

time lost due to strikes and lock-outs represented one-seventh of 1 per cent of the total working time. On the whole, however, labour-management relations in Canada have been good, and have been improving. Both sides are developing an increased willingness to talk matters out, to recognize the problems of the people on the other side of the bargaining table and, above all, to give due consideration to the public interest.

There have been positive indications of success; higher productivity, a rising standard of living, the way in which working men and women are treated on the job, their growth in self-confidence, their willingness to participate in activities such as labour-management production committees, designed to foster the economic health of the whole industrial enterprise, the volume of investment in the industrial plant. Some of these factors apply to other aspects of our economy besides industrial relations, but taken altogether they do provide evidence of a satisfactory state of labour-management relations in Canada.

I say this with humility because I know that, if the system has worked, there have been factors that have helped to make it work. In a young country like Canada, with a wide variety of natural resources, a fortunate geographical location, and availability of large amounts of capital investment, there would be little excuse for poor labour-management relations. Furthermore, I know quite well that a system of industrial relations is never good or successful in itself but only in relation to the social framework, the stage of economic development in which it is applied.

The system must also be judged by its ability to meet new conditions. In recent years, new bargaining issues have made their appearance in the Canadian industrial picture. There is, of course, continuing pressure for higher wage rates and other economic improvements. At the same time, more and more attention is being given to problems of job security and industrial efficiency.

In some industries there is pressure from management for greater freedom to conduct business unhampered by unnecessarily rigid collective agreement provisions. The problem of technological change, now termed "automation", presents its challenge. In partial answer, the trend toward shorter hours and longer vacations is continuing; while here and there attention is being given to the guaranteed annual wage. The industrial environment is dynamic rather than static, and the changes and developments are of constant interest.

Against this background it is necessary for government to evaluate its role in industrial relations. As we in Canada are inclined to see it, government may make three main contributions: a good economic environment, legislation that helps and stimulates the collective bargaining process, and a number of research and promotional services. Let us take these one at a time.

The first is a good economic environment. By this I mean that government should help create conditions conducive to high levels of production and employment by