Public Servants' Training

Supported by more adequate research on training and development, that school would create programs and courses tailored to the needs of the civil service. Last, the decentralization of efforts would have to take into account the reality of regions by offering decentralized courses. If training and development courses are available throughout the civil service, there is no doubt that the population basis being larger, the cost efficiency would also be greater. The success of such a training and development program depends on the recruitment and stability of highly qualified personnel. The training and development school would be a guarantee for the future that the government would be staffed with efficient and qualified employees.

• (1620)

[English]

I am simply proposing to this House a sort of College Canada for the administrative echelons of the Government of Canada whereby the excellent reputation of the Canadian public service known throughout the world could be honed, polished, and made even more ready to serve not only the federal government but all the people of Canada. In this way we can take our place among the leading nations of the world which each have their own public service colleges.

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I commend the hon. member for bringing forward this motion today. If I may, I should like to underscore the remarks he made about the Canadian public service and Canadian public servants.

Both he and I, along with other members of the House, have the privilege of representing large numbers of public servants. Sometimes they are misunderstood. Sometimes the purpose of the public service is misunderstood. Sometimes, too, the work of the public service, in terms of its objectives and functions, is misunderstood. The public sector has an objective different from that pursued by many parts of the private sector. I support the motion, partly for the reason that the proposition envisaged by the hon. member would go a long way toward creating a climate of understanding.

I do not think it is enough merely to commend an hon. member for putting forward a good motion. I believe something should result from such a motion and I hope this will be the case today. There is no more appropriate place than the national capital in which to locate an institution such as the hon. member is asking the House to consider. Quite frankly, the idea of a college within which the skills of public servants could be increased, utilizing the tremendous experience we have here now to assist others, appeals to me.

I hope it will not be lost upon the hon. member—I am sure it is not—that Carleton University in this city has for many years conducted a School of Public Administration. It could be within the hon. member's consideration that this school might become the focal point for the kind of institution he has in mind. The School of Public Administration of Carleton University has an excellent reputation.

I do not wish to prolong the debate. I would only say that the hon. member's objectives are commendable and supportable, and I hope the House will share this view. As I say, I certainly want the matter to be considered further. I shall therefore propose an amendment, one with which I hope the hon. member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) will be in agreement, seconded by the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski). It is as follows:

That all the words after "That" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

"motion No. 4 respecting the establishment of a National Administration School be withdrawn, and the subject matter thereof referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates."

I move this amendment in the hope that the work done by the hon. member for Ottawa-Vanier can be dealt with in a positive way and I trust the motion, as amended, will go to the standing committee for consideration. If there is any doubt about the validity of the amendment, I hope the Chair will ask the House whether or not hon. members are prepared to consent thereto at some stage in the course of this debate. I believe it is important that this excellent idea, one which could be the beginning of the upgrading of the already high standards of the public service, should not be lost. I am very pleased to support it this afternoon.

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, we in the NDP agree that the principle set forth in the motion of the hon. member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) is a good one. The idea is to establish in the national capital region a school of public administration as a first step toward the creation of an agency responsible for the training and development of public servants.

In some 12 years in the House of Commons I have noticed that members from the city of Ottawa and surrounding areas have been the main spokesmen in connection with matters concerning public servants. I look across the Chamber and I see the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. Francis) in his place. I also see the hon. member for Hull (Mr. Isabelle), and, of course, the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) is here. All of them are very able, very articulate, and very sensitive to the problems and needs of public servants. While I am about it, I might add that we in the NDP have as our main spokesman on this subject the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), who has taken a special interest in the problems of public servants and who in many instances has acted as liaison between them and parliament in the promotion of constructive ideas.

The qualities needed by good public servants are efficiency, competence, understanding, and co-operation. The hon. member for Ottawa-Vanier mentioned this in his speech. In the final analysis, there must be some way of enabling public servants to reach their best potential. It is therefore important that the courses in contemplation are tailored not only to the needs of the public service but to the needs of the public.

I see that some of the members present in the Chamber this afternoon are from the City of Toronto. May I use an example based on conditions in that city? When I moved to my own