

*Adjournment Debate*

Mr. Speaker, the House will recall that I was not talking about senior executives. I was not talking about studies on the remuneration of these executives. I was talking about jobs held by public servants who had either lost or were about to lose their jobs. And I asked the Minister whether he had made a cost-benefit study. Have you made studies which might show, for instance, the cost benefits of privatization, as advocated by the Government?

So, Mr. Speaker, again on February 11 I wrote to the Minister asking him to confirm, in writing this time, the existence or non-existence of privatization cost benefit studies. In case of a negative reply, I asked the Minister in the letter, and I quote from the third paragraph: "As you will see . . .", and I am quoting my own words, ". . . on page 10246 of the Official Report of the *Debates* my question had to do with the tabling of privatization cost benefit studies."

If there are no such studies, should I conclude that the Minister misled the House? It is a very simple question since the Minister told me: "Everything is available, we are an open Government. The Hon. Member need only ask and he will receive." I asked but did not receive anything, Mr. Speaker.

The Government policy on personnel management is well known. We know that in its Budget last year, in May 1985, the Government had announced its intention of reducing the Public Service by some 15,000 person-years. With that in mind, the Government has announced a 2 per cent reduction in fiscal year 1986-87 and 1 per cent in each of the next four years. We also know that yesterday, in the February 26 Budget, were told that there will be a \$500 million cut-back in various programs. We simply do not quite know where and how, but there will be cut-backs of about \$500 million in federal agencies and corporations.

Mr. Speaker, it seems that this Government wanted people, at least in the National Capital Region, to believe that jobs have been created, but I can tell you that the Government has not created jobs in this region, especially in Ottawa-Vanier and in the sectors of the capital with which I am familiar. On the contrary, the Government has done away with jobs, it is still doing so and it is putting public servants in a very difficult position.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the budget debate will give me an opportunity to come back to this issue, but, this evening I would like to ask one question to the Parliamentary Secretary: Have studies been made on the privatization of Government services? Have cost-benefit studies been carried out by the Treasury Board which would show the country as a whole that your policies do make sense? Or else, did the Minister not know what he was saying when he told me that we had all received information on this issue! The question is quite simple. Have studies been made or not?

• (1825)

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Dick (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pity that the Hon. Member has not learned how to ask a question properly in the House. In going over the material recently, I noticed in the Member's questions there are six different queries, and it makes it virtually impossible for a person to respond to them intelligently in the short time allotted. I know a letter was being drafted in response to his most recent inquiry, but he has decided to jump the gun and tried to make political capital out of something which is not.

I read all the questions and they are basically unrelated. Concerning the negotiations on the salaries of public servants since the resumption of Public Service collective bargaining in 1984, the Government and the unions have concluded more than 20 collective agreements providing, on average, annual pay settlements of 3.5 per cent.

On February 23, the Government and the Public Service Alliance of Canada reached an agreement, subject to union ratification which will provide pay increases for another 90,000 public servants in the CR, PM and GL groups. It is anticipated that the contracts of many other groups will be renegotiated during the next few months.

With respect to privatization, the Government has established a ministerial task force to co-ordinate the possible sale of Crown corporations or other equity holdings. A privatization secretariat has been set up in support of the task force. The ministerial task force has developed a systematic process for the review of each individual privatization initiative to ensure that all issues be fully identified in advance and that divestiture proceed in a business-like manner.

In the initial stage, the Minister who is responsible for a particular corporation will present his or her recommendations to the task force on the whole range of issues concerning possible privatization, including the continued public policy role of the corporation, alternate means of delivering the same policy, potential impact on employees, service to the public and preliminary financial considerations. The task force will then decide whether or not to proceed with a further study of the corporation.

The purpose of the next study phase would be the proposal, again by the responsible minister, of resolutions to the outstanding policy issues, including impact on employees and more detailed financial and cost benefit analyses. I would stress that this work will be done by the line department in consultation with the privatization secretariat to enable the responsible minister to formulate recommendations for the task force. Much of this work will contain commercially sensitive information and cannot be released to the public. It is only after this second study has been completed that the task force will decide whether or not to proceed with the sale of the corporation.

In so far as person year reductions are concerned, I would like to emphasize that Treasury Board has had a detailed