

Government Orders

efficiency but in fact a more bungled situation has been created than one could ever imagine.

There is another thing I would like to suggest to the member. Quite often a lot of this contracting out is not as efficient as the people who do the job within the Public Service. I notice the Minister of Supply and Services is sitting in the House today. He runs an organization that works on revenue dependency. I am sure he would bear witness to the fact that he has within his realm of responsibility public servants who frequently, week in week out, month in month out, do work that is as efficient if not more efficient than contracting out. If it were not that way, why would the minister be in the business of printing? Obviously the Government of Canada must be doing his printing more efficiently.

My question to the member is: Does he not think that the government endangers not only efficiency but is in danger of adding to the national debt because of this motivated gesture of cutting back public servants?

Mr. Stupich: Mr. Speaker, in the PS 2000 hearings there were examples given exactly in line with what the member was saying, examples of work that was done by outside contractors. Of course they were not familiar with the work and the work had to be redone by government employees at greater cost to correct the mess. In fact there was additional cost in that the contractor was involved as well.

One example is weather reports that were being prepared by the government service for the city of Calgary and for the Minister of Transport. The government said: "You cannot provide this service to the city of Calgary. You have to stop it". The city had to employ some outside outfit to do it. The bill was ten times the \$600 per month it was originally costing. Then the Ministry of Transport decided to use the same service. I can only suspect that it too is paying ten times what it was paying for the work that was being done within the Public Service.

There are many examples like that represented. The Auditor General himself raised the question and suggested that the government was not getting value for money in contracting out.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Bourassa.

Mrs. Marie Gibeau (Bourassa): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to express my support for Bill C-26, the Public Service Reform Act.

The federal Public Service is one of the cornerstones of our parliamentary democracy. It advises members of Cabinet on policies and programs, offers Canadians a wide range of programs and services, represents the country's interests abroad and protects our sovereignty at home. It is an important national institution. Its operations are critical to the administration of this country and to our ability to settle constitutional matters and meet the challenges of a global economy. In other words, it is indispensable to the kind of country we live in.

The last amendment to the current legislation on the Public Service goes back 25 years. As we all know, things have changed considerably since that time, and we have witnessed a kind of cultural revolution in the management of people. Our concepts of leadership and authority are no longer the same. The level of education of employees has increased, and participatory management, training and development have replaced time and motion studies and what used to be called time cards. Advances in computer science have reduced both geographical and hierarchical distances between employees.

The federal Public Service, like private organizations, has been reacting to these changes for some time. It is restructuring, reducing the number of management levels, downsizing and becoming increasingly result-oriented. Public Service 2000, launched two years ago, has given new vigour to actions that were already under way. Ten task forces were asked to suggest ways of making specific areas more cost efficient and more effective. Proposals covered over 300 areas in need of reform.

The reports and the feedback they generated were tabled in a white paper in this House more than a year ago by the President of the Treasury Board. Where legislative changes were not required, many administrative reforms have already been put in place.