

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

Group No. 7 is Motions Nos. 68 to 73.

[English]

I would now propose Motions Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 to members of the House.

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-76, in Clause 3, be amended:

(a) by replacing line 10, on page 3, with the following: "of the program,"; and
(b) by replacing line 17, on page 3, with the following: "able job offer, and

(iii) shall in no circumstances make a payment to a surplus employee who has not performed any work."

[Translation]

Hon. David Anderson (for the Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-76, in Clause 7, be amended in the French version, by replacing lines 8 and 9, on page 7, with the following:

«ou à toute personne appartenant à l'administration publique fédérale.»

[English]

Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.) moved:

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-76, in Clause 8, be amended by replacing lines 26 and 27, on page 7, with the following:

"the employee, under a closed competition exclusively open to employees declared surplus within the meaning of the Workforce Adjustment Directive under the Public Sector Compensation Act, to another".

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-76, in Clause 8, be amended by adding after line 37, on page 7, the following:

"(6) Under no circumstance shall the Commission appoint a participant in a program designated by the Treasury Board as an employment equity program to a position that could be occupied by a surplus employee within the meaning of the Work Force Adjustment Directive under the Public Sector Compensation Act."

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: I would like to point out to the House that on page XVIII of today's Notice Paper, Motion No. 4 in English should be read as standing in the name of Mr. Speaker (Lethbridge) and amending clause 8.

[English]

Mr. Speaker (Lethbridge): Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity to discuss Bill C-76 and the amendments thereto.

I want to make general comments then some specific comments with regard to the amendments.

With regard to the amendments before us that deal with public service measures, we generally support the government's decision to suspend the workforce adjustment directive and eliminate some 45,000 positions in the public service. However, we feel there are some concerns and because of that we have moved Motions 1, 3 and 4.

With regard to our first motion, on clause 3, we are concerned that some employees will be declared surplus and be paid for a period of six months without doing any work. Officials have confirmed to us that this would be possible with the way the bill is written at the present time.

With regard to clause 8, we have concerns that the legislation gives the Public Service Commission too much flexibility in appointing surplus workers to jobs in other departments. We would prefer that the appointments be subject to the competitive process in order to prevent any type of favouritism, cronyism, or unfair competition. We think the commission should be given the power to hold a closed competition confined to surplus employees only.

With regard to clause 8, we are concerned the employment equity programs will be used to further the goals of employment equity during this period of downsizing. As I recall, earlier in this session the minister responsible for the public service mentioned that this would be one of the criteria taken into consideration. We feel that this could happen as a result of people being appointed without competition to jobs that would otherwise be occupied by surplus workers.

• (1535)

Those are the motions that will be looked at with regard to that. My colleague, the critic who is responsible for that in terms of the public service, will be making further comments on those amendments to the House.

I think we have to understand the broader picture and the reason for Bill C-76. Bill C-76 has as its purpose to deal with the fiscal circumstances of Canada. It is to deal with the deficit in some way.

We have to recognize that we have a very serious circumstance. We have said this many times in this House. My hon. colleague from Vancouver points out to me often that every day we have a deficit of some \$100 million between the revenue that is available for us to take our responsibilities as a federal government and the expenditures that take place on a daily basis. That is \$100 million a day in terms of a deficit. If we put that over a one-year period we have the accumulated deficit of this country, as projected in the current budget for 1995-96, of some \$32.7 billion.