

*Government Orders*

If that member realizes what is going on down there and the problems they are having and the people we talked about, he would not be in the House whining about it.

He is trying to do exactly what is going on in the House. He is trying to turn a situation where we were looking at some real problems of crime in his riding into a racial issue. That is what is wrong.

We have been talking to the solicitor general about the crime problem in this area and we have been getting very poor answers. There has been no recognition from the government, no real action to curb it. We have been down in the member's riding because we were asked to go. If he does not like the way we travel, that is really just too bad.

I belong to a party that goes out and talks to the people rather than these pompous Liberals who complain that Reformers are in their ridings dealing with issues. They turn a crime issue into a racial issue. That is exactly what is wrong. He has a crime issue in his riding.

• (1305)

They do not have the courage to deal with the crime because they are so sensitive about something they call a racial issue.

**Mr. Barry Campbell (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore.

[*Translation*]

I am pleased to discuss this bill, which seeks to make the workplace fairer for all Canadians, particularly those who have traditionally been disadvantaged.

This is also an opportunity to reply to some very severe criticism made by Reform Party members in terms of this bill's probable impact on the Canadian business world.

[*English*]

I wish they would stay with us long enough to hear some of these responses so they do not come back uneducated. They asked a lot of questions. They want responses. I am going to reply to some of their concerns and it would be great if they were here to hear them.

[*Translation*]

This criticism has dire consequences, because it seeks to undermine the efforts made to ensure fair treatment of Canadian workers.

[*English*]

**Mr. McClelland:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I note that it is customary and appropriate that we do not make reference to the absence or the attendance of other hon. members.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I thank the hon. member for raising the point. His interpretation is correct. If that

assessment is correct I would ask the hon. member for St. Paul's to deal with it. We should all be mindful, as the hon. member for Edmonton Southwest has raised the issue, that we are not at any time to make reference to the absence of members from the Chamber.

**Mr. Campbell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to speak to this bill and to have the attention of all members of Parliament.

[*Translation*]

So, I want to take a few minutes to discuss the provisions of this bill and explain how they will not only benefit disadvantaged people in the workplace, but also employers.

This legislation reflects two basic values which Canadians really care about: fairness and equality. It also takes into account the need to promote business development, in order to create jobs and opportunities which will ensure a good future for all Canadians, whoever they are and whatever their situations.

[*English*]

This bill seeks to achieve a critical balance between competitiveness and compassion which is so vital for assuring opportunities for Canadians.

While we in government are seeking to enhance fairness and opportunities for Canadians, some opposition members either do not see the need for such measures or feel that no improvements are required to existing legislation. In my opinion they simply do not get it.

They have never had the experience. They do not understand what it is to apply for a job, to have all of the qualifications and to somehow suspect that their colour, their gender, their disability or their orientation precludes them from a fair chance at that job.

I do not necessarily ascribe malevolence to interviewers or people who do the hiring. It is human nature. We have all felt it ourselves. When we face candidates before us we tend to like those who are just like us better than we like everybody else. We feel more comfortable. We feel more at home. We can see ourselves working with them.

We have only to look at the membership of the third party to see that they have the same problem and perhaps need a plan to deal with it within their own ranks.

An interesting study was done recently with respect to hiring. Employers were asked to consider applicants on the basis of their applications only. There were no personal interviews. It was interesting to see employers hire people without regard to colour, gender or disability and only find out later their colour, gender or disability and then say: "I do not care. I will make whatever arrangements are necessary. Whether it is a ramp for a wheelchair, or whatever it is, I want that candidate".