

know that that is not so, and that a great deal of their concern now is not just in trying to scramble to keep up with inflation, although that is very important, it is also the very serious concern as to whether or not our industrial society will produce enough jobs for their fellow workers and for the sons and daughters of all of us.

Some reference has been made to the situation in European countries. I think it is fair to point out that in one of the countries in Europe where they have a high degree of unionism—at least as high as our own, or perhaps a little more—that is in West Germany—there is no compulsory, mandatory, union membership. But we have to remember, when we look at the situation in Europe, just as we have to do in other things that are being talked about today, including co-determination, industrial democracy, workers' councils, and all that sort of thing, that it is not easy to transplant a system which may work in another milieu and with another cultural background into our industrial milieu, because our tradition has been very different.

Lastly, I want to emphasize, because it has to be remembered, that law makers have an obligation not to just work out on a theoretical basis what they believe would necessarily be the best of all possible worlds for all possible people. You cannot pass laws that will create so much strife and antagonism that the social damage done as a result of those laws exceeds any benevolent objective that the law makers may have.

● (1650)

I say bluntly that if this House should decide to impose so-called right to work laws across the boards on the parts of organized labour which lie within the federal jurisdiction, it would be taken as an attack on union security by every trade union person in this country.

I do not need to remind hon. members that within the organized trade union movement in this country there are approximately 3.2 million people. I ask the House also to remember that those are just the men or women who work in the force and belong to trade unions, and that the trade union family is much larger than that. That family is composed of the spouses, the children and the parents of those people, and I can assure hon. members that 3.2 million trade union members in this country and their families do not consider themselves undemocratic or somehow alien to the civil traditions of our society.

In closing I want to come back to my opening point and say that I hope all hon. members will recognize that my colleague, the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River, has done this House a service by bringing this bill here, because there is a reason it has been introduced. The reason is that many people are demanding this kind of legislation. That is a warning to us.

It is a warning to management, and it is a warning to the trade union movement. There is no part of the civil community, in which we have so much pride in Canada, that can very long withstand the scrutiny of public opinion if the perception should grow—and if it should become solidified—that democ-

racy is not working within it. The same applies to the trade union movement if the public should begin to believe that the industrial relations system of our country is not working—in fact, even worse, if the public decides it is working against the public interest—then there is no question that the pressure upon all of us in this Chamber to pass laws to do something about it will increase.

I want to thank the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River for introducing this bill and initiating this debate. I want to thank other hon. members for taking part. I hope that when I say—regretfully, because the hon. member is a colleague of mine—I cannot support the bill, all hon. members will, after listening to my remarks, understand the reasons for that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roger Young (Niagara Falls): Mr. Speaker, nearing the end of the day and entering the debate as I do at this moment, I must say that I have had the benefit of listening to the previous speakers, and I say very sincerely that I enjoyed that benefit.

When I gave my maiden speech in this House a couple of years ago, I followed the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser). We did not entirely agree on principle or on specifics at that time, but I have always appreciated his wisdom, his intellect and, by and large, the soundness of his judgment, even at the times when I have disagreed with him. I think I can say on his behalf that he spoke this afternoon probably with some reluctance because he spoke in opposition to a bill proposed by one of the backbench members of his own party. However, he spoke with such cogency and was so lucid in his remarks that there is little else to be said.

This afternoon I also find myself in agreement with the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). I do not always agree with him, but today he spoke very appropriately.

I do not mean to condemn the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle), but I too disagree with the specifics of the bill, and I would fear the result which would be brought upon the Canadian scene.

The hon. member for Vancouver South said he was glad the bill was brought forward for debate this afternoon, and I agree. He spoke of the growing feeling in the country that perhaps a change in labour law legislation is needed. I think it is true that there are people who feel that there has been too much confrontation and too much economic disruption and that we are all involved in this. However, as the things in which we are involved grow more numerous, sometimes we forget some of the lessons of history, and we are so wrapped up in the problems we have today that we forget the set of facts which originally gave rise to the type of labour code we have today, to the Rand formula, and to the system we now operate under. It may not be a perfect system. Few things are ever perfect. They may look that way on the surface, but there is a point where, because of human fallibility, they begin to break down.