

### *Government Orders*

their work and their work would be done better, more efficiently. Of course the public in dealing with those people would also be happier that they were being treated more fairly.

This legislation has failed. Pay equity is something that is still talked about, and we have gone to court over it, but the legislation does not really do anything to say it is going to be any better in the future than it has been in the past.

If the legislation, PS 2000, the whole process, were supposed to make conditions better between workers and management, it has failed. Unless the organizations representing the workers believe that a real attempt is being made to do this, to accomplish this, unless they believe they are really being involved in the process of deciding what is going to happen then it is not going to work.

I fear we may see more of the kind of job action that we saw last summer, which did nothing to improve relations; indeed it made relations that much more difficult.

PS 2000 once again will be a total waste, a waste of effort, a waste on our part of passing the legislation if it is not going to achieve the co-operation and the good will it was supposed to achieve. If the process before the legislative committee does not meet with success—and I sincerely hope that it will for the sake of all concerned—then it would seem to me that it would be better not to make the changes we are contemplating simply because we have gone this far down the road and we should proceed. That is not good enough.

If we do not come out of the legislative committee with an agreement on all parts—that is the members of the committee themselves and the witnesses who have appeared there from Treasury Board and from the various organizations representing workers—if we do not come out of there feeling that we have achieved something worth while, it is better to leave it the way it is and try again to see if we can come up with something that is going to serve government and Treasury Board, that will treat the workers fairly and make them believe they really are partners in the process. Then in the end all of us together will have served the public better by having produced something that is going to improve the level of service offered by government employees to members of

the public generally and make them feel that their government is working on their behalf rather than simply taking advantage of the present system where it has the votes, the control, can pass any legislation it wants and do whatever it wants with respect to the workers until such time as there is a change in government, to which I think almost all of us are looking forward.

It could be better. It should be better. Twenty-five years is a long time for the same process to remain in effect. I believe out of this process something good could happen. It will be up to the members of that legislative committee to listen to all the witnesses, to hear what they are really saying, and to come up with something better than the legislation before us, legislation that will be acceptable to Treasury Board but legislation that the worker organizations will believe they have been able to change in the interests of employees and the public generally.

The committee will work. The committee will produce something. It is in its hands whether what it produces is something better than what we have right now or whether the committee has failed.

**Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief in my question. The member talked about this opting out process or this contracting out process and how it affects the morale of the Public Service.

• (1030)

I would like to suggest to members that it does not work in an economic sense or efficiency sense. In Toronto we have several examples where the constriction of the Public Service has caused an incredible backlog in processing, specifically the refugee cases in our community. What we have experienced is that the service has broken down because public servants just cannot manage the load. The delay in processing refugees has created a backlog of close to 50,000 people. There has been a drain on our social services in the city of Toronto. Health care in the last year, just in the greater metropolitan area of Toronto alone, has cost the treasury close to three billion additional dollars.

All governments are really concerned about deficit and debt. This contracting out process is contradictory to the objective. It is done in the name of streamlining and