

Employment Equity

Let us look at the type of data required in the reports. First, there would be the industrial sector locale, the number of employees, and the number in the target group. Second, there would be a description of the occupational groups in the workplace and the number of target groups in each occupation. Third, there would be the salary ranges and the number of target group persons in each salary range. Fourth, there would be the number of employees hired, promoted and terminated, and the number of target group persons who fit into each circumstance. The target groups made clear to anyone who wanted to listen, certainly to anyone who wanted to see real action, and to the legislative committee on Bill C-62 that a firm must be obliged to develop an action plan with goals and timetables, addressing how it would go about removing discriminatory practices and taking positive steps needed to bring about employment equity.

Action plans were not in the original Bill. Indeed, the Minister claimed before the committee that an action plan for producing equity was inherent in a company. Ultimately the Government responded by presenting the committee with an amendment forcing companies to prepare action plans which contained goals and timetables. However, these action plans will be strictly confidential. As various Hon. Members have said, the plans can remain locked up in firms' personnel offices, shielded from all prying eyes.

Why should action plans be kept secret?? What about dissatisfied employees or members of a target group who think that a company is not following the intent of the Bill? Without giving an opinion on the merits of my example, the Government must know that a group of women charged that the CNR was not ready to hire women except in clerical positions. They charged that the CNR was certainly not prepared to hire women in non-traditional jobs such as those in the maintenance shops in Montreal, Moncton, Winnipeg or wherever. I am speaking from memory when I say that the Canadian Human Rights Commission found that their claim was valid. If the action plan is kept secret, how will employees or prospective employees who want to work for the company know what is happening?

I was pleasantly surprised some weeks ago when I visited the branch of the bank with which I deal in Winnipeg to see a black person working as a teller, the only one I have seen. In the City of Winnipeg, with its large native population, I have yet to see a single native person working in any branch of any bank in Winnipeg. If there are any, they are certainly very few in number. How will the Government of Canada or members of the native community in Winnipeg know that banks have action plans and whether they will work if the banks are permitted to keep them secret?

There is no penalty for failing to develop an action plan, even a poor and inadequate one. The NDP has attempted to have penalty provisions included in Clause 7, but it has been to no avail. The suggestion was rejected by the Government. We have also moved motions to cause employers to file their action plans with the Canadian Human Rights Commission and to

post them in the workplace. They were not accepted. We are not suggesting that there should be Canadian Human Rights Commission approval of action plans. We are simply saying that it would be useful, in trying to meet the objectives of the Bill, if companies were required to make the plans public.

It is worth repeating that Gordon Fairweather, Chairman of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, in a speech in February of this year, repeatedly urged management that although not required by Bill C-62 it would be in their interest to make, upon request, copies of action plans available to the commission.

I note that my time is coming to an end, but I should like to compare the Bill with the legislation in the United States. The Americans began to put legislation into effect years ago. The legislation in its final form was brought in during the administration of President Johnson. The plan requires employers to set targets and goals, and to have target dates for the hiring of people from various minority groups. The legislation has made tremendous difference and has led to tremendous improvement in the employment of people from minority groups in the United States. That country now has the most ideological President which it has had in 50 years. Some of his advisers have indicated that they want business to be free and that they do not need that kind of legislation, those numbers or goals. It is interesting and significant that U.S. Secretary of Labour Bill Brock has carried on a campaign within the U.S. administration to retain those numbers and goals, that piece of legislation. He is being supported publicly by the National Association of Manufacturers, the same kind of organization which in Canada is the main opponent of doing that here. Why is that organization opposing it?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. I have given the Hon. Member an extra couple of minutes to wind up. I will now ask for questions and comments from the House, and I am sure the Hon. Member will be able to carry on with some of his remarks.

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, I know the Hon. Member has had a good deal of experience with the American legislation because he worked for the Canadian Labour Congress on the matter. From my observation of the American legislation, it has been quite successful for visible minorities and, in particular, black Hispanics in areas like the American post office and so on. As the Member pointed out the other day, when you visit an American post office in Chicago, Los Angeles or New York, an overwhelming number of employees are black or Hispanics. It seems to me from my meetings in Washington that with women, especially at higher levels, the program has not been as successful. I may be mistaken.

● (1720)

In continuing his remarks on the success of the American legislation, could the Hon. Member tell us whether he thinks it has been of greater success with the blacks and other visible minorities than with women because of the impetus behind the