

*Government Orders*

We would ask that the government support our Motions Nos. 15 and 18. In fact we would bring out this legislation with these amendments intact.

Hugh Winsor said in *The Globe and Mail* of May 23 that: "This clause opens a loophole that will give civil service managers a major new opportunity to play favourites and dispense their own form of patronage".

We are painfully aware of patronage run amok in some departments of the Public Service. It would be tremendously unfortunate to enshrine in a brand new piece of legislation, albeit flawed in many parts, the kinds of clauses that would open a loophole giving Public Service managers a major new opportunity to play favourites and dispense their own form of patronage.

Canadian people have told us very clearly, have told this House, have told this government, have told opposition members, their opinion of blatant patronage. I would suggest their opinion of blatant patronage does not diminish if it is being dispensed either by mandarins or Public Service Commission corporate managers. It is no less distasteful than if it is being put forward by the government itself.

We then have a situation where the department can make appointments, can deploy, can put people into positions without consideration under this new broadened description of competence of a person. What we find is the ability for a manager to end-run the process of merit and appoint by favouritism, by special favours from whomever is seeking the appointment. Possibly the debate on that point was more relevant in the last clause we discussed, sexual harassment. However, we have a situation where managers have wide discretion on who should get appointed to a new position. Again, the Public Service Commission, in presenting to us in committee, very clearly said two things.

First it said, trust us, and second it said that the calibre of manager in the Public Service is tremendously high and they would not see this right misused. I would not suggest that any manager in the Public Service is not of high calibre or is not a fair-minded, good-hearted man or woman. I would suggest that when one is faced with opportunities to show favouritism to someone they like

over someone who is qualified for the job, sometimes that opportunity is tough to ignore and overcome.

When one is faced with an opportunity to let a little bit of racial discrimination sneak into the decision or not wanting to be bothered with someone who may have a disability because it means a little extra work on the part of the manager, it is very possible we could find ourselves with a manager who would not deliberately make mistakes because of the broadened parameters of this definition of the merit principle.

If the House does not like the reference to Mr. Winsor and his suggestion that this opens a loophole that will give civil service managers a major new opportunity to play favourites, then maybe we could make reference to the head of the PS 2000 exercise, Mr. John Edwards, who said: "Bill C-26 gives managers the authority to appoint and by-pass the system". This was reported in *The Globe and Mail* on June 20, just a couple of days ago. When bureaucrats were briefed by the Public Service Commission in response to a question he said: "This section gives managers the authority to appoint and by-pass the merit system".

It is passing strange that we got one story at the committee about how committed the government service is to the merit principle and that this clause makes no difference and that managers in the Public Service would never dream of doing something like that and then we have reported in the minutes of a meeting with bureaucrats, with the very same person who gave us those assurances, that managers could now by-pass the system.

We think it is absolutely critical that these amendments be included in the legislation. Even the Public Service Commission has admitted in its most recent annual report that there has been too much abuse of the merit system by senior managers who have been appointing their friends and redeploying those they do not like.

Now we have legislation that allows those managers to redeploy people they do not like, redeploy people who do not share their views or redeploy people whose hair cut they do not like, or whatever. We also have in this legislation a provision that would allow, not only redeployment but by-passing of the merit system which we were all told by the head of the Public Service Commis-