Government Orders

The hon. member and many of my colleagues on all sides of the House will recognize that in departments such as employment and immigration, foreign affairs, health and welfare and many others, there is a need for more manpower rather than less. Situations like the one we are in certainly is not helping morale at all.

Mrs. Dobbie: Madam Speaker, I will just point out to the hon. member that last year, I believe, we spent $314 million in lump sum payments to members of the Public Service for pay equity and that there is another further $76 million per year being spent to try and equalize the wages between males and females. I do not think it is fair to characterize what we are doing as nothing, because we are doing a lot. We may not be doing precisely what the union is asking, but we are doing what we should be doing.

The hon. member made a comment about contracting out. I am very glad he brought that question forward. I think there is a very big misunderstanding out there. The accounting of contracting out, the number that is published, includes all contracting out, whether it is having garbage removed or whatever. I cannot think of any number examples, but it does not just include employment. It does not just include people coming in to perform term contract work. It includes purchases and other things that are characterized as contracting out.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The time for questions and comments has expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 38, it is my duty to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Nepean (Mrs. Gaffney)—employment; the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Butland)—the steel industry; the hon. member for Moncton (Mr. Rideout)—highways; the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby (Ms. Black)—the Canada Assistance Plan; the hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel (Mr. Ouellet)—the garment industry.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Carleton—Gloucester.

Mr. Eugene Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to rise in the House today to defend Canada's Public Service, since these are the people who enable Parliament to function.

Through Bill C-29, this government has decided to come down on its own employees. Yesterday, in front of the Parliament Buildings, I saw the RCMP, arms linked, to protect the government against a group of public servants who only wanted to tell the public at the top of their voices that they were setting the short end of the stick and that they wanted to be treated fairly and equitably.

That is how this government treats its employees.

[*English*]

This forcing of employees back to work with threats, not with sticks luckily, not with guns but with threats of $1,000 a day fines, I find absolutely abominable.

The government has decided to fight the recession which it created itself. It is a government created recession. It wants to fight it on the backs of employees.

An hon. member: On the backs of everybody.

Mr. Bellemare: Of everybody, someone suggested from across. That is what it has been doing. It has been picking on one group. It has been picking on the other group. It has picked on the fisheries. It has picked on the forestry industry. It has picked on the grain farmers in the west. It has picked on about anything that is moving but big business.

The government has brought in the free trade agreement which encouraged people to go to the United States to buy. It encouraged trucking firms to go across the border and register. It has encouraged people to purchase across the border. It has struck the—

[*Translation*]

—the fisheries, which affected the entire industry on the Atlantic and Pacific coast.

[*English*]

The government has struck hard at the unemployed. It costs more now to be insured in the unemployment insurance, and one gets less benefits.

The lumber industry has been affected. Agriculture in Ontario and Quebec has been affected. The potato growers in P.E.I and New Brunswick, where is the government protecting them? I do not see it protecting