

*Industrial Relations*

On page 48 of *Hansard* for the same year the hon. member for Cape Breton South (Mr. Gillis) said:

I am convinced that you cannot write a trade union agreement on the floor of the House of Commons.

Finally, on page 49 of that volume of *Hansard* the former member for York West said:

I object as strenuously as does any member of this house to compulsion of any sort in labour-management disputes or in anything that has to do with collective bargaining.

Is not the point well taken, therefore, that if parliament should preserve by all possible means the freedom of action of both management and labour when they get together and attempt in good faith to reach a common agreement, then to a certain degree the present bill taints the healthy state of collective bargaining as we have it today? And are we not replacing a procedure which has given satisfactory results in the past for a principle about whose accomplishments in the future we may be in doubt?

I have stated that there is nothing in the industrial relations act that stands in the way of inserting in a collective agreement such a provision as is contained in the bill we are discussing. This assertion on my part cannot be better substantiated than by the following extract from an article in the April convention issue of the Canadian labour magazine entitled "The Future of Labour in Canada", by Donald MacDonald, secretary treasurer and chief executive officer, Canadian Congress of Labour, which reads:

It is probable that as the process of collective bargaining continues, there will be a more stable, mature and effective type of labour-management relationship. Both employers and communities will, in all likelihood, come to accept unions in a more genuine sense, until they will be more or less taken for granted. This, in turn, should mean that there will be more bargaining in good faith, and that the area of bargaining, will broaden both as to subject matter, and scope of the bargaining agency.

In the face of these views on the legislation as it now stands, Mr. Speaker, and in consideration of the points mentioned, I feel that it would not be considered the course of wisdom to abandon now the well tried principle of free collective bargaining for the new principle contained in this bill.

**Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni):** Mr. Speaker, I must say that I have been very greatly impressed by the almost fantastic processes of logic which were put on the records of the house by the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour. I have some admiration for his ingenuity in going to certain people whom he quoted, I agree,

[Mr. Blanchette.]

as authorities on this subject of labour legislation and, by using those quotations, attempting to justify his opposition to the bill which is now before the house. For example, he mentioned the former member for Spadina, the hon. member for Cape Breton South (Mr. Gillis) and Donald MacDonald, the former secretary of the Canadian Congress of Labour, now secretary of the Canadian Labour Congress, in an attempt to bolster what I have already termed his rather fantastic logic.

First of all, let me say that in quoting the present secretary of the Canadian Labour Congress in an attempt to bolster his arguments he has perhaps exceeded the limits, because undoubtedly he must be aware of the fact that the Canadian Labour Congress, newly formed as a united labour organization in this country, is definitely on record as being in favour of the principle of this bill and of its adoption in the field of labour legislation.

Perhaps I might expand a little on why I consider the hon. member's reasoning to be so strange. All of the quotations he used referred to another subject matter altogether, namely, the suggestion of the application of compulsory arbitration that has been discussed on some occasions in this house. How the hon. member can suggest that there is anything akin to the principles involved in compulsory arbitration and those contained in this bill is quite beyond my feeble mind to understand. Apparently, these quotations are being used by him in an attempt to suggest that what is proposed in his bill would interfere in some way or other with the process of free collective bargaining. Perhaps I do not need to take the time of the house to explain that I myself am certainly in favour of the free process of collective bargaining; but I think it is important for us to get something of the picture of what collective bargaining is and what it should be about and, incidentally, to get some picture of what the role of legislation, federal or provincial, in the field of labour activity, should be.

It seems to me that if collective bargaining means anything at all it means a group of workers joined together for the purpose of improving their conditions of work and of increasing the amount of remuneration they receive for performing that work. That to me is the essence of collective bargaining. To attempt to suggest that questions of union security properly belong to a sphere of the collective bargaining process to me just does not add up. If, as the parliamentary assistant admits and suggests, we should have collective bargaining in this, that to me, at least, is tantamount to doubting the legitimacy of the trade union as such. That is the crux