

Oral Questions

Employment Equity Act and said that the results were far from encouraging. These remarks were repeated by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and the Canadian Ethnocultural Council.

The Employment Equity Act was supposed to bring fair play in the market-place and in the labour force for visible minorities, women, disabled people and aboriginal people of this country. It has not been doing this. Under the circumstances, is the minister now ready to bring in amendments to the Employment Equity Act to ensure effective sanctions and to provide an enforcement agency for that law? Will she do that immediately?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Mr. Speaker, we implemented a law that had never been implemented before 1984. We received the reports for the second year and we all know that the legislation is to be reviewed in 1991.

I am following progress very closely and I intend to make any amendments that may be required during the year.

I must add that we have excellent co-operation from most companies with whom we work. Needless to say, changing attitudes takes a lot of time. Progress is gradual. This is an incentive. We strictly and scrupulously respect the sanctions provided and we will apply them.

[English]

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, according to the government's own report, some of the worst performers under the Employment Equity Act are prominent national firms such as the CBC, Air Canada, the Royal Bank, the Canadian Ports Corporation, Imperial Oil, Bell Canada, the Canada Council and many others which have made no progress.

I want to ask the minister if she is happy with this record. If she is not, what is she going to do about it?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Mr. Speaker, I repeated that I was not satisfied with the progress made and that I find it is still not enough. I also

reiterated our intention to monitor the progress very closely as we are in the third year of the program. Major changes must occur; otherwise, political action will be taken.

• (1450)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. For several months, observers of the political scene in Haiti have been warning Canadian authorities about General Avril. After a series of murders and basic rights violations, we now have a proclamation of a state of siege. Has the minister decided to ask the Haitian Ambassador to his office, to express the indignation of thousands of Canadians who have an interest in what is happening in that country, and what steps does the government intend to take to further progress already made towards democracy in Haiti? Will this government let itself be fooled by General Avril as it was by General Namphy?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, all Members of this House are concerned about the situation in Haiti. As you know the government has suspended all bilateral discussions with the Haitian government on development aid, and it is now time for non-governmental organizations to step in. We are monitoring the situation in Haiti very closely. We shall be talking directly to the ambassador, to determine whether there are any options for Canada to do more than just express its position and whether we could in some way influence the situation in an effective manner.

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): I want to thank the minister for his answer, and in the light of what he just said, I have a supplementary for the Prime Minister.

Is the Prime Minister prepared to order his Minister of Employment and Immigration to cancel all planned deportations to Haiti and legalize the status of hundreds of these citizens who are now living in Montreal, not knowing whether tomorrow or the next day they will be deported to Haiti or if they will finally get landed immigrant status in a country where they were seeking a peaceful life?