

*Government Orders*

Break the backs of the unions and then sell pieces of it off to your friends in private enterprise. Forget about the great jobs that the public servants have done since this country came into existence in 1867.

Over the last few weeks I watched the minister opposite responding to questions about ship crews on the east coast. I am going to try to keep my remarks to that because I know my colleagues on this side will be addressing the problems and the concerns of the hospital workers as they relate to this particular legislation.

I could not quite believe that the government was going to try their heavy-handed tactics on members of the ship crews. Since I have been elected I have seen, witnessed and heard from many people in the Public Service who are fed up with the treatment they have received from this government. I only have to think back to the hundreds of letters I received—and most members of this House have received them—from employees of a place like Canada Post, a Crown corporation.

We saw what happened in that Crown corporation. The government said: "Whoa, we had better get rid of this place. We are going to sell it off, but before we do that we have to get the union turned on itself". It set out on a pattern of forcing every single small issue, to get all of the postal stations and post offices across this country into the grievance procedure.

We get up in this House time after time after time and ask the minister responsible to respond to the real concerns that we hear about harassment at the post office, harassment of pregnant women at the post office, harassment of minority groups in that Crown corporation. We asked the minister over and over again to please tell us what kind of management instruction that Crown corporation was getting to be treating those men and women at Canada Post in such a callous and cruel manner.

• (1550)

Every time one asked a question of that particular minister he would get up, always have a little roll of his belly and a drop of his jaw, and he would laugh as he responded. I was hoping, and it is a terrible hope, that Canada Post was an isolated example. I thought perhaps it was just the insensitivity of top management at a Crown corporation. Maybe I am really stretching it to see this as almost a conspiracy from the top down.

Then we had the ship crews, 2,200 of them across Canada. I said earlier that they do a great job for this country. They ply the waters on the east coast, on the west coast and up the St. Lawrence Seaway. To listen to some of the rhetoric that has been falling out of the lips of some of the members opposite, they would have you believe that these are terrible individuals who are trying to destroy the economy of both coasts and of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I just want to put it on the record so people know who these faceless men and women are when this type of nonsense comes from the government. These people have faces, they do a job, and they do a good job for the Public Service and for all Canadians.

I have here a newsletter which was to explain to people who were concerned about the lack of progress in the negotiations who the workers are. It says:

We are the employees. We work on Canadian Coast Guard vessels on the east and west coasts and the Great Lakes, from large ice-breakers to buoy tenders, to Hovercraft and lifeboats, engaged in search and rescue operations. We work on armed fisheries vessels that ensure that proper monitoring of our fisheries resource is maintained both in policing the laws and in the research on improving and expanding the oceanographic resources that we all depend on. We work on Canadian Forces Auxiliary vessels in providing support for our naval vessels in the protection of our national sovereignty. We provide a service to our country in an honest and forthright manner.

That is who they are. Down in my neck of the woods on the east coast there are probably 1,500 of them. These are people you never hear of nor think of. But these are the individuals who for \$18,000, \$19,000 or \$20,000 a year put themselves out on the high seas on the east coast. These are the very individuals who go out for \$20,000 in five-storey swells when a vessel has put out a distress call. They do that for \$20,000. It is not a pleasure cruise they are on. It is a tough job. It is a hard job and it is a job that they do and they feel proud of doing, and all they wanted was a decent wage for doing it. That is all that they asked for. They did not ask for anything special. They did not make any unreasonable demands. They were at the negotiating table for two years, two solid years.

It is nice that the President of the Treasury Board finally found out what these people do and that they are essential to the Public Service of Canada because for two years he and his negotiators did not negotiate in good