

*Government Orders*

On the particular occasion to which the member referred, the ships' crews workers, despite the abuse by this government, despite the mistreatment, despite the fact that for two years their requests for equity and justice have been denied, delayed, fought every step of the way by the government instead of recognized and acceded to, those people put out to sea. Despite that even those who were not on a coast guard vessel, *The Alert*, put out to sea with a full crew above and beyond normal requirements of emergency services.

The union representing these workers has spared no effort to make sure that they are available at any time to respond to an emergency. They have not been sitting at home nice and warm and comfortable. They have been out on their picket lines, and they have put down their pickets the instant there was a requirement for their services.

The union representing them, the Public Service Alliance of Canada, has spent thousands and thousands of dollars, even though it has no obligation to do so, to make sure that these workers are available at all times for emergency services. Not the government, but their bargaining agent which this government refuses to even recognize in legislation, has kept them in hotel rooms. The workers have voluntarily left their own communities, stayed away from their families for weeks at a time to be available for emergencies. They have been put up in hotels and transported by their union. They have remained right on the scene so that they could respond to any kind of an emergency. This has been done at great personal sacrifice by the workers and has been done at a cost to all workers represented by this union. Despite that, the member has the nerve to stand up in this House and try to link the names and reputations of those workers with a tragedy.

The member tries to pretend that the members on this side of the House are unaware of the seriousness of the situation. We are well aware of the seriousness of the situation, and I will come back to some specifics on that. We know where the blame for that serious situation lies, it lies right across the aisle of this House. It lies with a government which is incompetent, incapable and unable to respect the collective bargaining process, which is unconcerned about paying people what they are worth and paying people who are doing the same job the same amount of money. This government is absolutely unconcerned about following due process. It is using every

legal means at its disposal to try to bypass collective bargaining and waste valuable time and valuable dollars dragging people through the courts instead of trying to reach a settlement with them.

It is the members on this side of the House who, before the strike ever started, raised questions in this House and pointed out to the government the dangerous situation that was developing and the need to act quickly to settle these collective agreements.

Last spring we were raising in the House the question of pay equity for hospital service workers. That was at a time when the first round of collective bargaining had been negotiated, completed and referred to the bargaining units. It was at a time when the different bargaining units were considering whether they would or would not approve the particular agreements that had been worked out for them. I will be going through that case in a little more detail later, after the lunch break.

The hospital service workers wanted one thing, one sign that this government really understood the whole basic question of human rights, fairness and equity. They simply wanted the government to grant them what the Human Rights Commission had already said they were entitled to. They simply wanted the government to include in their contract the settlement of this whole pay equity issue so that people performing the same work, whether in a government office building or the veterans home on Smyth Road, were getting paid the same.

The government had gone through those 18 months of negotiations without ever addressing those issues. It had refused to address those issues. It had refused to recognize that the basic problem of a proper wage for their work needed to be recognized in their collective agreement with the Government of Canada.

If our veterans are suffering less than adequate care right now it is because when we raised that question in the House last June the government chose not to respond to that, not to address that question and, in fact, continued to stonewall. The government knew that this strike was going to happen. The government knew because we warned it in this House. The workers had warned that the agreement was unacceptable if the issue was not dealt with in that agreement. As far back as two years ago, this government knew the end result of its intransigence, its bull-headedness and its stupidity in refusing to recognize that fair is fair, just is just. The Human Rights Commission had told the government what was fair, what was just, and what was right in this situation. If one veteran is suffering a lack of comfort