

*Motions*

House I learned a great deal about the procedure for Public Service staffing. I was interested to learn, for example, that the PSC, under the authority of the Public Service Employment Act, has responsibility for staffing in the Public Service but in fact delegates 98 per cent of that responsibility to the departments. While there is the appearance that the PSC is the major force in the whole procedure, the actual responsibility for administering the staffing procedure lies not with the PSC but with the government departments involved. That created some real problems and led to the recommendations in this report.

The first recommendation deals with simplification and condensation of the rules and regulations governing staffing procedures. My understanding of the evidence was that there are several volumes of rules and regulations which every department manager has to follow. However, the evidence indicated that it was in fact impossible for any manager to have a firm grasp or understanding, or even to have read anything but a small fraction of the rules and regulations. As a result, it was and is quite clear to the committee that in no way, shape or form can these rules and regulations, which if piled end to end would probably be two or three feet high, possibly be carried out in any legitimate fashion by the various managers. Therefore that is an important recommendation which we should see implemented by the PSC.

The recommendation that I would like to target in on most specifically has to do with affirmative action. The recommendation is that the PSC develop effective procedures to monitor and assess a department's progress in implementing affirmative action programs and report that progress in writing by November 30, 1986. This Parliament has spent a good deal of time discussing the issue of employment equity. We had an employment equity Bill before us. It was substantially debated on second reading. There was a good deal of discussion in committee. It then came back to the House and there was a tremendous amount of discussion at report stage and on third reading. From what I understand there has since been a lot of discussion in the Senate on the Bill as well.

There was a feeling, if I grasped it correctly, in many parts of society that the Bill on employment equity did not go far enough in addressing some of the problems of affirmative action, if we can call it that. You will remember there were four target groups outlined in that Bill: women, the disabled, native people and visible minorities. The gist of the Bill was to make sure that in all dealings governed by federal law the principles of employment equity with respect to those four target groups should be put in place, made effective and maintained. The Bill itself did not deal with the federal Civil Service. Neither did it deal with businesses which contract with the federal Government. However, the Government at that time indicated as far as contractual relationships with other businesses were concerned, it was going to put in place by regulation the same sort of rules. At the same time it indicated that rules and regulations had already been put in place with respect to the federal Civil Service. However, it

became quite clear in the discussions relating to the employment equity legislation that that was not the reality.

The previous Government had some affirmative action programs put into place specifically dealing with women, the disabled and native people. However, there had been no such provision for visible minorities. When the chairman of the PSC, at the request of the committee, tabled material relating to the way in which Government was performing with respect to these four target groups, it became quite clear that there had not been much progress made at all. There had been some with respect to women but virtually none with respect to the disabled, native people, and certainly not for visible minorities.

When we looked at the material tabled, particularly with respect to senior management positions in the Public Service, we found no one from the disabled or visible minority groups in those positions. Therefore it seems to me we must start to address this problem with some urgency to make sure that the Public Service truly reflects the make-up of this country's population.

There are problems in doing this, especially regarding visible minorities. For one thing, there is a problem with the identification of visible minorities. As you know, according to our human rights legislation the question of race and colour cannot be asked on employment applications. That immediately puts the federal Civil Service at a disadvantage when it comes to trying to implement some form of affirmative action program for visible minorities.

Since September 4, 1984, when the present Government took office, there has been a specific effort made to implement affirmative action for visible minorities, and to overcome the technical problems of identifying visible minorities in the Public Service. This has been done on a voluntary basis asking all Members of the Public Service to agree or disagree with their consent to have this identification. It is starting to take some shape. There is starting to be a data base and there is starting to be some basis for actually ensuring that the program of employment equity at senior levels of government with respect to visible minorities can now start to become effective.

● (1250)

There is a specific women's secretariat within the Government to monitor whether women are going into place under the affirmative action program that was established some years ago. It seems to me that this is the same sort of thing that we should be doing with visible minorities and these other target groups. It is only in that way that we are going to ensure that this sort of a program is carried out and that we do have a Public Service that truly reflects the realities of life in this country and the realities of the make-up of the Canadian population.

It is with all of that in mind that I feel that the motion by the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier is certainly one that should be adopted by this House. There has been a feeling in