

Government Orders

I want to turn to the bill before us and discuss the amendments. The hon. member seems relieved that I have got off the subject of her party's duplicity with the Conservative Party. I can understand that. It must be very embarrassing.

• (1550)

The bill before us has some amendments moved to it by the hon. member for Ottawa West that I wanted to talk about. The amendments she has moved deal with complaints alleging sexual or personal harassment or abuse of authority.

What the member from Ottawa West is trying to do through these amendments is stiffen the government's resolve to deal with these issues when complaints are made in the work place.

This bill is deficient in that it fails to provide for corrective action in the case of these complaints. The hon. member for Ottawa West has urged very reasonable and sensible amendments. There is nothing wild-eyed, there is nothing that smacks of the NDP government in Ontario in these amendments.

These are sensible amendments. These are reasonable amendments. These are competent amendments and they are straightforward amendments. They are amendments, that must commend themselves to all members of the House, including any right-thinking member on the government side. I urge the members of the government to look at these amendments and to not blindly vote them down, as it seems to be doing with every other amendment we have considered so far. Look to the protection of people who suffer from these kinds of complaints and offer them some protection in the law so that instead of allowing the Public Service Commission possibly to make recommendations and possibly issue directives it will require the Public Service Commission to issue directives and take steps to deal with the complaint when it comes before us.

That is all the amendments are asking for. That is all the amendments propose. It is not too much to ask in this day and age. I urge the government to look again before it votes these amendments down and accept them.

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Madam Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to speak on Bill C-26, sometimes referred to as Bill PS 2000, and probably more appropriately referred to as BS 2000.

It is amazing how we go through these management fads, but it dismays me to see what the government has done in relation to the changes it wishes to impose upon its employees.

One of my colleagues from the Liberal Party previously spoke in as eloquent terms as I have ever heard anyone speak with respect to the civil servants, most of whom are within his constituency and he therefore represents them. I am not surprised that he speaks so eloquently on their behalf and as knowledgeably about them as he does.

We all have many of these civil servants in our constituencies however, and I certainly would like to put on the public record that the amount of support they have given to my office, and I know to the offices of other members of Parliament as well, is valued beyond measure. Some of the things proposed in Bill C-26 really work against that and mitigate against the excellent work that these people do.

With reference to the previous Motions Nos. 5 and 7, they would bring the Public Service Employment Act in line with the federal Employment Equity Act.

I am not so sure that is necessarily an exemplary recommendation. As a matter of fact it has certainly come to my attention that the federal Employee Equity Act is tremendously deficient.

I have had the misfortune of having people in the federal civil service come to me having exhausted the process in so far as standing up for their rights within the federal Employment Equity Act and having gone to the Human Rights Commission, which is a body put in place to protect federal employees even beyond what the equity act does. I must say that I have found both to be deficient. Tragedy has befallen people who have stood up for their rights. The particular motions refer to sexual harassment. Some of the people who have come to me have suffered under that category as well. I can only say that in all categories, whether it is the Human Rights Act or the federal Employment Equity Act, the government, the prime employer in this nation, has come up far short.

The amount of tragedy that has befallen these people is beyond description. I have to repeat something that has already been referred to by me today. I think it is worth while referring to it again. It was also referred to by one of my colleagues on this side of the House. Imminently a female of the Armed Forces is about to be court-martialled because circumstances surrounding her appeal before the military tribunal, circumstances sur-