

unions under trusteeship and barring certain criminals from holding union office. For us who are outside Quebec this seems to give an opportunity for the Quebec Federation of Labour to oppose the government. We are all familiar with and have heard and read what happened at the Pratt and Whitney plant where there was civil disobedience. In this movement by the Quebec Federation of Labour it seems significant that they have been supported by the CNTU and by the Quebec Teachers' Centre, which have brought with them 250,000 unionists.

● (2100)

Some of these problems that have come to the forefront in Canada's second largest province only point out the timeliness of this resolution.

In the broader labour field in Canada the announcement by the federal government of an industrial relations council of union, management and government will be welcomed. If it can find ways and means of reducing work stoppages, labour strife, and improving the work environment it may be of some value which certainly is more than can be said of many government boards.

I am not so sure that the appointment of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Munro) as chairman is a good one; not that I have anything against his abilities but I doubt that he should assume this position at this time because I believe the purpose of this body is to bring labour and management together. As I understand it, the unions are represented by the Canadian Labour Congress, and the spokesman for management is from the Canadian Manufacturers' Association.

If this board can develop some procedures whereby labour and management can settle their differences through the collective bargaining process, it may be of some help. Apparently the United States and the European countries have had such tripartite arrangements for a long time and even they have had their problems. If, as has been suggested in a speech by the Minister of Labour, this will clear away some of the legislative logjams that now hamper unions and employers from developing industry-wide bargaining, then this exercise may be of some help.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) suggested last week in Montreal that the structure of collective bargaining in Canada has broken down, as indicated by the large number of strikes in Canada last year. There is not any doubt about the sorry state of industrial relations in Canada. This is manifested by the frequent refusal of union members to ratify agreements reached by their bargaining agents. This has seemingly become very widespread.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour seem to feel they have the answer in some type of industry-wide bargaining. I should like to remind them that this industrial relations council has been established to bring forward solutions to problems. There may be some validity for this viewpoint, and certainly in the grain industry it may well be of considerable value. Last year we had the grain handlers strike, followed by the grain inspectors, and then the weighers and samplers, all of whom represented only 400 or 500 people in each group. They might well have been bargained for by one body.

### *Labour Relations*

The efforts of the Minister of Labour and of the Prime Minister to sell the idea of industry-wide bargaining when the government is in the midst of establishing this tripartite advisory council, suggests that they are usurping beforehand the council's duty to analyse industrial relations and establish new approaches. There are some serious difficulties with industry-wide bargaining, as has been pointed out by various people. Industry-wide bargaining has been most successful, as examples show, in Germany and Sweden, but I believe these are unitary states and do not have the federal system that we have. There are provincial governments in this country which prevent national bargaining among employees of mining and metallurgical companies.

It has been suggested that industry-wide bargaining might not promote as many strikes, but that strikes would be much larger and worse if they did occur than they are now. Presumably industry-wide bargaining means very large unions, with union management being far removed from the rank and file of their supporters. This is one of the complaints of ordinary union members, that they lose touch with their officials.

In the short time allocated, Madam Speaker, we can only have a preliminary discussion of the great problems involved—work stoppages, strikes, and walkouts which are a part of our free society. I believe the increase in the number and length of strikes is due to the financial immunity which workers now enjoy—they can strike and their families will not completely lose their income. In years gone by, in less affluent times, the grocery bill hung heavily over a family affected by a strike. Various welfare programs and unemployment insurance benefits for those who are put out of work without their unions being on strike have had an influence in slowing the settlement of labour disputes. Many families now have two wage earners and are not as compromised by a strike as was the case in years gone by.

Indeed, although the strikes in the grain handling industry were quite severe and serious, it seems as if Canada will be able to export all the grain it has on hand at the present time. That either indicates that the grain handling system is efficient for the volume of grain we have to sell, or that its capacity to export when alternatives are given is considerably above what has been estimated.

This debate is timely, I repeat, and I hope that reasonable solutions to our problems can be found. Certainly profit sharing is one area that can be looked at with favour. Anything that will improve worker identification with his firm and his job is to be commended. We can look with dismay at the confrontation shaping up in various parts of Canada, and hope that the differences can be resolved so that further confrontation will not take place in other parts of the country.

**Mr. Paul E. McRae (Fort William):** Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in this debate today for the purpose of attempting to offset the very common notion that labour is the principal cause of inflation; it is the scapegoat in this inflationary cycle.

I think we must look at the last three, four or five years of really heavy inflation. In 1973 the cause was the rapid