

### *Government Orders*

increasingly diverse. It does not make it easier to reassign employees quickly in an ever-changing environment and it creates unnecessary distinctions which are very costly and waste a lot of time.

The present system, needs vast resources—more than 100,000 classification actions a year. Imagine. From now on, the number of occupational groups will be considerably reduced as will the number of levels, we hope. Both initiatives will help smooth the traditional hierarchical structure and make the process more service-oriented.

As for employment equity, we have known for a long time that the quality of service to our different public section depends in part on the representativeness of the public service. The new act specifies that the government will be able to launch employment equity programs without having to go through all the red tape of the past. Once again, the Public Service will benefit from that measure.

• (1250)

Bill C-26 includes several reforms concerning staff relations, all of which are aimed at improving the service to the public and streamlining the present procedures. The scope of the arbitration process is extended, which will encourage people to use that process rather than to go on strike.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, the administrative work that is necessary to exempt civil servants from collective bargaining will be reduced. It is the positions that will be exempted, and not the employees that fill those positions; consequently, it will no longer be necessary to reopen a file every time a position is filled by a new incumbent.

Public Service 2000 is essentially an exercise aimed at improving the service to the public by increasing the motivation of employees, giving more freedom to managers and making them more accountable, as well as providing the Public Service with better systems to satisfy the needs of its clients. This exercise must take place with fewer resources, fewer formalities and fewer levels of management; as well, centralized systems that are too rigid will have to be replaced. The savings that will result from this exercise will be used to improve the service to the public.

The bill on the reform of the Public Service enables us to eliminate those obstacles that prevent us from providing a first class service to the public. To sum up, this bill makes the staffing process less rigid by authorizing an increased use of transfers, as well as simplifying the classification process. It also authorizes the hiring of temporary employees more quickly than before, to face short-term needs. Finally this legislation eliminates obsolete provisions concerning eligibility lists, probation periods and dismissals.

Employer-employee relations will be improved, thanks to amendments that will encourage the increased use of arbitration, will facilitate the identification of managers and confidential employees to be exempted, as well as speed that process.

It is very important that the Public Service be more representative of the different clients it serves. That is why this bill provides for employment equity programs. I therefore urge the members of this House to pass this bill as quickly as possible so that its provisions can take effect immediately.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in debate on this very important Bill C-26 I think it is important to remember part of the history of the dealings in which the government has engaged in bringing this bill before the Commons.

In December 1989 the Prime Minister announced that he was launching an in-depth study of the Public Service. As a result of the lengthy study which was called PS 2000 we were to receive a white paper. In fact we did receive it but the white paper was called a policy paper, not a discussion paper.

Notwithstanding the fact that the white paper was reviewed by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, the bill has been introduced without the benefit of further study by that committee as recommended by it.

The recommendation was that the bill be studied by a committee so that the principle of the bill as well as the details could be subject to review before its passage in this House at second reading.

The government has rejected that very wise, very sound advice. Why has it chosen to do so? One can only