

*Routine Proceedings*

fund a post-census survey of issues affecting Canada's disabled in the next census. That report is welcomed and it is extremely important because it will finally give us information so that we can talk to government departments and, indeed, cabinet ministers can use that very important information to formulate needed policies and to bring forward programs after they have had that information.

However, on balance the rest of the government's response was, to say the least, disappointing and extremely sad. The government response followed every cliché and argument that has been followed by every other previous minister in every other previous government. I would say it was a lack of response. They used exactly the same language that the previous government used to appease not only the committee but the people who were addressing the committee, who were coming to us with the problems, as they saw it, looking for some kind of redress.

One of the major problems in the government's response has been one that we recognized when we were dealing with the *Obstacles* report. We initially made those 130 recommendations on what we felt should be done to address the problems that society has, let alone the disabled community, because those problems affect us all. The one central problem is the lack of accountability. It is the lack of action, even if there is an expressed political will among cabinet ministers individually or collectively to do something concrete about these concerns. That is the key problem.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, if you go back to the original *Obstacles* report, you will find that the committee addressed that concern. Based on experiences gathered in other jurisdictions, particularly in Europe, where governments who had been a bit ahead of ourselves in many of these respects had told us that nothing would happen in a very positive way unless first of all a minister of the Crown was given sole responsibility, a policeman if you will, to make sure that not only other cabinet members but people in cabinet offices and in various government departments did what they were asked to do by the politicians. Based on their own experiences over the last 10 or 11 years, I suspect that is the one element that has been missing.

• (1530)

I am not saying it is being done in a bad way, but I am saying that the pressure has not been there. There has

not been a process of accountability set up to make sure that people are doing what they are supposed to be doing. That is why we are still having problems with integration, both economic and social integration. That is the key problem and that is why we took the time to address those concerns in this particular report. The whole accountability question dominates this report. That is why we chose to title this report *A Consensus for Action*.

In the last year or so, we have heard not only from people in the disability community, but we heard from government bureaucrats, ministers, and a whole range of people in the public sector. We are convinced that there is a public political will to support change. There is no question about that. The problem comes from those people who are supposed to develop policy and make sure that policy is being enacted so that the political will that we have observed is actually carried out.

I have some examples of where the political will exists, at least on paper. The Throne Speech of November 5, 1984, insofar as it affects disabled Canadians, stated:

It is time to recognize also the responsibility we all share to bring those amongst us who suffer from physical and mental disabilities into the productive mainstream of Canadian life.

That is a clear-stated government policy on November 5, 1984.

Now I will come to October 1, 1986. In another Speech from the Throne, the government stated that "Canadians recognize the courage and talent of our disabled citizens. Inspired by the example of Rick Hansen, we are made more aware of the potential for new directions and initiatives to aid the disabled."

On the next page it goes on to state: "Honourable members, you will be asked to consider amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act which will represent further progress in the long march of this nation towards full equality."

That was in 1986. The government again, a week and a half ago, said exactly the same thing. What is the problem? Why are we not seeing these amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act? It is a relatively simple demand. It is clearly understood. It is accepted by government. Why not do it? That is the second Speech from the Throne.