

*Government Orders*

those, could never agree to them, and yet went ahead as though we were marching—not realizing there was a precipice there—safely along and everything was going well, and the union would cave.

• (1600 )

Did the President of Treasury Board have in mind that is what would happen? The PSAC would lead its members into a strike, a strike that would not be supported by the membership and that if some of them did go out for the first day or two then they would come back to work because they could see that their fellows were not marching with them on the picket lines.

It did not work that way. I think the government did make a mistake. I hope that is the case. I hope it did not want to have the kind of confrontation we are dealing with today. I am not sure, but I am hoping it thought it could destroy the union. To its credit, the union has proven that it is capable of taking on the government and surviving and growing stronger as the days roll by, rather than weaker. It is tough for it.

The hon. member for Kitchener again talked about the privation and the way people are suffering. Every union leader knows that no trade unionist on the picket line is going to come out of that strike any better off than he went into it. They are the ones who are guaranteed to lose. They cannot possibly get enough of an increase to make up for any length of a strike. It does not work that way. The ones who come behind them do gain. The ones on the picket line are not doing it for themselves, they are doing it for the principles involved and they are doing it for the people who are coming behind them.

In the private sector when there are these kinds of worker management disputes and disruptions, sometimes the employer wins and sometimes he loses. The workers always lose. In the public sector, generally the employer wins because he is paying less wages out, although there are costs associated with a strike.

I have forgotten which cabinet minister pointed out that they cannot allocate the profits from this to the debt reduction because they cannot determine just how much will be gained. There are losses. Everyone loses whenever there is any kind of a worker-management dispute

that ends in a withdrawal of services. There is no question about that.

There are other people who suffer as well. There are people who are suffering because of this. There have also been some excellent examples, to me, of the way in which the trade unionists are trying to co-operate and trying to help. I visited picket lines in three communities in my own riding on Vancouver Island. I saw trade unionists talking with people who were coming to try to get some service from the government. I heard them telling people: "You can phone or write and tell us what your problem is and we will give you the best advice we have as to how you can get the service you need". In the event that going into the office and being serviced by one of the people working there was the best way of getting it, then they were invited to go through the picket line into the office and get what they needed.

There are stories in the newspapers about what is happening in other communities. I can only tell you what is happening in Nanaimo, in Duncan, in my own constituency on four different locations. They were cheering, good natured and looking forward to the end of the strike because they are not getting paid. They were doing everything they could to make it easier on the individuals involved.

If it were up to the union, I think there is no question that the farmers on the prairies would not be suffering. It does not want to take it out on them, but neither does it want to be taken advantage of by a government that could have acted on this much sooner.

If the government really wanted to keep the grain moving, as was pointed out earlier, a year ago it could have designated those people as essential servants and they would have been working.

Alternatively, the government miscalculated and thought there would be no strike. The strike started a week ago Monday. It did not have to wait until Monday of this week to call us together. It could have called us together on the Tuesday and taken action immediately. It chose not to. It wanted people to suffer some first in the hope that public reaction would be so damaging to the