

• (1720)

[Translation]

This is preferential treatment! This is not right, and it is unfair, as far as I am concerned.

[English]

It is my contention that, even if all these preconditions are fulfilled, giving these very dedicated employees such preferential treatment goes completely against the idea that an employee of the Public Service will be given his or her due reward because of merit.

As well, there is something that I believe some other members who have spoken to the bill have missed. Those of our employees who seek entry into the Public Service of Canada, following being employed by us, would be insulted to think that they would need preferential treatment. I have asked employees of members of Parliament, including my own, and they tell me that they can take the heat, that they can take the competition, that they are qualified. They have said that they would go to the race track in terms of the competition and stand in line with everyone else. They were absolutely insulted with the suggestion that they would need help, preferential treatment, political push to get into another job.

There is also a problem here with public perception. This is a difficult time for all politicians. The public would and should not stand for this. Opening the door to parliamentary assistants without competition—can you imagine that, Mr. Speaker—would be seen as an extension of the powers of members of Parliament. We must not be seen as just looking after our own—

[Translation]

—the New Democratic Party seems to want to do. They are trying to protect their people. But what are they doing to protect the workers who got jobs through competitions? I think this attitude is entirely wrong.

Private Members' Business

[English]

These are tough economic times. Many Canadians are looking for work. One of the ways in which the Public Service Commission has dealt with this government downsizing policy and the disastrous effect which it has had on employees is the work force adjustment policy. How will it seem to Public Service employees made redundant by the present Conservative government when our own employees are allowed to have jobs before those who have been let go because of bad government policy?

Some of my colleagues may make the argument that these conditions addressed in this bill already exist in ministers' offices, as well as in the office of the Leader of the Government in the Senate and the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons and the Senate. I submit that two wrongs do not make a right. This government patronage policy is wrong. Let us not extend it further by letting the NDP have this odd way of proceeding—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): If the hon. member has another minute or so, I will recognize him after we return from Royal Assent.

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THE ROYAL ASSENT

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Deputy to the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

• (1730)

And being returned:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I have the honour to inform the House that when the House went up to the Senate chamber the Deputy Governor General was pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the Royal Assent to the following bill:

Bill C-86, an act to amend the Income Tax Act (child tax credit)—Chapter 42.