

*Increased Cost of Living*

against this kind of wait and wish policy. That is what it is, a wait and wish policy; wait and wish that something will turn up like Mickey in "David Copperfield". Not only that, but they would find that the people in Canada are fed up with this policy. I was home the week end before last, and when I went to buy my ticket the personnel of Air Canada—I cannot name them, of course—said: We sincerely hope that this government and parliament will not let the strike occur.

Yet the government waits and wishes. Let us see what the government said in reply to questions on the orders of the day. I asked this question on November 16, as reported at page 9955 of *Hansard*:

A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder whether the Minister of Labour would make this very clear because there seems to be some misunderstanding on the question. Are the parties still meeting? Is mediation going on? If the answer is in the negative it should be made clear in the House of Commons.

The Minister of Labour replied:

Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of any such proceedings going on at the present time. I believe the atmosphere is somewhat tense—

Isn't that wonderful? The atmosphere is tense. Of course it is tense. It is tense in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Calgary, Montreal and Toronto because industries in these areas are not able to attend to their businesses. But the minister quotes, with great approval, from the report of the Economic Council of Canada and talks about productivity. Our industries are at a stalemate because this government will not measure up to its responsibility by appointing a Government mediator so that talks can proceed intelligently. I am sorry the Minister of Labour has adopted this attitude. Up to this point, I had a great deal of respect for his administrative ability, but on this particular issue he has failed not only his party, the government and the House of Commons, but the country. I have no hesitation in saying that. Then I asked the following question:

A further supplementary question. In view of the fact that the minister says he has no knowledge of any such proceedings going on at the present time, does he not feel that he has some responsibility to determine the situation and let us have this information as soon as he can?

There was no answer to that question, Mr. Speaker. Do you know why we have not had answers to the questions we have asked day after day about the air strike? It is because this government does not have the answers.

**Mr. Nicholson:** Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member give us the date of that statement?

Will he not admit that within a matter of hours that the statement was made the parties had voluntarily resumed negotiations?

**Mr. Woolliams:** Yes; they met for two hours, had coffee and then dismissed. The press today says, "Air Canada Talks Fail Once More, Situation Worse." What is the situation? Let me summarize it, and then I will put the rest of the record straight in this regard. This morning I made it my business to find out the facts of the Air Canada situation by talking to someone who knew something about it. I will not tell the government whether I talked to somebody on the labour or the management side of the company. I had a long conversation with this person and made four pages of notes. I did this because I am one member of parliament who believes this strike is the responsibility of government. I speak for myself in this regard.

I believe we must do everything possible to assist our essential industries to function properly. The government cannot just sit down and wait and wish in this situation. That is what this government is doing, and it is failing to measure up to its responsibilities. The situation is that 5,200 people brought on this strike. This strike is tying up all the air avenues of Canada. Air Canada has a monopoly in this field. They have a monopoly in the city of Calgary; C.P.A. cannot land there on a trans-Canada flight. C.P.A. cannot even land in Great Britain; they must land somewhere in Europe and their passengers are ferried across the Channel to Great Britain or take an alternative aircraft. Air Canada is a crown corporation, not a free enterprise company, and has this monopoly in Canada. The situation in this strike is not like that which occurs in the United States, where they have free enterprise and other companies flying to and from their cities. Air Canada has a monopoly, and when they cease flying, air services cease, business ceases and productivity ceases.

This strike is tying up the air express, mail and passenger operations of the country. There has now been instituted a substitution service in respect of mail, and perhaps in respect of express traffic. But try and get out of Ottawa, try and get out of Calgary, try and operate the petroleum industry in the city of Calgary; and try and operate a business economically in Toronto, Vancouver or Montreal. The maintenance department of Air Canada are on strike, as are the stores department and the ramp and station attendants. What are the mechanics earning today? They