

Adjournment Debate

Second, under U.S. jurisprudence, the equal employment opportunities commission in its final amendment to guidelines on discrimination because of sex has included a number of guidelines dealing with sexual harassment. Therefore, sexual harassment is included within the discrimination based on sex.

Third, the Canadian Human Rights Commission in its newsletter of autumn, 1981, has underlined that under Part VII it does have the ability to deal with sexual harassment. The commission used a page and a half to define what is sexual harassment, and it feels it has the power to deal with it.

Last, the opinion of the Department of Justice is and has been that sexual harassment is already prohibited under the Canadian Human Rights Code. Nevertheless, sexual harassment is abhorrent conduct. It is, unfortunately, too widespread. Women are the principal victims of this offence. We agree that they must be protected against it.

In addition, it must be realized there are other groups in our society who are protected by the human rights code against

discrimination based on race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin. The members of this government, like all right-thinking Canadians, are opposed to sexual and, indeed, to any form of harassment. That is why the Department of Justice is presently examining the impact of all forms of harassment. I expect that very soon its recommendations will go to cabinet making sexual harassment an explicit offence, as opposed to just an implicit offence, as it now is, even though it is still prohibited under the Canadian Human Rights Code. Making it explicit will create an even greater awareness on the part of all Canadians of this degrading, discriminatory offence against women.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to be adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until two o'clock.

At 10.30 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.
