

wanted to recount that incident to drive home the points made by the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis).

Mr. MARTIN: The tribute paid by the hon. member for York South (Mr. Noseworthy) to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell) characterizes the discussion which has taken place with regard to the whole problem of labour and management. Other hon. members have given an indication of a similar spirit, of trying to understand this problem in a cooperative way rather than in a spirit of endless controversy. The hon. member for Peel (Mr. Graydon) has urged the Minister of Labour to exert and assert his point of view in the executive council. I do not know that there is anything wrong with that suggestion, but surely there is an obligation upon members of parliament generally to give some support to the Minister of Labour, whoever he happens to be. As long as I have been in this house this discussion has always been confined to a few members. This is one of the most important problems facing us to-day or that will face us in the future, and we have approached it all along in the spirit of one group pitted against another instead of treating it as something that should be shared by all alike.

The minister has stated, and I give him credit for his courage in doing so, that he regards the decision of the Department of Justice in respect to the organization of labour in government-owned industries as being anomalous. Most certainly it is. This government and every government since the treaty of peace have recognized the right of collective bargaining, and have urged it as a proper means of settling disputes between management and labour. Other countries have practised this technique for such a long time that it is treated as a joke when anyone suggests that a man should be marked as progressive because he advocates collective bargaining. This institution has come to stay; it is very necessary. If it should be applied to industry generally, most certainly it should be extended to those industries that are controlled or operated or owned by the government itself.

I have examined this decision of the Department of Justice, and it strikes me that the suggestion behind it is somewhat along the lines of the theory which is still observed that the crown is not to be sued because the king can do no wrong and individuals working for the state therefore should not be allowed to place themselves in a position where they can openly defy the state. That theoretical position must be abandoned. I am glad the

minister is going to try to rectify that situation. He will find precedents, not only in the United States in a partial way, not only in the United Kingdom and Sweden, but more particularly in Switzerland, where for eighty years the right of labour in a state or canton-owned institution has always been recognized.

I have just one more word to say about this problem of labour and management. Some months ago I rose in my place and supported the contention that if we were to make labour feel that it was a partner in this particular assignment of war, we should see to it that it was given adequate representation, along with agriculture and so on, on the important boards that were being set up. There has been some improvement in that regard, and I suppose the Minister of Labour deserves special commendation for that. However, there is still room for improvement. I do not believe we have gone as far as we should. In the larger communities the minister is setting up advisory boards in connection with the proposed modified system of selective service. I understand that the men appointed to these boards in the local communities will represent employee and employer groups. The only suggestion I have to make is that this representation should be extended to include agriculture. I do not know what the practice is in most communities, but in the one I have in mind at the moment agriculture is not represented.

I understand that these boards are to be merely advisory in character. If they are to sit only once a month or so we are going to run into many of the difficulties which arose in connection with the operation of the mobilization act. In that case one encountered considerable difficulty in going from one community to another, perhaps a hundred miles away, to address himself on a specific problem to some central agency. I suggest that these boards should be more than advisory, they should have some executive function so that it will not be necessary, in respect to moving a man from one plant to another or determining whether he should be moved from the plant into the army, to write to Ottawa or, as is the case in my district, to London, a smaller industrial area than the city of Windsor. I trust the minister will appreciate the importance of this problem.

I agree with the concluding remarks of the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis). We should not seek to place ourselves in a bargaining position and try to hold down one group. We should courageously indicate the manner in which that group can improve its position. Having done that, having shown that we are sincere, we should urge upon that group that they recognize the fact