CURRENTS

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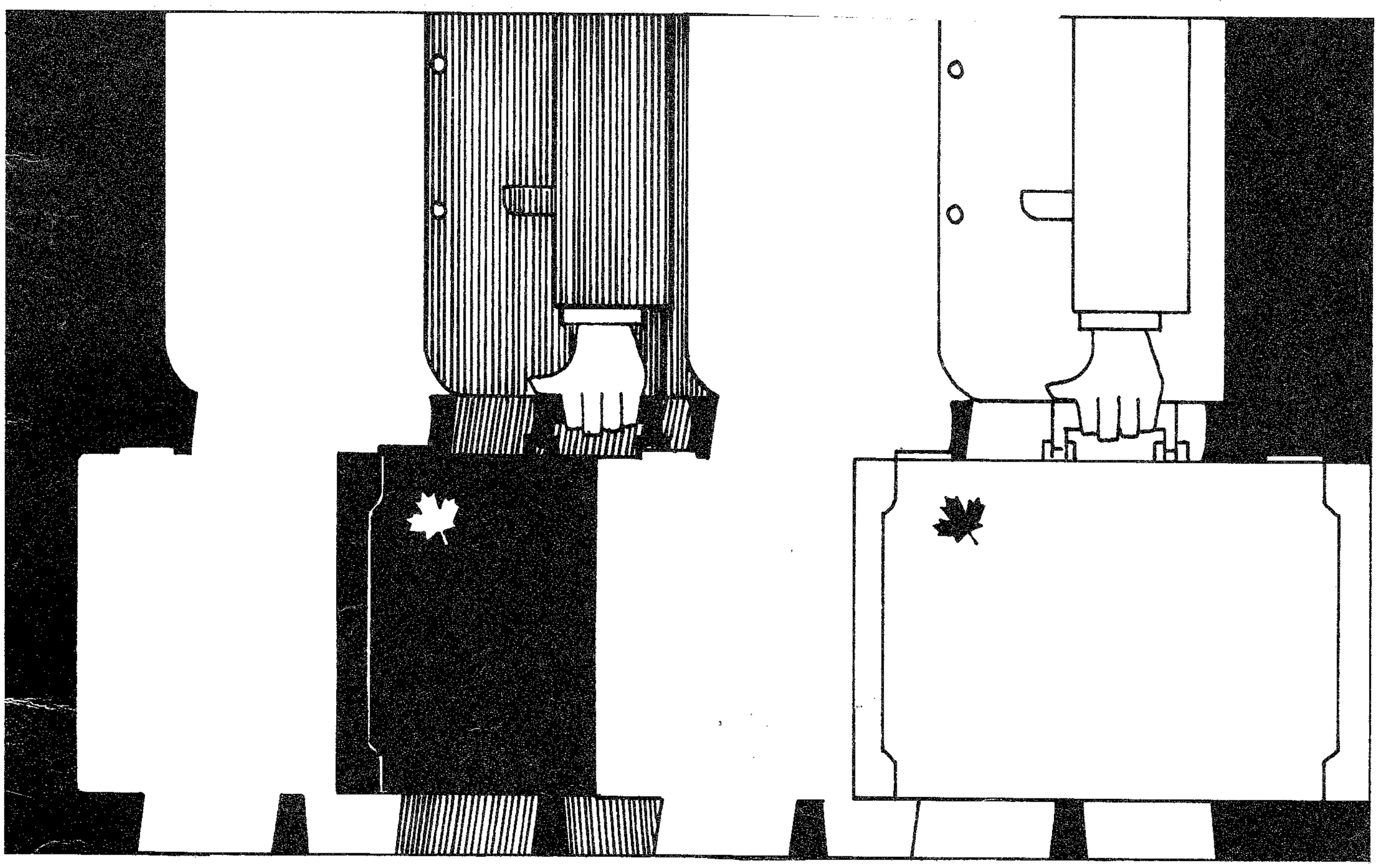
Race Relations and Canadian Business



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CONTENTS

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The Urban Alliance on Race Relations formed in July 1975 "to promote a stable and healthy multiracial environment in the community," is a non-profit organization made up of volunteers from all sectors of the community.

The Urban Alliance on Race Relations is an educational agency and an advocate and intermediary for the visible minorities. It works toward encouraging better race relations, increased understanding and awareness among our multicutural, mutliracial population through programmes of education directed at both the private sectors of the community. It is also focusing its efforts on the institutions of our society including educational systems, employment, government, media, legislation, police, social service agencies,and human services, in order to reduce patterns of discrimination and inequality of opportunity which may exist within these institutions.

The work of the organization is carried out through committees such as:

Educational Institutions; Legislation; Media; Law Enforcement.

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EDITORIAL

Good Policies and Poor Practices

An increasing number of institutions and agencies in all sectors of Canadian life are articulating finely worded commitments and policies with regard to equity issues. Unfortunately, these have seldom been translated into good practices. The pursuit of racial equality in Canada appears to be frequently hampered by an inability to translate policy into time efficient and cost efficient procedures that have a measurable impact on eradicating racial disadvantage and discrimination. There is a danger that the impetus and commitment to equity will unravel in a collection of uncertain, cumbersome, and misdirected activities that do not achieve any real results in removing racial inequalities. Such confused and superficial responses may indeed reinforce and even exacerbate the existing state of racial discrimination.

The activity that has taken place in Canada over the last while in pursuit of racial equality has largely been spent on determining whether racial discrimination is occurring, how it is occurring, to what extent, and on proposing ways of prevention. While data on these questions is still very far from being adequate, and considerable research is still required, it is suggested that more emphasis should be placed on analyzing the issues from the perspective of results, on outcomes.

The most important measure of any initiative is its results. Extensive efforts to implement training, and develop procedures, analyzes, data collection systems, report forms and finely written polity statements are worse than meaningless unless the end product will be measurable improvement. Just as the success of a private business activity to increase sales is evaluated in terms of actual increases in sales, the only realistic basis for evaluating a program to increase opportunity for racial minorities is its actual impact upon these persons. If private enterprise is investing resources on an activity that does not improve its bottom line they very quickly scrap it.

This perspective was emphasized in the previous issue of Currents (Vol. IV, No. 4) by the Toronto Board of Education's Director, Dr. E.M. McKeown who called on his senior staff to develop action plans that were. . . "SMART". That is, specific, measurable and manageable, appropriate, realistic, and timebound".

In accelerating the process of change, more careful consideration needs to be given to focussing on those particular issues within various sectors where there is a real prospect of affecting change quickly.

In addition to this strategic targeting, any improvements in policy and practices must incorporate the mechanisms for monitoring and measuring their impact. In other words, any initiative must show definable results that reduce in a measurable way racial injustices.

What are the techniques and mechanisms that are required to meaningfully assess whether policies and practices that have been established are in fact achieving racial equality? The lack of rigorous monitoring systems and evaluation criteria in the field of race relations in Canada is inexcusable. The consequence of this state of affairs is that limited public dollars and community energies will continue to be wasted on trivial and irrelevant exercises because they do nothing to effect the bottom line - the eradication of racial discrimination and the establishment of equality of opportunity.

There is a huge need in Canada to collect and disseminate the body of knowledge--the strategies, the technology, the technical skills--that is required to effectively achieve racial equality. Unfortunately, the degree of skill development and information sharing in Canada across institutional, racial or geographical boundaries is relatively insignificant. This isolation, in not drawing upon the experience of other initiatives, effective methods and tested programs and approaches, is also found between Canadians and the international community.

It is perhaps regrettable that Canadians appear unable to grasp the opportunity to learn from the significant body of knowledge and technical experience in implementing practical strategies in pursuit of racial equality that has been developed elsewhere, particularly in the United States and Great Britain. In looking at the comparative experience of contract compliance in these two countries, this issue of Currents in a small way hopes to remedy this.

Canada cannot afford to persist in pursing racial equality on an insecure foundation of inadequate knowledge. And Canada, through its public and private sectors and its various social agencies and institutions, cannot afford to continue to devote increasing resources in terms of personnel and other ways in supposedly improving opportunity for racial minorities if the actual impact upon these persons continues to be negligible.

Contract Compliance

With reference to equal employment opportunity for visible minorities, the existing evidence continues to indicate depressingly high levels of racial discrimination. The 1985 study Who Gets the Work? (Ginsberg & Henry) showed that one third of employers discriminate against job applicants. The Multiracial Labour Force Case Studies Project, reviewed in this issue of Currents, found that of the the twelve major employers in Toronto selected for their leadership in addressing race relations issues, not one was involved in Employment Equity as defined by the Federal Royal Commission on Equality in Employment. And not one of these companies was even meeting

the limited requirements of existing federal initiatives (legislated Employment Equity and the Federal Contractors' Program).

Notwithstanding human rights legislation and government rhetoric, a substantial proportion of employers continue to employ people on the basis of their skin colour.

The Federal Contractor Program affects only those organizations with 100 or more employees which bid on federal government contracts for goods and services worth $200,000 or more. It does not require an employment equity plan, only a commitment to have a plan. It does not require employers to collect data in a standard used form or to report data annually. The monitoring mechanism, through a signed agreement, permits a compliance review officer from Canada Employment Immigration (CEIC) to conduct an on-site review and to examine workforce data. Failure to comply with the requirements does not result in the loss of a contract but merely removes the firm from the bidding process in the future. Clearly, the Federal Contractors Program is not a model worthy of emulation.

And the City of Toronto's much heralded contract compliance program (see Currents, Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter 1984/85) has still not been implemented!

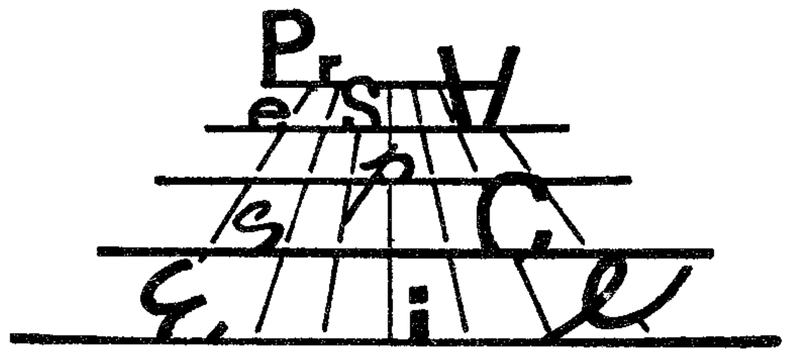
Given the fundamental flaws in current employment equity legislation, contract compliance can make a vital contribution to the eradication of discrimination from the employment market.

Contract compliance uses the economic power which public bodies enjoy, through their purchasing of good and services from the private sector, to promote equality of opportunity. Such an obvious and simple strategy should be in place for no other reason than that public money should not be used to subsidize discrimination or to provide profits to discriminators.

If government at whatever level is denying or delaying the power and authority that is conferred upon it by virtue of being elected, if it shuns the notion that it is there to undo injustices such as the discrimination racial minorities experience in the labour market, then it shuns the notion of government itself.

Tim Rees.

Affirmative Action/ Employment Equity Programs and Visible Minorities in Canada



Harish C. Jain

Visible Minorities are not well represented in public and private sector organizations in proportion to their representation in the population and the labour force. They are absent in key public positions and from the senior management of the public service and crown corporations. They are being denied full participation in almost all Canadian institutions (Daudlin 1984).

Affirmative action programs are explicitly designed to ameliorate the systemic discrimination and labour market disadvantages experienced by Visible Minorities.The term "affirmative action " is subject to widely varying interpretations, (Jain & Sloane, 1981, p. 101). Cohen (1983) suggests that affirmative action occupies a middle ground on a continuum with equal employment opportunity at one end and contract compliance at the other end. Affirmative action draws from equal opportunity its mandate to neutralize the environment so that all individuals have equal access to employment, training, and promotional opportunities. Affirmative action draws from the other end of the continuum, a proactive and structured approach to achieving this mandate in accordance with specified goals and timetables.

The most prevalent definition of affirmative action in the Canadian literature comes from the Affirmative Action Directorate of the Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC, 1982). Here affirmative action is described as a comprehensive planning process adopted by an employer to: identify and remove discrimination in employment policies and practices; remedy effects of past discrimination through special measures; and ensure appropriate representation of target groups throughout the organization.

The term, affirmative action, often sparks a negative emotional reaction as it is equated with reverse discrimination, or hiring and promotion based on target group membership, rather than merit. Judge Abella (1984), has recommended that "measures to eliminate discriminatory employment barriers and practices should be referred to as employment equity, rather than as affirmative action" (p. 255). This new label, according to Judge Abella, should help defuse the emotional reaction to affirmative action, and will be used frequently throughout this article.

Employment Equity in Canada; An Overview

Canadian employers are largely protected from the charge of reverse discrimination (Tarnopolsky, 1980, p. 94). Legislation in most jurisdictions allows for the development of special programs to reduce the disadvantages experienced by women, native people, visible minorities and the handicapped. The Canadian Human Rights Act, Section 15(1), explicitly permits the implementation of special programs that will prevent or reduce disadvantages to designated minority groups or remedy the effects of past discrimination against those groups. Section 41(2) of the Act allows a Canadian human rights tribunal to order a special program where such an action is deemed necessary to prevent discriminatory practices from occurring in the future. This authority was underscored in a recent Supreme Court ruling (8-0) that the Canadian Human Rights tribunal did have the power to order the Canadian National Railway Company in 1984 to increase to 13 per cent the proportion of women working in non-traditional occupations in its St. Lawrence region (Rauhala, 1987); this case is detailed later in the paper. Canada further confirmed its commitment to the principle of employment equity in passing the Constitution Act of 1982. As of April, 1985, under Section 15(2) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, special programs or affirmative action programs are considered legal.

With such legal protection, coupled with the costs of discriminating against minorities (Agarwal, 1986; Dunnette & Motowidlo 1982; Milkovich & Glucek, 1985, p. 245), one might expect widespread adoption of employment equity programs. However, of 1400 employers offered assistance by the CEIC Directorate in 1984, only 71 agreed to develop an employment equity plan (Abella, 1984). Since 1984, recent legislative developments at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels have increasingly put pressure on both private and public sector organizations to adopt employment equity programs.

Employment Equity Act

At the federal level, the Employment Equity Act became law in August of 1986 and applies to Crown corporations and federally-regulated employers with 100 or more employees. The legislation requires these employers to file an annual report with the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) beginning June 1988. The report will provide information on industrial sector, geographic location and employment status, that is, on the representation of all employees and members of designated groups by occupational group and salary range and on those hired, promoted or terminated month by month for a full year. Failure to comply with this requirement can result in a fine of a maximum of fifty thousand dollars. All records used in the compilation of the report must be retained by the employer for three years following the submission of the report. The annual reports will be publicly available and will be provided to the Canadian Human Rights Commission which has the authority to initiate an

investigation if it has reasonable grounds to believe that systemic discrimination is indicated by the data in the reports. In addition to the annual report, the employers are also required to prepare an annual employment equity plan with goals and timetables, and to retain such a plan for a period of at least three years. Unlike the annual report, however, employers are not required to submit this equity plan to the government and no penalty is provided for failure to prepare and implement this plan.

Employers under the Act are legally obliged to consult with designated employee representatives, or, in unionized settings with bargaining agents. The purpose of such consultation, in implementing employment equity, is to identify and eliminate barriers against persons in the designated groups and to institute positive policies and practices, that is, to implement special measures and apply the concept of reasonable accommodation.

The Act provides for a comprehensive review of the provisions and operation of the legislation in five years and every three years thereafter.

Federal Contractors Program

Effective October 1, 1986, the Federal Contractors Program affects organizations with 100 or more employees which bid on federal government contracts for goods and services worth $200,000 or more. Contractors will be required to sign a certificate of commitment to design and carry out an employment equity program which will identify and remove artificial barriers to the selection, hiring, promotion and training of women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and visible minorities. The program should have eleven criteria. These include:

(a) Communication by the chief executive officer to employees and unions of the commitment to achieve equality in employment and assignment of responsibility for implementing employment equity to senior personnel.

(b) Collection and maintenance of information on the employment status of designated groups by occupation and salary levels and terms of hiring, promotion and termination in relation to all other employees.

(c) Analysis of designated group representation within the organization in relation to their representation in the qualified external work force.

(d) Elimination or modification of policies, practices and systems, whether formal or informal, which have or may have, an unfavorable effect on the employment status of designated groups.

(e) Establishment of goals for the hiring and promotion of designated group employees.

(f) Adoption of special measures where necessary to ensure that goals are achieved, including the provision of reasonable accommodation as required.

(g) Adoption of procedures to review the progress and results achieved in implementing employment equity.

(h) Authorization to allow representatives of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission access to records in order to conduct on-site compliance reviews for the purpose of measuring the progress achieved in implementing employment equity.

The Contractors program is expected to apply to 900 major firms whose business with the government has a projected dollar value of some $6 billion; both the employment equity legislation and the contractors program will include in excess of 1 million Canadian workers (MacDonald, June 12, 1986). Failure to implement equity can result in the exclusion of the contractor(s) from future government business. Recently, two paper companies' bids worth more than $5 million were rejected by the government because neither company had complied with the requirements on employment equity. The bidding period was extended to give the companies a chance to resubmit their bids; one of the two companies has already complied. More than 520 companies have signed the certificate of commitment since the program became law in October 1986 (Globe and Mail, February 17, 1987, Al-)

It is important to note that under the Contractors program, the government's policy does not require a contractor to file an employment equity plan, only a commitment to have a plan.

Affirmative Action of the Federal Public Service

The Federal government, through the Treasury Board, has also undertaken employment equity measures for the target groups in the Public Service of Canada. Visible Minorities were added to the list of these target groups in July 1985. In June 1986, the Treasury Board announced several measures for Visible Minorities. These include a special employment program costing $10.5 million for 300 person years until March 1989,[2] a visible minority employment office at the Public Service Commission in Ottawa, regional visible minority co-ordinators, special training for public service managers, a monitoring program for the recruitment, referral and appointment process of visible minorities in the public service, and Canadian educational equivalences of certain foreign university degrees (News Release 86/22, Treasury Board of Canada, 1986).

In August 1987, The Treasury Board announced the establishment of numerical targets for Visible Minorities. These targets were established by departments for a 3-year period beginning April 1, 1988 and set by occupational category. In November 1987, the Treasury Board extended the period for an additional 3 years to 1993. In April of this year the Minister Pat Carney approved the employment equity targets for 1988-1991 with a commitment to add 2,115 person years from the four designated groups.

Affirmative Action Programs Across Canada

Voluntary affirmative action programs are legal in all jurisdictions in Canada.

In Alberta, the cabinet can approve such a program. Such programs are also legal under Section 15(2) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as noted earlier. In Quebec, as of September 1986, the Quebec Human Rights Commission can recommend an affirmative action program, if an investigation by the Commission shows a group being discriminated against. If the Commission's recommendations are not followed, it can apply to a court of law and obtain an order to draw up and to enforce implementation of an affirmative action program. The Quebec regulations cover the same four target groups as in the federal legislation as well as other groups who may be victims of discrimination. In Saskatchewan and at the Federal level, boards of inquiry can order affirmative-action programs, if discrimination is found.

A tribunal under the federal human rights legislation ordered (1984) the Canadian National Railways Company (CN) to undertake a mandatory affirmative-action program. The tribunal, after three years of hearings and deliberations, found that the company had discriminated against women in its hiring practices in the St. Lawrence region. In a landmark decision, the tribunal ruled that the company was required to hire women for one in four non-traditional (blue collar) jobs in the region until they hold 13 percent of such jobs. The CN was also required to implement a series of other measures, ranging from abandoning certain mechanical aptitude tests to modifying the way it publicizes available jobs.

It was an important decision in several respects. It arose from a complaint laid against CN in 1979 by a Montreal women's lobby group, Action Travail des Femmes (ATF). It was the first time that goals were specified; the goal of 13 percent roughly corresponded to the proportion of women in blue-collar work in industry generally. The CN appealed the tribunal ruling to the federal Court of Appeal. The Court set aside the affirmative action part of the tribunal order but found that the CN had discriminated against women in its hiring practices and upheld the ban agianst tests, etc. The supreme court of Canada (Rauhala, June 26, 1987), as noted earlier unanimously endorsed the power of tribunals to impose affirmative action plans on employers to remedy systemic discrimination, thereby upholding the 1984 tribunal decision.

Affirmative-action programs have also been ordered by boards of inquiry in other jurisdictions in previous years. For instance, in 1980 in Betty Hendry vs. Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), a similar program was ordered by an Ontario board in a ruling against the LCBO. However, no goals were specified. The LCBO was required to collaborate with the provincial women's bureau to design a program which could reduce imbalance in employment opportunities for women. In Shirley Naugler v. The New Brunswick Liquor Corporation in 1976, the New Brunswick board's order on affirmative action was appealed to the New Brunswick Supreme Court where it was not upheld. The Hendry ruling was not appealed by the LCBO.

The Quebec and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission have a set of regulations in order to approve affirmative action plans. The Saskatchewan regulations entail: (1) a systematic analysis of an employer's current workforce, (2) a comparison of the make-up of that workforce with that of the larger surrounding community, (3) establishment of management policies which will move in the direction of overcoming those imbalances which have been identified, within a certain time frame, and (4) a monitoring system to ensure that goals and timetables are being adhered to.

Affirmative action as part of contract compliance has also taken place in a number of specific resource mega projects and through contract leverage of surface lease agreements to include Native hiring on major projects in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In addition, as Tarnopolsky 1980 has pointed out, "...for at least the last decade we have witnessed in Canada the greatest affirmative action program of all, and that is the recruitment of francophone Canadians into the federal public service ..." (95). Bill 101 in Quebec, a language based mandatory affirmative action program, is another example of a massive program to improve the representation of francophones in the public and private sector organizations in Quebec. Similarly, the War Veterans have received preference in employment in the federal government over the years.

Affirmative action programs have been adopted by some public (such as Crown Corporations) and private sector employers in Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan and Ontario as well as in the Ontario and Manitoba public service, several municipal governments such as Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina, Vancouver and at least one police agency, the Metropolitan Toronto police force and a number of large Canadian businesses. However, a majority of organizations in Canada do not have such programs.

Effectiveness of the Employment Equity Legislation

The employment equity legislation is likely to be beneficial to minorities in that it will require employers under federal jurisdiction to prepare an annual employment equity plan with goals and timetables and to retain it for three years. It may not be very effective, however, since employers are not required to submit this plan to the government. There is no mechanism to guard against plans which may be poorly devised with no meaningful goals and timetables; for instance, much of the wording in the employment equity law is ill defined and somewhat loose in that positive policies and practices and reasonable accommodation do not lend themselves to precise interpretation. There is only a vague process of consultation between employers and designated group employee representatives to formulate the plan; meaningful consultation between the union or employee representatives is not possible if the employee representatives do not have a right to see the plan. What is more, there is no penalty for non-compliance with the action plan to prepare goals

and timetables. The Act leaves it to employers to establish and pursue their own goals and targets. As Stasiulis has noted, "no matter how appalling the reports reveal a company's performance to be, nothing in the legislation obliges it to improve," (1987, page 10).

The position side of the Act is that the reporting requirements on the representation of Visible Minorites and other target groups will be standardized and that the annual reports will be made public so that comparisons with subsequent years from 1988 onwards, will become possible. In addition, as MacDonald suggested, comparisons between employers in the same industrial sector will be possible (MacDonald, June 12, 1986.). Thus, employers could possibly be ranked, for instance, by industrial sector, region and size, by a comparison of employment equity reports .

In this author's judgment, on balance, it is better to have the employment equity legislation - despite its crippling weaknesses - than not to have it at all.

The federal contractors program (FCD), unlike the employment equity act, does not require employers to collect data in a standardized form or to report data annually, although employers are required to collect data concerning the composition of their workforce, as noted earlier. The monitoring mechanism is the signed agreement by the employer to permit a compliance review officer from Canada Employment Immigration (CEIC) to conduct an on-site (company premises) review and to examine data on minorities by occupation and salary levels and concerning hiring, promotion and termination with a view to measure the progress achieved in implementing employment equity.

In our view, the program should be enforced vigorously by reviewing the goals and timetables for Visible Minorities and others. The CEIC compliance officers will have to guard against contractor plans which may be poorly devised and inadequate to meet the needs of the target groups. In addition, failure to comply with the requirements of the contractors program does not result in the loss of a contract but only means that such a firm will be removed from the bidding process in the future. This penalty is too weak and needs to be strengthened. Similarly, the program should have a wider coverage and not be restricted to contractors with 100 employees or more and a contract of $200,000 or more. In the United States, the federal contractors' program includes contractors with 50 employees or more and a contract of $50,000 or more. The executive orders also include sub-contractors, unlike the Canadian program. In our view, it will be easier to strengthen the federal contractors' program since it can be done by the Order-in-Council or some other "in-house" procedure rather than amend the employment equity legislation.

We agree with Stasiulis (1987) that the federal employment equity policy will remain de-facto voluntary-making modest demands on business to show good intentions, since it lacks (a) specific goals and timetables, (b) systematic monitoring mechanisms or (c) effective sanctions for non-compliance, unless the changes suggested above are implemented.

Conclusions

As noted earlier, the federal employment equity Act and the federal contractors programs have come into effect as of 1986. However, both of these measures need to be strengthened in order to be effective. For instance, the employment equity Act does not include an effective enforcement component. Research (Jain and Hackett, 1987) has demonstrated that few Canadian organizations are likely to initiate an employment equity program in the absence of government or public pressure and that the data reporting requirements of the Act are certainly needed since few organizations in the study were collecting these data.

It is essential that the Employment Equity Act be amended to require employers to:

(a) make public their employment equity plans along with numerical goals and timetables;

(b) keep and to make public both the stock and the flow data by minority and non-minority status. Flow data provides information on the movement of minorities into and through the organization, including numbers of applicants, hires, promotions, terminations and so forth. Stock data provides a "snap-shot" of the current workforce make-up by minority and non-minority status across all occupational levels within an organization. These data will help identify entry and post-entry job barriers.

The federal contractors program also needs to be strengthened and enforced vigorously. Unlike the employment equity Act, the federal government need only to pass new regulations -- without having to go through the Parliament and the Senate -- through Order-in-Council. These regulations can then be enforced by Canada Employment & Immigration Commission (CEIC) Officials.

Under the federal contractors Program (FCP), while the data concerning the composition of the workforce by minority and non-minority status must be collected by individual contractors, the form in which the data must be collected is not specified and there are no reporting requirements. Moreover, the only penalty is that employers in violation of employment equity may lose the right to do business with the federal government needs to strengthen the FCP regulations in order to make the program more effective. The program should:

(a) specify numerical goals and timetables to be achieved by the contractors;

(b) require public reporting of stock and flow data in a standardized form to be prescribed by the CEIC;

(c) Levy penalties on contractors for failure to comply with the requirements of the program.. There should be a range of penalties including cancellation or loss of contract, etcetra;

(d) include sub-contractors; and

(e) broaden coverage from 100 employees and $200,000 contract

at present to include contractors with 20 or more employees and a contract of $50,000 or more.

As noted earlier, the employment equity legislation applies to employers under federal jurisdiction while the federal government's affirmative action program applies to the federal public service. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Armed Forces are not covered either by the federal affirmative action program or the employment equity legislation. In our survey (Jain 1986; 1987) of selected police forces in Canada, the RCMP reported that they do not collect data by visible minority status. Indirect evidence indicates that visible minorities are not well represented as police officers in the RCMP; for instance, data supplied by the RCMP indicates that very few RCMP officers are fluent in languages spoken in third world countries. It is ironical that government is requiring employers in the private sector to collect and to report data on the representation of designated groups in their workforce while an important government agency like the RCMP does not come under the federal government's affirmative action program and thereby has no requirement to collect and report data on Visible Minorities and other minorities and to undertake an affirmative action program. For this reason, the federal government needs to issue regulations to bring the RCMP and the Armed Forces under the federal affirmative action program.

At present, as noted earlier, all provincial jurisdictions allow voluntary affirmative action plans by employers. However, this has not resulted in very many employment equity programs. Similarly, there are very few contract compliance programs at the provincial level. Therefore, provincial and territorial governments should introduce mandatory employment equity and contract compliance programs forthwith.

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Footnotes

1. This is not as simple as it appears. The data contained in an employer's annual report on its workforce may not be truly comparable to the external labour force data or "availability data". The disparity may be attributable to legitimate, non-discriminatory factors such as existence of union seniority and hiring hall requirements, downsizing, competition for certain types of personnel and so forth (Bevan, 1987).

2. The 300 person-years are divided into 50 person-years for 1986-87; 150 for 1988-89 and 100 for 1988-89.

3. As Bevan (1987) points out, however, any company with a workforce profile significantly 'below the norm' may not be in deviance due to, for example, downsizing. Therefore, the Canadian Human Rights Commission may not be able to conclude that this company has practised systemic discrimination.

Urban Alliance Race Relations Award Medal

Designed by: Irene Chu

The ultimate goal in race relations – to achieve racial equality and harmony – is depicted in the medal by the symbols of 16 men and women encircling the Maple Leaf. The number represents the 16 points on the compass thus reflecting the cosmopolitan make-up of the people of Canada. The choice of 8 men and 8 women of equal status emphasizes our effort towards equality between men and women as well as equality among all races.

Race relations work has never been smooth, nor easy; it takes courage, patience and unwavering determination to overcome the many hurdles and obstacles that lie in the path towards racial harmony. The many difficulties and hardships are represented here by the angles and edges on the outerside of the medal.

At the centre is our National Emblem-the Maple Leaf -- around which all Canadians gather and rally expressing our aspirations that Canada be a leader in Race Relations.