

*Motions*

dinosaurs who is opposed to these recommendations yelled out: "Don't hold your breath". He said that we should not hold our breath because we will not see the changes in reality. Mr. Speaker, I am calling upon the Government to make equality a reality for all Canadians. The Standing Committee on Human Rights will have the mandate to ensure that the recommendations of this report become a reality, and we will continue to press for full implementation of the long overdue recommendations.

**Mrs. Finestone:** Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure to share this experience with my colleague, the Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson) and five members of the Conservative Party. Does the Member not have some sense of hope that as a result of this report we will move toward equality in any way?

**Mr. Robinson:** Mr. Speaker, many of us were pleasantly surprised by a number of the more progressive suggestions made by the Government in a number of areas. The committee had hoped that the Government would move forward, and the commitment is on paper.

In response to the specific question, I am considerably concerned by the suggestion by a number of Conservative Members of Parliament, including the Hon. Member for Calgary East and the Hon. Member for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta (Mr. Friesen), in the areas of the role of women in the Canadian Armed Forces and putting an end to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, that while the words are there, these changes will not become reality.

As an example, on the issue of sexual orientation, the Member for Calgary East said that he, along with over 50 per cent of the Tory MPs, opposes the recommendations. The recommendations are not for special rights, but for ending discrimination. They are opposed to recommendations for helping to put an end to an atmosphere of intolerance, oppression and pain which can lead to violence, as we saw in the tragic death of the young teacher in Toronto. The Member for Calgary East said: "We are condoning a third sex, somebody who is not exactly normal. We are changing the moral fabric of the nation this way. We are sending out a dangerous message".

I regret to say that the Liberal Member for York South-Weston (Mr. Nunziata), the critic of the Solicitor General for the Liberal Party, has said that he is opposed to the recommendations with respect to sexual orientation. He believes that the recommendations with respect to the RCMP should not be implemented. He said he would consider it an invasion of his personal privacy if he had to be searched by a homosexual Mountie. For heaven's sake, if that is the kind of attitude we have in the House we must ask ourselves how this particular Member would feel about women in the RCMP. Does he have an aversion to being searched by women? Would he keep women out of the RCMP as well?

In response to the question of my hon. friend from Mount Royal, I acknowledge that progress has been made. If nothing else, the squeals of outrage from the more reactionary forces within the Tory caucus gives some indication of that. Never-

theless, I await, as I am sure many other Members of the House and women and minorities across the country do, specific and concrete proposals for legislative change.

**Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise in this House on behalf of the Liberal Party to comment on the Government's response to the report, *Equality for All*. I wish I could feel a great sense of joy, and I wish the name of the report had been "Equality for Real". Nonetheless, I believe that a small step toward equality has been achieved. I will, however, indicate the areas in which I feel disappointed.

Four years ago the Liberal Government and its provincial counterparts brought to Canada the guarantees which are so vital to life in a democratic society such as ours. They express, in legal terminology, the values which we hold dear, the values we proudly stand for on the world stage, the very values we wish to protect and pass down to our children and our children's children. Those are the kinds of values which are in this very wonderful constitution and the Charter. We entrenched, for the first time, in this constitutional document of rights, rights which are indispensable in a world in which oppression can much too easily overwhelm democracy and justice.

As the representative of the Liberal caucus on the parliamentary committee established to study the equality section of our Charter of Canadian Rights and Freedoms, I was part of that very special group of parliamentarians asked to propose ways and means to implement the intent of the law so that all Canadians would benefit fully from Section 15 of our Charter. This was to ensure that our laws and institutions, our judicial system, contain the appropriate safeguards to meet the constitutional requirements set out in Section 15 of the Charter. A difficult task for our committee? Monumentally difficult when you consider the depth and extent of Section 15.

● (1610)

I want to take this opportunity to express to my confreres and our staff my respect and admiration for their commitment to the task. To all those groups who exercised their democratic rights and fulfilled their obligations to the sector of society whose interests they addressed we all owe a debt of gratitude. They brought many issues of discrimination to our attention for consideration. In a sense the true partnership, the linkage between the voluntary sector and Government initiative was concretely demonstrated, in the best interests of our society. I would like to quote the full extent of this section.

[*Translation*]

Section 15 reads as follows:

Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

At first blush, Mr. Speaker, this statement would seem so straightforward and so basic to any fair and charitable individual that, hopefully, its implementation should be nothing more than a mere formality. After all we live in a free and