

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT  
MOTION

[Translation]

LABOUR RELATIONS—PERMISSION TO C.B.C.  
EMPLOYEES TO JOIN UNION OF CHOICE

**Mr. Alcide Simard (Lac-Saint-Jean):** Mr. Speaker, may I be allowed to quote to the hon. Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh), the question I directed to her on May 31 last:

Could the minister tell the house whether the C.L.R.B. has decided to make it easier for the C.B.C. employees to exercise their right to belong to a union of their choice?

Why did I ask such a question of the hon. minister? Simply because Canada compels our labourers to join American unions which they do not want.

In fact, what is the C.L.R.B.? Would it not be about time to know the meaning of those mysterious letters which seem to have a right of life or death over the unions governing the C.B.C. employees? Why was that board granted such an authority that no higher authority can reverse its decisions? The Canadian Labour Relations Board is relatively young, since it dates back only to 1948; its ancestor was the Wartime Labour Relations Board, created in 1944, under the War Measures Act. In 1948, the War Measures Act went into oblivion and the government introduced a permanent legislation, namely the federal act on industrial relations under which the C.L.R.B. was established. The board is made up of nine persons: one chairman, four management representatives and four labour representatives.

Whatever the authority given to the C.L.R.B. by the government, the workers and the employees of the C.B.C. do not want a union which was imposed upon them by the C.L.R.B. an official agency completely dedicated to government interests; the employees of the national broadcasting and television network want and ask for free unionism but they reject any idea or any attempt to impose unionism. The Canadian Bill of Rights grants them that precise, unquestionable and inalienable right.

The thousands of workers scattered throughout the country will no longer accept not to be able to choose their unions or to be members of unions which they do not want. Needless to add that these same workers in the civil service do not want to be dictated to by unions that they do not know at all or well enough. We cannot remain much longer indifferent about the fate of thousands of workers who want freedom of association; nobody,

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

not even the present government or all the future governments can issue this challenge to the face of our trade unions. Not one organization in Canada, be it the most authorized, has the right to dictate to our workers the type of union to which they must subscribe, be it coast to coast.

On behalf of trade unions and all public bodies concerned, I wish, Mr. Speaker, to take position openly and denounce, in this house, the omnipotence acquired by certain government organizations, as has so well been written by the hon. member for Montreal-Hochelaga (Mr. Pelletier) in an editorial published on April 15, 1967.

That is a striking example of the way our bureaucracy goes about getting from governments more and more money and powers to control the administration almost completely.

Those statements illustrate very well how a great number of senior officials operate to build for themselves small empires within the public service, how the bureaucrats gradually take over, how it is that, at times, ministers are paralysed and must follow the policies laid down by the technocrats.

That situation prevails unfortunately at the federal and provincial levels and, in some cases, at the municipal level. Such a state of affairs can only lower the status of the ministers and members of parliament and alter completely the role of democracy, which is that those elected by the people should govern. That is where the danger lies. It is high time to react against that increasing administrative dictatorship.

[English]

**Hon. A. J. MacEachen (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has referred to the authority and function of the Canada Labour Relations Board. In doing so he has entered into a very wide field which affects the determination of bargaining units and the certification of the bargaining agent by the Canada Labour Relations Board.

The authority which is being exercised by that board is one granted to it by the parliament of Canada. This is a technique which I feel is used in all the provinces of Canada and the United States in order to arrive at decisions with regard to bargaining units and the certification of bargaining units.

I understand from his previous question that the hon. gentleman is concerned about the application of the employees of the French network for certification as a bargaining agent. As my hon. friend knows, that is a