

Private Members' Business

Rather than make sure that these decisions are made fairly and on the basis of clear rules, what this bill wants to do is enable them to be made even more unfairly and with more discretion.

Also this bill provides mechanisms for increased devolution of managerial responsibility and accountability. Rather than make those mechanisms more effective, it attacks the job security of public sector workers. One thing that causes more concern among workers, more concern in terms of their ability to do their job and their effectiveness and their sense of commitment to the work place and to their job, is uncertainty. To create more uncertainty in the Public Service is to do a disservice to the employees and their families and also to the Public Service itself and to those Canadians who receive those services. It does not help to make the lives of civil servants more insecure.

The employees within the Public Service who after all know their jobs better than anyone else, who know what is required within their frame of activity in order to effectively and properly service the public, have asked for very modest changes on the whole. They do not want this bill, they want to have the real concerns of the Public Service addressed. They want to be able, as they should, to bargain in the same way as they might in the private sector over such things as staffing, classification and deployment of staff, perfectly reasonable expectations that this government should respond to positively rather than throw out.

They also want an adjudication process which will appropriately hear their grievances on such issues as staffing, classification and deployment. Again, a reasonable request. Surely it is appropriate that their positions should not be changed, that their place of employment should not be changed arbitrarily, and that there should be some procedure for making sure that that was fair.

They want an end to contracting out for two reasons: first, it adversely affects their jobs, their opportunities for promotion and their security, not an unreasonable concern for an employee; and second, and more importantly, as they have voiced so often, contracting out has given rise to a deterioration in the service rendered to the public and very often sees duplication of costs, which has not given rise to savings. If the rationale behind the government's response for contracting out is that it saves

money, it clearly has not done that and the government is not even prepared to prove the economic benefits or detriments of the scheme one way or the other.

We can only be concerned about the lack of openness on the results of any study the government might have made about the economic effectiveness of contracting out.

• (1700)

Once again this government is going after workers in the Public Service rather than trying to nurture their ability to do their jobs effectively. I think we would see clear support across this country, not only within the Public Service but outside, for opposition to this bill.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): It being five o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 30(6), the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed in today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

SUGGESTED AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider amending the Constitution Act to recognize the right of every person in Canada to a safe and healthy environment.

[He said: Mr. Speaker, to paraphrase the words of Saint Exupéry, we do not inherit the environment from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children. We have a responsibility, each and every single Canadian, to act as good stewards of our environment for future generations. This responsibility falls on us as individuals, how we act in our consumptive patterns, the choices we make on a day to day basis. This responsibility falls to us also at the community level, how we work together to promote a way of living and growing that maintains and enhances our environment.

This responsibility also falls on the shoulders of government, municipal, regional, provincial and federal.