. Redway: As I have indicated, there is an enforcement mechanism in the legislation. It is the intention to ensure that there is employment equity for those four target groups. However, it is not the intention of the Government to try to enforce this provision by putting people in jail. It is the intention of the Government to bring that enforcement about in an orderly and logical fashion. That is what this legislation is geared at.

There are many examples in the United States of legislation of this sort. I refer to legislation with respect to human rights and civil liberties, and legislation with respect to the desegregation of the school system in the United States where penalties such as jail terms have been imposed. Time and time again it has been proved that that does not work. In fact, I was present at a debate in a committee of the House of Representatives in Washington last fall when members of the committee were debating that very issue. At that time, the administration had been called on the carpet because the system which it had put in place did not work. The system being put in place by this Bill will work. If it does not work