

*SIU Strike Settlement*

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Alexander:** I notice the Prime Minister is pointing. I do not know who brought him into the act.

**Mr. Trudeau:** I was asking if you support the agreement.

● (1500)

**Mr. Alexander:** We must continually look for new methods so that the collective bargaining process can work to the satisfaction of the Canadian people. This is why we have taken the position that a public interest disputes commission should be established which would not only assist the Department of Labour in bringing about new techniques in order to help the parties in dispute but would determine what are the essential aspects of services and how we can determine what are the best steps in order to bring about reasonable industrial peace. In closing, I would just say this—

**Mr. Trudeau:** Yes, take more time.

**Mr. Alexander:** I will take all the time I want until Mr. Speaker tells me to sit down. I appreciate the Prime Minister's intervention. It makes me look like a hot shot when he has to get involved with the hon. member for Hamilton West.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Alexander:** In closing I would just remind the minister—I have every sympathy for him in his job—that he does not have to be too queasy or hesitant about personal intervention, which is what we asked him to do a week ago.

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** Mr. Speaker, my comments will be very short. I have an ingrown suspicion of hon. members who say they want a new way of settling disputes but are all in favour of collective bargaining.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Alexander:** I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member seeks the floor on a point of order. The Chair has recognized the hon. member for York South. The hon. member should indicate why he is seeking the floor now.

**Mr. Alexander:** I rise on a question of privilege. I resent the leader of the NDP taking what I said out of context. I said we must devise new methods whereby we can make the collective bargaining process work better for the Canadian people. That is what I said.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lewis:** My suspicions were not at all allayed by the charming interjection of the hon. member for Hamilton West. I happen to know that such ways have been sought for at least half a century, if not longer, and that all these people who are searching for new ways end up in one

[Mr. Alexander.]

place, namely, compulsory arbitration. That is why I have some justified suspicions.

I merely want to say on behalf of my colleagues and myself, without any reservation, that we congratulate the officers of the minister's department who have worked so hard to reach a settlement and the minister himself for the part he has played. The fact that a settlement has been reached which will avoid hardship for parts of our economy and for people in the west merely underlines the value of collective bargaining when all those involved do it with good faith and with hard work.

I am not the slightest bit outraged by the fact that there will be a reduction in the hours of work. At a time of considerable unemployment in the country, to reduce the weekly hours to 40 is desirable not only for humane reasons as the work affects those now engaged in it but also for the purpose of opening jobs for those who are unemployed. I am sure every member of the House is glad that a settlement was reached without the strike continuing but for a few days.

**Mr. Speaker:** We will now return to oral questions.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### SOCIAL SECURITY

#### SUGGESTED ISSUANCE OF SENIOR CITIZENS IDENTIFICATION CARDS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Can the minister advise us whether he is giving sympathetic consideration to the very reasonable request of the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation that a senior citizens identification card be issued, and will he give some thought to my humble suggestion that such a card could efficiently be issued with the first cheque sent to every recipient of the old age security pension?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I have had a very fruitful meeting with representatives of the pensioners federation. I have had the opportunity of advising them that I asked my department several months ago to study the items they have put forward, and this is under consideration.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Moose Jaw.

**Mr. Neil (Moose Jaw):** Mr. Speaker, my question was for the minister in charge of the Wheat Board but as he has left the House I should like to postpone it.