

about the methodology, the documentation, the supervision, the review of the audit work and the training of personnel. I know that quite an extensive effort is being made in the area of comprehensive auditing. The Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation is currently involved in a comprehensive study which is trying to find a better format for comprehensive auditing, a format which will not only help the Public Service but will also help Members of Parliament understand comprehensive auditing objectives, so they will be able to ensure that comprehensive audits result in products which are useful to everyone. That will involve reviews of this kind.

I endorse the recommendations of the committee. It has called for the commission to clarify its staffing audit mandate and report progress to the committee. It has called for the commission not only to report in 1986 but also to report again in 1987. As well, it has called for evidence of consultation with the Auditor General, the point to which I referred earlier being the very real importance of a consultation process with the Auditor General so that the commission will understand his directives.

● (1340)

I have had an opportunity to review the report and, in view of its importance, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Ontario (Mr. Fennell):

That the motion be amended by striking out all of the words after the word "That" and that the following be substituted therefor:

"the tenth report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be referred back to the committee to reconsider recommendations concerning monitoring of affirmative action programs."

**Mr. Speaker:** The amendment appears to be in order. Debate is now upon the amendment.

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, I guess the Government would like the committee to reconsider certain dispositions in its report. I took it that the Parliamentary Secretary was in accord with most of its recommendations but would like to have more information on the question of affirmative action. He wants the whole report to be sent back for the purpose of obtaining more information on the application and the workings of the affirmative action program.

I do not disagree with that. I think it is a good idea. However, we all know that the annual report of the commission was a good progress report. Indeed, if I had been given notice of this, I could debate it quite thoroughly. I do not intend to do so. I think it is a valid point. We are all in favour of affirmative action, not as a matter of reporting only but as a matter of action and putting teeth into the legislation. If that is the purpose of the motion, I say put the question.

**Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few points. I was a member of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts which produced this report. I am a little concerned that we are going through this process without really defining whether or not the effectiveness of the report will be carried out by the Public Service Commission.

### Motions

Consequently, it becomes rather important to put before the House, and I suppose before the public, the real aims of the committee in providing the report. The aim of the committee was to ensure that fairness to employees of the Government prevailed at all times, that government policy be interpreted in a way which particularly protected employees, and that affirmative action be recognized and monitored effectively.

It is very interesting to look at what the Auditor General referred to as a contrived and curious system of personnel which has developed in the Government over many years. It is now in place in such a way that it is very easy for an individual to become lost in the system and never have his particular problem considered by the people in management positions. I suppose one of the Auditor General's concerns in covering this particular area was that over 90 per cent of the monitoring or control of staff was not within the Public Service Commission but was within Departments. Supposedly the Public Service Commission was the structure which monitored and ensured that all cases were handled adequately. Also the Auditor General indicated that the monitoring of departmental staffing activities was practically non-existent.

I suppose that could happen for many years without it becoming a major factor in the Government or in the image of the Government across the country. However, in the last couple of years there has been a real move to reduce the number of people working for the Government. Therefore, it has become very important that the monitoring system be in place and that we as parliamentarians be able to look thoroughly at what is going on, so that there are no unacceptable situations in the real world out there, let alone within the government structure. If we do not do that, we are apt to have various kinds of bureaucratic or even political patronage in the structure of the Public Service.

Consequently, it became obvious to the committee, in the process of making its recommendations, that there should be guidelines. Therefore, the committee made recommendations in various areas such as the need for monitoring of departmental staffing procedures, the need for the establishment of some kind of personnel management manual, and the need for some kind of monitoring of the affirmative action policy of the Government.

As I indicated earlier, the Auditor General made comments about the contrived and curious system of personnel. Therefore, the committee suggested strongly that the Public Service Commission should simplify its staffing procedures to a great extent and should ensure that the average amount of time required to fill a position was reduced considerably. In the process we required the Public Service Commission to reply to us by September 30, 1986. Consequently we hoped that it would make it possible for parliamentarians to feel a little more secure that the procedures in place were for the benefit of the Government as a whole and for Canada as a whole.