

tee if the House leader's agreement is forthcoming. In my letter to you of December 11, 1990 I indicated that we would establish a special committee of the House to deal with the legislative aspects of Public Service 2000". There is a little catch word in here. It says: "to deal with the legislative aspects of Public Service 2000, the government's Public Service reform initiative".

We did not ask to deal with the legislative proposals. We as a public accounts committee asked to deal with a paper in which the government laid out its views and that the paper should be discussed by an all-party special committee of the House of Commons. That was not done. He is throwing in this legislative proposal here instead of keeping faith with his original letter.

The minister says: "I am pleased to confirm that it remains the government's intention to do so once we are satisfied that adequate consultations have taken place with interested parties on the legislative proposals required". What he is saying is again that it is the legislative proposals which he is going to bring forward to the House, not his original commitment that he was going to bring a paper before the House which could be studied by an all-party committee and in which all elements of the Public Service of Canada could have a hearing.

The government is dealing in high-handed ways with its public servants. That is why it had a massive walkout not very long ago; it dealt with the public servants as if they were secondary citizens.

We have a tremendous Public Service in this country and once you start destroying the morale, destroying the quality, destroying the invitation of bright, young people of this country to go into the Public Service because there is a challenge there, the Public Service of this country is going to suffer.

• (1640)

I have another one where the President of the Treasury Board wrote me a letter suggesting under what conditions his officials from Treasury Board should appear before the public accounts committee. The committees of this House have the power to demand that public servants and other agencies appear before them. Here we have the President of the Treasury Board, who is supposed to be in charge of government expenditures,

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saying that only under certain conditions should his officials appear before the public accounts committee.

Mr. Speaker, I see that you are giving me the high sign, but I just want to put these facts on the record. The minister has not kept faith with the parliamentary committee. He has rammed his legislative proposals into this House. He has still retained the capacity to contract work out. We were told by the public accounts committee that it had no records of how they were going to save money or how much money they saved by contracting out.

If you do not have any statistics to show how you are going to save money by contracting out then why are you standing in this House and saying that we save money by laying off public servants and contracting the work out? You have failed to prove that. In fact you say you have no statistics to prove it and you are still saying that you are saving money.

Bring back decency in the treatment of public servants. Treat them with decency. Give us an honest—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Order, please. The hon. member for Malpeque.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this legislation, Bill C-26, the Public Service Reform Act. I must say at the beginning that I too will be voting against this bill on second reading. I feel it will have a negative effect on the whole Public Service and the way services are delivered to the Canadian people.

I am sure everyone in this House agrees that reform is necessary. The legislation under which the Public Service operates at the moment was passed in the 1960s. Certainly times have changed since then and we do need reform and new legislation. This bill before us today is certainly not the answer.

I am opposed to the legislation for several reasons. I know today my time is limited. In the time I have I want to try to outline some of the reasons why I will be voting against this legislation at second reading.

As our critic for this legislation has suggested, and I certainly support the suggestion, this bill should be sent to a special committee of Parliament and studied there in detail. During the study the groups affected by this