

*Employment Equity*

same way, but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences. How the devil do people know how that is seen by the employer if in fact the employer does not have to communicate just what it is he intends to do?

Clause 4 of the Bill indicates that the employer is required to implement employment equity in consultation with designated representatives of the employees, however those designated representatives happen to be chosen. If I consult with the Government, but then at the end of the day the Government says it is not going to tell me what the goals and targets are, then I will have no means of knowing what is going on and that is a pretty weak consultation. In fact, that takes the meat out of the process. That is not consultation.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission is a small body. It cannot monitor the actions of every employer who falls under federal regulation. There has to be a certain amount of voluntary enforcement. In fact, that is the system on which a great deal of federal law is based. Standards are set out and means are provided by which people can make complaints if they feel that the standards are not being respected. However, such a process is impossible if people are not allowed to know to what extent the employer's achievements, if any, reach the plan which the employer worked out, presumably in consultation with the employees. Only if the employer chooses to share that information will that be able to occur.

Under the Human Rights Act, the Human Rights Commission has the power to look at the implementation of employment equity, but there again the amendment would give the Human Rights Commission access on demand to the employer's plans and targets. However, because that is not as yet required, another obstacle is put before the Human Rights Commission. Conceivably it will have to go to the courts in order to get the information which in fact should be made freely available.

Canada Employment Centres are meant to ensure contract compliance in the case of larger employers who do business with the federal Government, but there again one of the ways of ensuring compliance is to see how targets and goals are being met. But that information is not going to be made available to employees. There is no requirement that it be made available to the Canada Employment Centres either. The information could simply be locked in a safe, and if anyone came to try to find out about the plans the employer need simply indicate that he has kept the information in a safe for three years where it has been safe from any form of public scrutiny.

*[Translation]*

Mr. Speaker, I want to stress the fact that Clause 5 of the Bill as drafted after committee consideration is so weak that it is practically useless.

It is useless because the employer must spell out in a plan each one of his goals with respect to employment equity, but this plan would not be unveiled to the employees, the unions

representing the employees, the Canadian Human Rights Commission, or the manpower centres.

So nobody will know the goals of the employer because the Government refuses to give that right to the employees. Mr. Speaker, I am wondering just how they can have the kind of consultation referred to in the subclauses of the Bill when the people who will be consulted will have no idea whether the employer has accepted or rejected their suggestions. They might even be given contradictory information. The employer will tell them: Yes, I agree, it is a good idea, your suggestions are excellent. But the day after, the employer prepares a plan of goals which completely ignores the remarks and suggestions made by the employees. But ask the employer whether he considers suggestions made by his employees and the employer will answer: of course. I promised I would consider their suggestions. That is, he considers them and then ignores them, and his employees will never know whether he included a substantial portion of their suggestions in the action plan set up by the employer for a three-year period.

As I said earlier, I am amazed, especially since the Parliamentary Secretary belongs to a group that has suffered terrible discrimination in the past, that he should fail to see how important it is to shine the light of information on all this so there are no secrets and employers, employees and unions discuss the plans together. That is what they want, Mr. Speaker. But in our society, we often get no further than voluntary compliance with legislation passed by the Parliament of Canada. In this case, Mr. Speaker, it would be impossible for people to try and influence the employer and make him meet the objectives set in his action plan, because his employees do not know what they are, except when the employer is a good employer who is serious about meeting his obligations.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest):** Order. I am sorry but the Hon. Member's time has expired. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Weiner).

• (1520)

*[English]*

**Mr. Gerry Weiner (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the very concerned remarks of my hon. colleague. Indeed he is correct when he states that I am a product of an environment which caused me to suffer a great deal in my lifetime. However, for me life has fulfilled much of my hopes. This has been an absolutely marvellous country to myself and to my antecedents. My father-in-law, who is still alive and very well, came to Canada without five cents and became one of the outstanding achievers in our community as a result of hard work and dedication. We are sending forth a message, and that message is one of hope.

**Mr. Cassidy:** Keep it secret, that is the message.