

behind the scene sits the invisible government, just watching. When one party is not doing the job well enough to suit it, and in its interests, then it gives its money to somebody else and that party comes in at the next election. That is the situation. I just want to leave these few thoughts with my hon. friends here, because I have a good deal of respect for the present house leader of the opposition. I know that he is honest and that it is just a matter of talking and explaining things to him. Then I think he will be on the right road.

I rose particularly to deal with another matter which gives me great concern, namely, the situation in industry itself. On one other occasion I rose in this house and drew attention to the possible developments at Kirkland Lake. One of my friends on the *Montreal Gazette* criticized me roundly later on, saying that I predicted such and such, that I told the house what was going to happen. My only thought in bringing these matters to the attention of the house is to try to offset them. In the present circumstances I do not think strikes, upheavals and stoppages of work should be permitted to take place. They should be stopped before they occur, and that can be done if common sense and a little judgment are used. To-night I am going to refer to the steel strike, which really was not a strike but a spontaneous walk-out; it was not a called strike in that the officials of the organization had nothing to do with it. I bring up this matter for this reason, that five thousand of the men involved in that walk-out live and work in my constituency; that is the steel workers at Sydney, Nova Scotia. For that reason I followed developments very closely. I know all the things that were done by the steel workers' organization, both national and international, with respect to finding a solution of that problem, without success. I have seen those steel workers referred to in the press as saboteurs of the war effort, as doing a disservice to the war effort, and there is no doubt that the walk-out did not help the war effort. But the responsibility for that walk-out does not rest with the steel workers' organization or with the men involved. I place the responsibility squarely at the door of the government, and particularly the Department of Labour.

Mr. MITCHELL: Does my hon. friend think he is helping the present situation, which we have more or less clarified, by raising the question here this evening? The matter is before the national war labour board at the request of the steel workers. Does the hon. member think he is helping the situation by

criticizing the government or any other agency at the present time, after we have just pacified the situation?

Mr. GILLIS: Yes, I do.

Mr. MITCHELL: With the consent of the steel workers.

Mr. GILLIS: Yes, I do, and for this reason: If I had any indication whatsoever that that matter was settled, or that it would be settled satisfactorily, then I would not be saying anything about it. But—

Mr. MITCHELL: When my hon. friend says this, does he not question the good faith of the national war labour board? In advance he makes the statement that the matter is not going to be settled. I think that is a reflection upon the board. It is a reflection upon labour and upon the representative of the employers on the board.

Mr. GILLIS: I cannot take any other attitude, and for this reason. I have in my hand the order in council which was passed. This is order in council P.C. 689, which was passed on January 26, 1943. In it there was a settlement, or an armistice. The situation, as it stands to-day, is not a settlement.

Mr. MITCHELL: The hon. member is talking arbitrarily. We are trying to make a settlement.

Mr. GILLIS: But the order in council prevents it. That is the reason why I have mentioned it. This order in council prevents a settlement. I will read only the last clause of it. It states:

It is understood that the government will adhere to its price-ceiling and wage-stabilization policy.

That is the very thing that brought about the present trouble. If this order in council means what it says—and I think it does—then the adherence to the wage-stabilization and price-ceiling policy is going to precipitate the trouble all over again.

Mr. SLAGHT: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. GILLIS: Yes.

Mr. SLAGHT: Does he realize that the men themselves agreed to the present status quo in an effort to settle the matter, without further trouble?

Mr. GILLIS: No, they did not.

Mr. SLAGHT: Of course they did.

Mr. GILLIS: No, they did not. I happen to have been pretty close to the Sydney steel workers. They accepted this agreement with