

Government Orders

This has not been done. The Public Service as a source of advice and opinion has been shut out and whatever advice has been forthcoming has been ignored, just as the views of Canadians on the GST were ignored, just as the views of the poor in tough economic times when the cap was put on the Canada Assistance Program were ignored. Just as senior citizens were betrayed by this government so were the public servants.

The approach has been high-handed and dictatorial. PS 2000 has proceeded on the basis of top down, heavy-handed dictates that are outdated and do not work. The idea of the old theme, "let the managers manage" is a 1962 theme from the Glassco commission. We are now living in 1992. We are seeing the dismantling of another of the institutions of our nationhood. Just as VIA Rail, Air Canada, mail service, the CBC, Petro-Canada have helped build Canada from coast to coast, the Public Service has provided services to Canadians wherever they are and carried out the will of Parliament in all corners of Canada.

The enormous increase in the use of contracting out, a form of privatization of the Public Service and the use of short-term employees have all contributed to diminishing services and the weakening of the Public Service as an instrument of public policy.

Our party believes that Canadians deserve to have accessible, quality services delivered efficiently by a professional, non-partisan Public Service that treats all employees with respect and fairness and is responsive to the needs of Canadians.

The Liberal Party is committed to the partnership between the public sector and the private sector and to the partnership between the government and its employees on whom it relies and should rely for policy advice to carry out the programs, services and regulations mandated by Parliament.

The Liberal Party supports the revitalization of the Public Service to better allow it to adapt to rapid change, to create an environment in which employees can be creative, innovative and adaptable to changing needs of its clients and the nation and to attract and retain competent, dedicated employees.

We believe that change can best be managed in a climate of mutual trust, co-operation and consultation

with its employees, including respect for basic collective bargaining rights.

We are committed to the accountability to Parliament and to the public for both the use of human and financial resources.

[*Translation*]

Today we have seen an example of the government's disastrous approach to problems in the Public Service. During Oral Question Period—Mr. Speaker, I can assure you I do not intend to discuss a ruling the Chair has yet to make, but it so happens to be what we are discussing today—there was a reference to the appointment of Mr. John Crispo to the Board of Governors of the CBC. In his comments Mr. Crispo attacked an aspect of the Public Service and more specifically the aspect of being subject to the Official Languages Act.

The government, did not answer right away. It knew what Mr. Crispo said since it has the same access to the media that we do I would have expected the government to respond during Question Period. If that is against the rules of the House, it could at least tell Canadians what it has done to counter Mr. Crispo's comments and tell the truth about the Official Languages Act and the impact it has within the Public Service. But, no, it tried to avoid a response. Maybe it has a right to do that. The Chair will rule at the appropriate time. However, even if it cannot give an answer here, it can at least tell Canadians.

I see I am running out of time, but I must say, this is a perfect example of the government failing to protect our national institutions and the Public Service against remarks that are not true and that attack the government's policy, a policy it even defended in the answers it gave. I hope whatever the Chair's ruling will be, that the ministers will find a way, either here or outside the House, to correct the position taken by their appointee, Mr. John Crispo.

[*English*]

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the motion that Bill C-26, the Public Service Reform Act, receive second reading.