

*Government Orders*

[English]

Canada's future prosperity depends on competing successfully at home and abroad. The president of the Public Policy Forum, an organization that brings together business, labour, the academic community and government, has recently stated that the quality of the Public Service is a major factor in Canada's international competitiveness.

Canadian enterprises must be adequately supported by an outward looking, innovative and results oriented Public Service. Research has taught us much about what encourages high performance in human organizations, such as maintaining a client centred focus, involvement of employees at all levels in decision making, instituting a continuous learning culture, exploiting new technologies and striving for improved management skills.

For the Public Service this will mean many changes. There will be more delegation of authority to front line units, dismantling of unnecessary central controls and enhanced accountability. Above all, there must be a rededication to service to the public.

[Translation]

But not only the Public Service is in favour of the reforms contained in Public Service 2000, Laurent Thibault, president and director general of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, said that he fully subscribed to this important exercise involving many issues. He said that the goals we had set of simplifying procedures, decentralizing authority and responsibility and increasing efficiency are exactly what major corporations do to take their place in world markets in the 1990s.

I would like to point out to hon. members that the idea of this public service reform came from within. Instead of the traditional inquiry presided over by an eminent person who considered the changes to be made, the Public Service itself decided to renew itself. Many public servants, at all levels, had a deep desire for change. They wanted a new management philosophy, not only new planning systems imposed by central agencies. In other words, what they wanted was a change of mentality in the organization.

One of the most important reforms of Public Service 2000, will be to reduce the number of occupational groups by about two thirds. Bill C-26 will amend the

Public Service Staff Relations Act so as to spread this restructuring over several years. In particular, there will be a job evaluation plan that will be the same throughout the Public Service. This plan will be free of gender bias and be based on the provisions of the Canadian Human Rights Act concerning equal pay for work of equal value. Union representatives will of course participate in developing this plan.

In conclusion, this reform has been too long coming. It is now time to join our efforts so that the federal Public Service can help Canada achieve its national objectives, at least in the next decade.

[English]

It is my earnest desire that the bill receive third reading as soon as possible. I would urge that the committee report back to the House by the end of March. There will be ample opportunity to consider improvements to the bill and I am confident that members will put aside differences and take full advantage of this window of opportunity.

**Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke):** Mr. Speaker, in spite of the content of the legislation before us, I am still pleased to have an opportunity to address Bill C-26, an act to amend the Public Service Employment Act, the Public Service Staff Relations Act and other acts in relation to the Public Service of Canada.

I and my colleagues in the New Democratic Party oppose the bill before us, I think for very good reason. We are also pleased, however, to support the hoist motion put forward by my colleagues in the Official Opposition.

On June 18 of last year the Conservative government introduced this bill in the House of Commons. Known as the Public Service Reform Act, the bill proposes changes to a number of existing acts, including the Public Service Staff Relations Act, the Public Service Employment Act, the Auditor General Act, the Canada Lands Surveys Act, the Financial Administration Act and the Surplus Crown Assets Act.

The majority of changes proposed by Bill C-26 affect the Public Service Staff Relations Act and the Public Service Employment Act. This bill represents the first major revision to PSSRA and the PSEA since these acts first came into effect in 1967.