

using all the fiscal, monetary and legislative devices at its disposal. In Canada, because of our federal form of government, some problems in the co-ordination of effort are inevitable. By and large, however, I think it is true to say that good progress has been made in recent years.

The net effect on industrial relations of these and other forms of governmental activity is hard to gauge. I think, however, that in helping to provide the ingredients of continuing economic progress, governments in Canada are at the same time fostering those feelings of general confidence and security that lie at the root of good labour-management relations.

The second contribution that government may make to industrial relations is to provide a legislative framework conducive to collective bargaining. Under Canadian law, in most jurisdictions, collective bargaining is compulsory, provision is made for the orderly selection and certification of bargaining agents, a number of practices disruptive to good industrial relations are prohibited, and strikes and lock-outs may not take place legally until full resort has been made to prescribed conciliation procedures.

Behind these statutory provisions and procedures are two main ideas: that collective bargaining should be encouraged; and that the welfare of the general public must be protected against unnecessary industrial conflict. It is my impression that these ideas have been well served by the present legislation since its introduction during the Second World War. Certainly there has been a rapid spread of collective bargaining since then, and a growing appreciation of its value within all segments of our society.

The last of the government contributions to industrial relations that I propose to deal with is the provision of research and other services. As we all know, collective bargaining is no longer a simple matter. To function effectively it must be fed facts--a great many facts. In my Department we find that the bargaining parties have an almost insatiable appetite for accurate information on any number of subjects; and, in an attempt to satisfy that appetite, we have built up a modest staff of economists and research officers. We publish regular information on wage rates, on collective agreements, on the trend of working conditions, on the extent of labour organization, on strikes and lock-outs, and on levels of employment and unemployment.

Other information used by the bargaining parties, particularly production statistics, are provided in large quantities by other agencies of our Government. In fact, our Government is devoting substantial resources to the collection, analysis and publication of information, without which sound collective bargaining could not take place. Clearly, this is a function for which governments are well fitted, and, in my opinion, nothing they can do for industrial relations is likely to be of greater importance.

Another type of activity by means of which my Government has tried to foster the cause of good industrial relations is the sponsorship of labour-management production committees. Such committees provide labour and management with a vehicle for a co-operative approach to production problems, whereby the latent creative abilities of the