

A DILEMMA STORY--
"HEY, SAM, THE TRUCK IS HERE"

The mines have been closed for almost six weeks now because of the strike. The first two or three weeks were not so bad. Everyone who works in a mine and belongs to a union expects an occasional strike and always allows for such things. Families store extra food and build up small savings accounts. The union provides some food and a small supplemental pay allowance for striking workers. Now, however, cupboards are empty and savings are gone--even the union funds are available only for minors with over 15 years of service. Children take smaller lunches to school, and family meals consist of soup and day-old bread.

Sam Lentoli manages the only large grocery store in the small mining community. Sam worked in the mines for over 25 years and knows the terrible conditions and the safety hazards which the union is protesting. He is thankful that he can keep his family going and his youngest daughter in college with his income from managing the store. His wife is glad that Sam does not have to go into that black hole ever again.

Sam has just finished answering the phone for the sixth time that evening. He continues to receive call after call from old friends and other miners in the community asking him about the possibility of credit at the store. Sam is deeply troubled. The owner of the store also owns at least half of the stock in the mining company and is eager for the strike to end. He has instructed Sam that no credit will be extended to striking mine workers--under any conditions.

The next day Sam receives two calls early in the morning. The first from the store owner: "Sam, I hear people have been asking you for credit at the store. I know that you sympathize with the union and the workers, and this puts you in a tough spot. Let me make it easier for you--if you break the non-credit policy, you can look for a job back in the mines!" The second call comes from an old friend and a union organizer in the mines: "Sam, the people have to get credit at your store. You can provide these people with some food, Sam. I will make sure the store is repaid after the strike is settled. I am sending a truck down to pick up a load of groceries to distribute to 30 families. It should be there by 9:30. I can have another truck there this afternoon".

Should Sam fill the order when the truck arrives?