

Employment Equity

put in place what is in this Bill, because there is plenty of room to go beyond what this Bill does.

• (1530)

This Bill requires reports to be made and they will, therefore, be available in the House. We abhor to some extent the inadequacy of just allowing corporations affected by this Bill to report. The Bill does not force corporations to take any affirmative action. If we had Motion No. 8 in place we would be able to have a further reporting, and the requirement of that reporting would give it the status and commitment of law.

The federal Government cannot say at any time or cannot have said at any time that it is a good example of what should be done in equity employment. In the process of getting to where we are, the Government has not put in place the kind of solid requirements to make us believe that 10 years down the road we will have equality for all in employment in the federal Government any more than this Bill will force equality of employment in the corporation that will be affected by it.

Not too long ago, during the Leaders' debate in the election, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) made a commitment to affirmative action. In this case it was affirmative action for women. He said:

The P.C. Party has had a long commitment to an effective affirmative action program within the federal Government to provide equal opportunity to women. Our Government will make sure the hiring and promotion practices give women the opportunities they deserve. We will carefully and regularly monitor—

By accepting Motion No. 8, we would be sure that that monitoring was done and that reports would be available to Members of Parliament who would be part of the monitoring.

I want to put on the record for the House recommendations from the Boyer Report. Recommendation No. 60 on page 110 reads:

We recommend that employment equity legislation apply to all federal public sector employers and to employers under federal jurisdiction, with necessary adjustments being made by regulation for small businesses and agencies.

Many witnesses told the committee that this approach was necessary. What is the Government's response to that requirement? It is almost exactly the same as the response of the Parliamentary Secretary, namely, that the Government considers it unnecessary to make federal Crown Corporations subject to the legislation because Treasury Board has already taken the lead in employment equity.

If we could believe that, if we could see it happening, if we knew it was there, it would mean something, but as it is, we cannot see it. Even if this Bill is inadequate, it does require reporting at the end of the period of time in which it is to take effect. When we show the report to the world we will then be able to say, "here is an example of what we in the federal Government are doing in the civil service", because the report would be available to all.

We recognize the program that is in place, but we believe that it should be given the force and the commitment of law. It would in that process be an example to the people we are

asking to provide the affirmative action in their particular corporations, and it would also provide the world with a substantial recognition of progress that has been made within the Government of Canada.

A number of organizations have made a specific request in this area. Again, many of them request action by the federal Government. The aim is not so much, if the Bill passes as it is, that the Bill give them the opportunity for jobs and further equality in employment, but rather that it show that one part of the Government was living up to its rhetoric.

There are good reasons why we think this clause should be in place and force the federal Government to abide by its own laws. Treasury Board policies are totally management controlled. If management decides it wants to have affirmative action and to operate in the particular ways suggested, it may do so. If it does not, and it appears from the past record of federal civil service that management has not indicated any particular pressing desire to abide by the regulations, management will not do so.

The Public Service Staff Relations Act, which controls a certain amount of the affirmative action program, exempts that area from collective bargaining. Consequently, that can be used for an excuse for less action than is adequate. Treasury Board guidelines were made to suggest the promoting of women to high management positions. There is a tendency for those guidelines to be used for token promotions in those areas and not to recognize the majority of the women who need to be recognized and who need jobs on an equal level with men in the community. The requirements of the Treasury Board guidelines can be fulfilled without effectively doing anything about the entire population of the workforce. The Government has taken no serious initiative to identify and eliminate systemic discrimination in the Public Service. The passage of Motion No. 8 will force the Government to study the structure and do something about it, because what it has and has not done will be publicly reported.

• (1540)

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, the purpose of Motion No. 8 is to eliminate certain words from the Bill in order that the Government will not be exempt from complying with the intentions of this legislation. The legislation is so lacking in teeth, compliance, and requirements, that one wonders whether it is worthwhile continuing with debate unless the Government is prepared to listen to the people who are affected by this employment equity Act, and to provide the assurances for which they ask.

It is fairly obvious why we want the Public Service to comply with this legislation. Through the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Abella Report, and the *Obstacles* Report, a lot of work had been done in an effort to alert, study, sensitize, and act in order to ensure that people have access to the courts to enforce their rights. Despite the fact that we have laws on the books as well as the Charter of Rights, inequities continue to exist, even in the Public Service.