

Oral Questions

Workers' Week, a week of community awareness events to draw attention to the plight of the older workers. Older workers are facing a crisis situation in Canada. There are an estimated 15,000 people in Hamilton alone, older workers, who cannot find employment. I think the Minister has a responsibility to tell this House what the Government is willing to do to implement a program that will respond to these older workers.

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member just said, the Canadian Jobs Strategy we have implemented is based on a new philosophy and is adapted to all groups in Canada, from older workers down to students. We have also implemented the Canadian Jobs Strategy for women. The unemployment rate among older workers is 5.6 per cent, which is well below the national average. I think we can say that older workers are working, and that within our programs we have components that are appropriate for all groups in this country.

[English]

ADVISORY COUNCIL'S RECOMMENDATION

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, what I am hearing is that the Canadian Jobs Strategy is responding to older workers. We know by three reports now that older workers are in a crisis situation in Canada. Certainly there have been all sorts of reports that have come out. The Advisory Council of Employment and Immigration has asked the Government to put 100 per cent dollars in it. If it is not going to meet the promises it made to Canadian older workers two years ago, is it at least willing to see that that recommendation is implemented?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, during the past two years, we have spent a major part of our budget on our job strategy. The results are there, and we are proud of what we have accomplished. Of course older workers are part of our new strategy and our new philosophy. We are working to achieve results in the long term, and we are convinced that the political measures we took were the right ones, and we are proud of this.

* * *

[English]

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

PUBLICATION OF COMPLIANCE REPORTS

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of State for Employment and Immigration. It involves the fact that two years ago the Government introduced, and this Parliament passed, the very first ever employment equity legislation in this country. It was

aimed, of course, at providing equal opportunity in employment for women, visible minorities, the disabled, and native people.

The legislation provided that businesses regulated federally were required to file compliance reports by the first of June of this year. Will the Minister advise the House when the Government intends to make those compliance reports public, and whether the Government intends to introduce employment targets under this legislation the way it has for visible minorities, women, the disabled, and native people, in the Public Service?

[Translation]

L'Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Hon. Member who is to be commended for his interest in our employment equity legislation, a social measure this Government introduced. It is a pleasure to be able to announce today that I have received 96 per cent of the first annual reports that companies were supposed to file. This is a remarkable response, and by the end of this fall, I will table my general report in the House.

I am also considering what kind of incentives we can use with respect to the small number of persons who have failed to comply with the legislation. We are analysing these files and will take appropriate steps to deal with the situation.

* * *

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

PATRONAGE ALLEGATIONS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister and concerns the statements by the Hon. Member for Rosemont. In answer to my colleague from York Centre as to whether an investigation would be conducted of members of the Conservative Party regarding the allegations of a system of contract pay-offs, the Deputy Prime Minister said that he would investigate, that he would check with the Deputy Commissioner of the RCMP and that he would report to the House of Commons.

My question is, further to the statements made by the Hon. Member for Rosemont, a former Cabinet Minister, would the Deputy Prime Minister be prepared to do that, to contact the Hon. Member for Rosemont, to find out about the accusations she made . . . statements she made to the press and report to the House of Commons at the same time as he reports to the Deputy Commissioner?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, that is a perfectly legitimate question. My understanding is there was one short sentence in a very long story that was in the press. Of