

*Government Orders*

of them are women. That is a record that this government should be ashamed of, the fact that the vast majority of its lowest paid employees are women.

We moved an amendment yesterday to ask the government to make sure that it implemented pay equity rather than treating it as something to be negotiated at the bargaining table. It is the law of Canada, after all and any other employer would have to live with it.

This government refused to consider that amendment. We did not say: "Add more money to employment equity." We just said: "Stop paying these phoney token payments to people, as if they do not deserve them as part of their salary, but make these payments part of the salary so that they fully qualify for other benefits such as pensions".

No wonder most of the elderly poor in this country are women, when they cannot even earn wages that reflect the value of the work they do. This government refuses to implement pay equity.

The Human Rights Commissioner has slammed this government for its refusal to implement pay equity. The minister can stand up all he wants, such as yesterday, and talk about how much money the government is putting into pay equity. He knows that that is one-third of what is needed to give groups of employees in the government, who are primarily women, equal pay for similar work being performed by groups, who are primarily men, and who are much higher paid.

He knows that that should be incorporated into salaries. That is the only thing that is true pay equity, and he has consistently refused to it. He has consistently insisted on fighting the Human Rights Commission when it tries to make a decision that will introduce pay equity into the Public Service.

I challenge the minister to explain why this government wants to talk about pay equity but not implement it.

Bonuses is another issue of fairness. The minister has been waffling all over the place on that in the last week. I want to point out to Canadians that whatever the minister has said in the media, whatever the minister has said in the House, again we have to look at the facts. The facts are that in the legislation before the House today,

this government intends to implement bonuses which are specifically exempted from any controls.

An amendment was introduced in the House yesterday to take out that exemption so that bonuses would be included in the freeze on increases. The government did not accept that amendment. This government, despite the minister saying in the House and in the media that there would be no bonuses, has insisted on bringing forward a law that exempts bonuses from any limits.

This government has brought forward a bill that allows it to exempt any employee or any group of employees from any of the provisions of this act, giving it full freedom to play favouritism as it has done up until now, with contracts to those who are doing well already and to bring down the hammer on those who are not.

The government published an ad that said it has offered pay equity. It has offered to incorporate pay equity into salaries. The government is very clever about not telling the truth. What it did not tell people is that it is only a small portion of what those groups of employees are due, and that it does not intend to do it tomorrow, but to do it some time in the future.

If the government is going to be spending my money and the money of the taxpayers of Canada to put out advertisements, those advertisements had better tell the truth, and this one did not.

I challenge the minister or one of the speakers from the government side to say how this government is going to implement, in legislation, the promises the minister has made in the media, that there will be no bonuses. Not that I agree with that. Not that I think it is fair. I do not think this whole piece of legislation is fair. I think everybody should be treated the same. I think that what applies to one should apply to all. The minister cannot simply stand up in this House and say he is going to do something and then go to the media and say he is going to do something and then refuse to put it in this piece of legislation before us.

The minister has talked about economic recovery. This kind of turmoil does more damage to economic recovery than any amount of fair negotiation might do. I want to touch on one more point.

In the last few years the government has insisted on firing people and contracting out a lot of work. The minister said that not many people have been touched by the downsizing lay-off program. He is wrong. He is totally ignoring the tens of thousands of people who have