

Government Orders

allow managers to lay off employees because their jobs were being contracted out. A 1989 Supreme Court ruling stated that such lay-offs infringe on the rights of Public Service employees for fair opportunity for advancement. It looks like once again this government is saying: "Don't break the law, change it".

Over the past five years the number of term employees in the Public Service has risen dramatically. The bill would facilitate the hiring of casual employees without competition. This again would be a blow to the merit system. At the same time, these casual employees would receive absolutely no job security or benefits.

Finally Bill C-26 offers no protection to whistleblowers. In 1967 such a provision may not have been necessary, but it most certainly is now. In fact it was probably necessary then too but just not commonplace. A number of states in the United States have recognized the need for such a provision and this government has been given ample opportunity to understand what whistleblower protection is all about. Only last week a private member's bill was put before this House concerning whistleblowing. Only one member of this government could be bothered to speak to that bill, and he spoke out in opposition.

For the past few minutes I have indicated some of the many reasons the bill is not yet ready for second reading. I am sorry now to have to add that I am not surprised at the remarkable inadequacy of the bill.

If I were to make a pair of shoes I would most certainly have to consult a shoemaker and someone who sold leather. If the shoes were to be good ones, comfortable to wear and able to fulfil the needs of the wearer, would it not be worth my time to consult someone who wears shoes? From the outset of the creation of Public Service 2000, the government has excluded those people who will be most affected by this bill.

The unions were called as witnesses but they were given no role in the final creation of the bill. Both the Auditor General's report and the public accounts committee recommended the bill needed more work and should be studied. The government has chosen to ignore them. By excluding the unions and the public, the government has once again acted in bad faith.

There is one statistic that I must commend the government on. The government has proudly asserted

that Public Service 2000 and Public Service reform is only 10 per cent about legislation. It says that 20 per cent is machinery, but the lion's share of 70 per cent is about attitudinal change.

I ask this government not to blast this atrocity into law. Let us roll up our sleeves and take this bill back to the table, to a special committee of Parliament. Let us consult thoroughly with those who will be affected by this bill, instead of destroying what could be a great institution. The Public Service could lead Canada into the 21st century with pride.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Speaker, since there is only one Tory here and it is too late for him to learn, I want to call for a quorum count.

[*Translation*]

And the count having been taken:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): There is a quorum. We will resume debate.

[*English*]

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Etobicoke—Lakeshore is raring to go these days. He wants to go to another party. We have a party in mind for him and are willing at any time to entertain his ideas. He should restrain himself for the minute, although I suppose if he is that anxious to come over I could forgo speaking. If he wants a few minutes to think about it, that is fine. I want to thank my friend from Regina—Lumsden for drawing a crowd for me. I owe him one.

• (1610)

Mr. Siddon: Get on with it.

Mr. Simmons: The Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs says: Get on with it. He has been talking to somebody. Oh, if he had only got on with it when he was in fisheries, we would be in much better shape these days in Newfoundland and Atlantic Canada.

My friend and colleague from Ottawa West has the solution to this bill. Give it the six-month hoist. Get it out of here until it is ready to come in here.

First of all, let us go to the motherhood issue in this bill. Do we need some renewing of the Public Service? Do we need to recraft legislation that has been in use for