

Employment Equity

trade unions are represented in the Employment Equity Bill, Bill C-62.

What is the good of holding public hearings and having consultations if at the end of the consultative process the Government has not listened? Why do we go through the expense, take up the time of Members of Parliament and the staff of this institution, if we are not going to listen to the people who come before parliamentary committees?

A very good example of this is that the Conservative Party ignored the handicapped who came here yesterday. Over a hundred handicapped persons came here yesterday at considerable sacrifice and expense because they felt they had not been listened to by the Conservative Government. Beryl Potter on the National News last night said that she was a supporter of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). She told of how she had worked for him and that she was a Conservative but had never been so disappointed in her life as she was yesterday at the non-response of the Conservative Government. She is not one of my constituents, although she is a friend, but I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that if I treated my constituents in that way I would not deserve to be re-elected to this Chamber.

Mr. McDermid: Come on.

Mr. Nystrom: We are now getting complaints from Members of the Conservative Party who are betraying their own supporters and friends. Once again, they are starting to laugh at some of the people who came here.

Mr. McDermid: What nonsense. We are laughing at you. You are nothing but a big clown.

Mr. Gauthier: Go get them.

Mr. Nystrom: There are a lot of different ideas in politics, but to laugh at the disabled who came here to demonstrate is another matter.

Mr. Lewis: We are laughing at you.

Mr. Nystrom: Just yesterday in Question Period a Member of the Liberal Party, the Hon. Member for Eglinton-Lawrence (Mr. de Corneille), mentioned the disabled people in the galleries. Some of those Hon. Members started to laugh and interject in what I thought was a very inappropriate manner.

Mr. McDermid: That is a lie.

Mr. Lewis: That is a lie.

Mr. Nystrom: Is it appropriate to call me a liar, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Lewis: We didn't call you a liar.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order. I think the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. McDermid) may wish to retract that word.

Mr. McDermid: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will retract those words. I will say, however, that no one on this side laughed at the handicapped people here yesterday. It was very unfortunate that the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) made those statements.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I wish to retract my comments as well, Mr. Speaker, but I would reiterate that no one on this side at any time laughed at the plight of the disabled.

Mr. McDermid: That was very unfair, Lorne.

Mr. Lewis: We were laughing at the point the Hon. Member was trying to make.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I can understand Hon. Members wanting to qualify their retractions. I can appreciate that.

Mr. McDermid: It's cheap politics.

Mr. Deans: However, you know, Sir, I am sure, that the requirement is that the retraction be absolute and without qualifications or explanation.

Mr. Lewis: It was.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order. Before the Hon. Member resumes debate may I draw to the attention of all Hon. Members of the House that we should keep in mind the subject matter of the amendments. Bearing that in mind, perhaps we could avoid such situations.

Mr. McDermid: Clean up your act.

Mr. Nystrom: If Hon. Members of the Conservative Party do not believe what I am saying, why do they not give Beryl Potter a call? If they were not laughing, they certainly were not treating them with much respect, with all kinds of hooting and hollering and interjecting during Question Period yesterday when questions were put about disabled people.

Mr. McDermid: Cheap shot.

Mr. Nystrom: They can continue saying that as long as they want. The more they say it, the merrier. It just shows where they stand when it comes to an issue like this. Those people came here at considerable expense—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order.

Mr. McDermid: You know better.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order. I think the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) knows full well that he is far away from the subject.

Mr. McDermid: Off the wall, as usual.

Mr. Nystrom: Hon. Members opposite are very upset. I must have hit a tender spot.