

The Budget—Mr. Masters

that issue. If we have a happy, contented, effective and productive private sector, then surely we must have the same situation in the Public Service sector. We have an awful lot of people in the Public Service who are just dying to be able to show more initiative. They have management skills, so I for one will be encouraging the Government to pursue the thought the Hon. Member expressed more fully.

Mr. Kristiansen: Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for both the Hon. Member and the Government he supports to realize that such mechanisms, whether they be a share in decision making, profit sharing, or whatever, are not a substitute for the adversary system. If they are regarded as such, they will be treated with a great deal of animosity. They may be complementary to it, and by taking those initiatives they may alter the mood in the industrial world. But if anyone suggests, particularly the Government, that these are a substitute for an adversary system which, particularly in North America, has done more to ensure that not just the collective body but individual workers have rights in the workplace, then he is treading on very dangerous ground and it is going to blow up in the Government's face.

There were initiatives a few years ago with the so-called labour-management consultative committee under the aegis of the federal Department of Labour. Many of the meetings became a talk shop in which issues were talked out to the point where grievances were lost due to being "out of time". They were misused by many corporations so as to bring the whole idea of co-operation into disrepute. I ask the Hon. Member to impress upon the Government he supports, that these systems are simply an adjunct to, or possibly supplementary to, the adversary system, not a substitute. There is a real danger if the Government pursues the substitution course.

Mr. Masters: Mr. Speaker, the only thing I would say in response is that the adversary system is terminology I want to disappear from our vocabulary. I would hope that through consultation we can solve the problems mutually. If you work on something in a mutual way, then I respectfully suggest you are no longer in an adversarial position; you are having an honest discussion.

Mr. Kristiansen: But who is in the driver's seat?

Mr. Masters: I understand what the Hon. Member is getting at, that the rights of the workers have to be protected and so on. However, we have now reached a point where we can do it in a better way and it does not always have to be by throwing rocks at each other from across the table. The basic thought of labour-management relations in the Public Service is a valid one but it should not be maintained in the adversarial role as we have known in the past.

Mr. Kristiansen: Parliaments and the courts work on the adversarial system, too.

Mr. Parker: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to direct a question to the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon (Mr. Masters) regarding the labour-management profits system.

When the Government initiated the six and five program, the request was made that mediation officers be brought before the committee so the method of dealing with this topic could be discussed. This really relates to labour-management within the Public Service which he is talking about, and we were denied that. It was strictly a confrontation.

Until this Government sets up some sort of system as in Sweden where a labour-management program is put in place, I think the Government is grasping at straws. Until it can lay out some sort of program to accomplish this, with Government assistance, then we are not going to meet that goal. We have had confrontation up until this point. If the Government is trying to change this direction, then I hope there is a structure in place. Does the Hon. Member see a structure in place to assist these groups in doing that?

Mr. Masters: Mr. Speaker, I think the six and five program, which worked, was undertaken because of extraordinary times.

Mr. Kristiansen: For whom?

Mr. Masters: The Hon. Member asks for whom. It has worked for the country as a whole because inflation came down. Unfortunately it is up to Government to set a tone and use whatever weapons it has in its arsenal to combat things such as inflation. What I hope will happen now is that we will have found the middle ground where we can meet with our Public Service employees. I would hope the NDP, because they seem to have their followers, will encourage our renewed attempt at honest dialogue to be fair to all concerned.

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, it is amazing how often you stand to speak having prepared in your mind exactly what you want to say and interventions from our colleagues to the left change your mind. It seems unfortunate that the NDP has such a terrible hang-up that, first, anyone should ever, heaven forbid, make a profit, and second, that any group of employees would want to work with a group of employers and thus remove the possibility of confrontation between the two.

Mr. Kristiansen: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to debate. But somebody deliberately misconstrues what is said and suggests that I, as a representative of the NDP, said there was something wrong with profit per se. He knows that his is a misleading statement. He knows that absolutely. I never said any such thing and neither has my Party.

● (1140)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Order, please. Differences of opinion are debate and do not constitute a point of order.

Mr. Ellis: Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but they do not know the difference between debate and points of order.

I intended to start my remarks, Mr. Speaker, which I will do now, with a quote from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) on February 15. He said: