

Employment Equity

I am speaking about consultation with disabled people because Motion 12A, put forward by the Hon. Member for Notre-dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand), talks about consultation with groups designated by the four target groups. A good example of the lack of consultation by the Conservative Party occurred yesterday when those Hon. Members would not listen to what the disabled people had to say.

Beryl Potter came here on March 26 with three or four disabled people and confronted the Prime Minister at the Conservative caucus. He told her through Geoff Norquay, his policy adviser, that they would be back to her before this Bill came back to the House for report stage last Thursday. But that was not done. That is why the disabled were angry. They were promised that the Government would get back to them before this Bill came back to the House and that promise was broken. That is not consultation. That is trying to take advantage of people. That is the way the Conservative Party is treating the disabled. That is why I am angry and that is why they are angry.

Mr. McDermid: Nonsense.

Mr. Nystrom: The Hon. Member can call it nonsense if he wants. He can call Mrs. Potter and her comments nonsense if he wants, but the Prime Minister promised to get back to them before the Bill came back to the House and he did not do it. A letter went out yesterday but yesterday, is not last Thursday.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order. The Hon. Member's time has expired.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on the motion moved by my hon. colleague from Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand), namely, Motion No. 12A, to amend the proposed legislation by striking out line 30 at page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

"ing agent, or with such persons as have been designated by the designated groups to act as their representatives, implement employment equity by".

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to this motion first of all, because I want to congratulate and thank the Government for having agreed to an amendment to Clause 4. I think that after the debate on second reading, we made the point that there was a need for consultation and for involving the people in the designated groups, the groups targeted by Bill C-62, and I am referring to women, the disabled, visible minorities and native people.

Mr. Speaker, if we take the trouble to identify these groups and are willing to help them find employment without being discriminated against, it stands to reason we should consult them.

The amendment by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East merely proposes to further specify certain aspects, so that, the legislation does not merely provide

for consulting with the employees who are represented by the bargaining agents, but, when those employees are represented by a specific group, whether it is the physically disabled or another group, that these groups and the representatives, the leaders of these groups are also involved in the consultation process, to avoid overlooking the concerns of the people for whom the legislation was designed, and to ensure that these people, who are organized in associations and interest groups, are heard and are listened to, and that the employer, when he will have to implement this employment equity policy, will not only consult with the unions which are there to make the system a democratic one, but will make the system even more democratic by ensuring that the designated groups representing the four target groups I mentioned earlier are also involved in the process. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favour of this amendment which I think makes a useful contribution to the Bill and is also supported by the target groups we mentioned earlier.

● (1150)

[*English*]

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to support the motions put forward by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand) Motions Nos. 12A and 14A.

By way of preamble I might say that I had not intended to speak on these particular motions. However, having sat in the House yesterday during Question Period, having met beforehand outside on the steps of this place with representatives of the disabled, and after seeing the response of Government members—their laughter, heckling and the contempt which they showed for these people in our galleries—I felt it was important that all of us who share the concern about that behaviour rise and make our voices heard on these amendments.

These representatives of the disabled were here seeking in a straightforward, honest and civilized manner to make their concerns known to a Government which has refused to listen to them thus far.

Mr. McDermid: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. First, my point of order is that the remarks of the Hon. Member have nothing to do with the amendments we are discussing. Second, the statements of the Hon. Member are not factually correct. I think that he should be called to order. He is another person who is stooping so low so as to use these people as political pawns. It is unforgivable.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please.

Mr. Nystrom: It is not a point of order.

Mr. McDermid: Just more smut!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please. The Speaker certainly does not agree with everything which the Parliamentary Secretary has said. However, I think he has a