

Council, using figures submitted by the union, calculates the increase at 47 per cent over the same period. But, by using their own figures, the B.C. Employers' Union has discovered that the actual increase will be in the order of 54 per cent.

It is very difficult to determine what the calculations are, Mr. Speaker, and what the end result will be with respect to any calculation except the 61 per cent. I would refer hon. members to a lead editorial in the *Toronto Star* of Monday, September 9, 1974, entitled "Up, Up and Away" which reads in part:

The federal government which is pressing western grain companies to accept the terms of a conciliation report as a settlement with grain handlers says it doesn't know how the companies figure the contract would cost an inflationary 61 per cent over two years.

Here's how. The calculation assumes—what else can one assume—that the consumer price index continues to rise by 1 per cent a month. The present basic wage is \$4.96 an hour. Add: 87 cents wage increase, December, 1973; 19 cents cost of living allowance, November, 1974; 65 cents wage increase, December, 1974; 50 cents cost of living allowance, April, 1975; 21 cents cost of living allowance, November, 1975; 40 cents pension plan; 21 cents other fringe benefits.

Total: \$3.03 an hour. Which is a 61 per cent increase, extreme by any standard. Does Ottawa really mean to put its seal of approval on that kind of package, thus establishing it as a target for other unions.

There is some question here because the union figures do not jibe. I find it strange, because of the complexities and implications of the COLA clause, that the government was in such a hurry to embrace it. I say "embrace" because they accepted it without knowing what it really meant. Now they want to give us a referee to assist the parties in determining what Dr. Perry meant. The minister shakes his head. However, I have read the bill, and it provides that any amendments or suggestions that cannot be understood by the parties involved are to be referred to the referee, who will tell them what they are all about. That shows that the minister does not know what this problem is all about.

The government has not released anything to indicate what they expect the figure to be on a percentage basis. All I can recall seeing from the minister is his press release of September 30, which indicated that there were only two unresolved issues remaining in the Vancouver terminal grain elevators' dispute and that they would produce a total settlement package costing considerably less than the 61 per cent widely reported in the media. What is this word "considerably", Mr. Speaker: what does it mean in terms of actual figures?

In connection with the press release, I tell the minister that he has been challenged by a responsible person, the solicitor acting on behalf of the wheat pool, who said, that "Munro told half story", according to a headline in the *Ottawa Citizen* of October 3. He is quoted as saying:

The minister hasn't told the whole story and why he chose to do this is a mystery to me.

Later he said:

Munro seems to be playing games.

The minister's statement in his press release, namely, that there are only two unresolved issues in the Vancouver terminal grain elevators' dispute, was also questioned by Ira K. Mumford, general manager of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, in an article in the *Globe and Mail* of October 2. In the same article, E. K. Turner, president of the

### Grain Handlers' Strike

Saskatchewan Wheat Pool quoted part of a telex sent the minister as follows:

In fact, there is no agreement on approximately 40 items, including those referred to in your telex.

Is the minister playing games? Is he being less than honest? I do not know, but that is Mr. Mumford's impression—and he ought to know because he is involved. Mr. Turner says there are 40 issues, including the two issues of pensions and benefits, whereas the minister says there are only two issues. What conclusions can we on this side reach except that the minister is playing games, is playing hanky-panky? Despite any discrepancies over the actual cost, Mr. Speaker, it is probable that a settlement of this size will constitute a precedent for future contract negotiations, as did the 1966 St. Lawrence Seaway settlement. The Prime Minister has either forgotten, or refuses—contrary to all respected opinion—to accept that fact when he indicates that this dispute is unique and that the settlement being imposed will not set off another round of inflationary demands, a proposition to which my party cannot lend any support.

Let us review for a moment the St. Lawrence Seaway settlement. In this case, 1,260 Seaway employees were awarded a two-year contract calling for an increase of 20 per cent immediately and a further 10 per cent following in January, 1967—or, in all, 30 per cent—when the inflation rate was stabilized at 3.6 per cent per year. At that time the Liberal government displayed its well known ineptitude, incompetence and complete disregard for the collective bargaining process by jumping in and promoting a proposal which gave the union 5 per cent less than its original demand of 35 per cent. And this was after the conciliation board's majority report had recommended a total package increase of 14 per cent over two years. Now, is that responsibility? Is that what you call leadership? They are aware of the circumstances, and they make these awards in keeping with the exigencies of the situation.

Let me continue. The Economic Council of Canada dealt with this settlement in 1966 in its third annual review, assessing all the relevant facts. At this time I believe it is not only advisable but very necessary to refer to the council's assessment, which was as follows:

Normally, bargaining in Canada is not characterized by strong national pattern setting. For example, settlements in the steel and automobile industries in Ontario do not usually exert any great effect on collective bargaining in British Columbia which tends to have a life of its own. But large, highly publicized settlements to which governments are parties inevitably have somewhat more impact on the climate of collective bargaining across the country.

● (1610)

That is the crux of the problem. From the moment the government embraces any figures or intervenes, the benchmark is made. This is true whether you like it or not. The Economic Council of Canada considered this sort of situation in 1966 and I have referred to its conclusion. It is not my conclusion, Mr. Speaker. It is a conclusion to which all members, particularly government supporters, should pay attention.

The *Globe and Mail* of June 22, 1966, registered its concern when it said that a pattern had been set for resolving major labour disputes and wage scales, one that would prove much more difficult to break than it had been to