

*Canada Labour Code*

adversely affected to the tune of \$1 million a day. This is a conservative figure and applies to the city of Montreal. When we consider all the categories of goods and materials that must move across this country, including wheat from our western provinces, we recognize, I submit, that this type of preamble is not one that we can accept. I respectfully suggest for my party that we cannot accept the premises embodied in this preamble.

I shall read the second paragraph of the preamble. I object to sentences or words which lead to an improper conclusion with regard to the entire area of labour-management relations. The paragraph I refer to reads:

And Whereas Canadian workers, trade unions and employers recognize and support freedom of association and free collective bargaining as the bases of effective industrial relations for the determination of good working conditions and sound labour-management relations—

I take issue with the idea that freedom of association and free collective bargaining are the bases of effective industrial relations. This idea, to me, is wrong in principle. Surely it would not take one long to find an example showing that freedom of association and collective bargaining did not play any role whatever in good industrial relations and in industrial peace. I am referring specifically to Dominion Foundries and the Steel Company of Canada.

In addition, reflecting on the total problem we will realize, I submit, that this bill affects only about 538,000 employees who come under federal jurisdiction. If my memory serves me right, approximately one-third of this country's work force is involved with freedom of association clauses and collective bargaining. In other words, two-thirds of the workers of this nation are not involved with unions or with management; neither unions nor management are involved in decisions regarding industrial peace.

We take exception to this preamble. We have tried to make the bill more meaningful by indicating that freedom of association and collective bargaining in total are merely one of the facets, one of the bases, to use the language of the preamble, underlying effective industrial relations. Why could the government not say, "Although we are most zealous with respect to the entire collective bargaining process, we admit that factors other than collective bargaining can lead to industrial enlightenment and peace." Management and labour together can work together for the benefit of the entire work force. Together, unselfishly, they could work for the benefit of the entire economy of the country, bring about security of tenure under the wage structure and deal with the whole gamut of matters in which management and labour are usually involved.

For some reason, however, the government says, "We cannot allow this sort of thing because freedom of association and collective bargaining are the bases of good industrial relations." Surely upon quick reflection, and much more so on profound reflection, one cannot admit that. We say that if we are to be responsible and attempt to bring about industrial peace, which is the basis of this bill, we must start on the proper premise, and the proper premise does not allow a preamble such as this.

• (1600)

Another objection I have to the preamble is that those who will have to deliberate, who will come before the conciliation board, the arbitration board or the Canada labour board will invariably look to the preamble for guidance. I say that this is wrong. I say that the bill should speak for itself and I see no reason for a preamble such as we have here. I know why the preamble was put in. An agreement was made between the government and the union as the result of a compromise and it was decided to put in clause 149. I respect the action of the government in that regard. But I say, give us a break and put in a preamble indicating the worth of the collective bargaining process and freedom of association leading to industrial peace.

Let us consider where the preamble is placed. As I see it now, it is in part V of the Canada Labour Code which is the part which deals with industrial relations. I do not know whether this preamble will be in the middle or at the front of the Canada Labour Code. This will mean that when one peruses such legislation one will have to look for the preamble in order to ascertain what it is all about and the principle behind it.

I say that we must question the collective bargaining process; it does not seem to be working because labour and management have not been bargaining in good faith. Secondly, they have taken inflexible positions. Thirdly, they should make full and complete disclosure. It seems to me that the whole process should be built upon these three criteria, which at present it is not. I see the hon. member across the way smiling. I could not reach him in committee and I do not know whether I am reaching him now.

I say that so long as the collective bargaining process is as it is today—it is under severe questioning in regard to the postal strikes, the Montreal port strikes and the NABET strike—it leaves much to be desired. It is questioned to such an extent that many people are asking the government to accept public responsibility and to become involved because the collective bargaining process is breaking down. I know that the minister will have much to say about this matter, but the position of the government is that even though the collective bargaining process is breaking down, freedom of association and collective bargaining are the bases of effective industrial relations. I say they are not, because other things are involved which this preamble does not recognize.

To go further would be repetitious, Mr. Speaker, but I hope I have given sufficient reasons for the House to reach the conclusion that this type of manoeuvre should be questioned because, as has been said, it is doing neither harm nor good and since this is the case it should be wiped out. I hope that when other hon. members have commented on this motion the minister will give us the reason for the preamble being included, why it is so lengthy and what he hopes to accomplish by it. Will this preamble in fact make the collective bargaining process useful? Will it improve it? I say that it will not.

I hope that hon. members understand what I say and will give credit where credit is due. This bill wipes out two-thirds of the work force, the non-unionized work force, by referring specifically to those who are unionized.