

Canadian Human Rights

people, the government has divided them between themselves and caused them to be weakened throughout the history of this department. It has been a breeding ground for discrimination against women, children and a large number of men. The minister expresses deep concern about the handling of this clause of the bill. He was most sensitive to the concerns of the members of the committee. Perhaps the committee will move one day on this one.

A woman named Mary Two Axe Early came before our committee. She was 72 years of age. I cannot remember whether she told the whole committee, but she told me that the Indian Act should either be abolished, cleaned up or altered considerably. She said that even if the land grants were settled, only a few people would benefit, and that it would not benefit women such as Mary Two Axe Early. Her statements before the committee are probably better than I can paraphrase them. I asked her if she thought there was any benefit in scrubbing the Indian Act. The justice and legal affairs committee report of April 26, at page 9:41, reads:

The Indian men will never want that Indian Act abolished. They can marry ten white women and all those women will have their rights on the reserves. They are getting money from the government, building homes for them, while their sisters are evicted. They have it too good, they will not want to change it.

She told me that she will never be buried on the reserve near her grandchildren, because she was driven off the reserve even though the wife of her brother, or her cousin—I cannot remember which—who is a white woman, can live in her place on the reserve. Mary Two Axe Early is a native-born Iroquois. The report continues:

I just wanted to say that I come from the Iroquois confederacy where we were matriarchal, and the government changed us to patriarchal—which is the man. We had clan mothers and I think we had a very good government, social life and everything. All that has changed.

She explained to me that when the Indian Act came into force, the government's dealings were with the Indian Brotherhood; the Indian Sisterhood was ignored.

This bill recognizes human rights. They will actually be realized only when society recognizes these fundamental rights. This bill is a step toward that end. Only when human rights are fully realized will we have a humane and human society.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I want to make just a brief intervention to re-emphasize the point I made on second reading of this bill with regard to clause 8 having to do with immigration. There is a provision in the immigration regulations whereby an applicant aged 35 or over is penalized one point per year to a maximum of ten points. That is totally contrary to the legislation proposed in this bill. Clause 8 deals with employment, the physically handicapped being prohibited employment. Therefore, reference to age is a discriminatory practice and should not be circulated in any form of application for employment.

Any application by immigrants who are sponsored, those who are nominated or individual, independent applications, must be accompanied by a Manpower 1234 form. There are certain exceptions, such as an application for a fiancée or if the

[Mrs. Holt.]

individual concerned is going to be bringing in enough money to be deemed an investor in Canada. In those instances the matter of age does not apply. In the normal course of events, an application by a person between 35 and 60 years of age is subject to a penalty of up to 10 points out of 100 points. In order to qualify and to be accepted as an immigrant, 50 points must be obtained, provided the further, and absolutely essential, condition of employment is met.

This piece of legislation is totally hypocritical at this point in time in view of the fact that the government has insisted for years that there shall be a points system. It insisted upon this under the white paper and also under the new bill. To me, this is totally wrong. I do not know how it could have crept in while the government has been encouraging people to hire persons over the age of 35. We know there are problems with group insurance plans, pension plans, and so on. It becomes extraordinarily difficult to fit these people into normal employment. The federal government, the provincial governments and all types of societies have been at pains to try to convince Canadian society which has behaved most mulishly and wrong-headedly in this connection, that any person over 45 was over the hill and unemployable.

I think that is wrong-headed and unjust, and I think the whole Canadian nation should hang their heads in collective shame because we overtly, and all too often silently, consent to this type of practice. We see this perpetrated in the Immigration Act. Why? It is a human right to be 45 years old and not to be discriminated against, in exactly the same way as it is a human right in this country to have a black skin and to be recognized as a human individual, or to observe any creed one chooses.

● (1610)

The Canadian Bill of Rights, passed in 1960, clearly indicates the position of a free Canadian. A number of provincial statutes, such as the Ontario human rights code and the Alberta individual rights code, are extensions of the Canadian Bill of Rights. But this bill is a sort of super blanket introduced in part for cosmetic purposes. Its very definitions condemn this government for allowing the inclusion of provisions in the immigration bill to which I alluded. I spoke to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Cullen) about this matter. Although I raised this point with the Minister of Justice (Mr. Basford) during second reading, he failed to reply to my allegations. I now invite the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, whom I see in the House, to do so.

Mr. Cullen: I am here today.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): The minister is in the House today. Perhaps it is his duty day.

Mr. Cullen: No, it is not. The hon. member is wrong, again.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Since I saw only two ministers in the House, I was persuaded it was the minister's duty day. I know ministers must serve on duty days and must have days away from the House. I do not criticize the minister