

INTRODUCTION

COLLECTIVE bargaining has occupied a great deal of the attention of American industrial management in recent years. Even some of the mechanical provisions of laws, or particular practices of collective bargaining agencies, have been allowed to obscure the vision of management.

A penny can be held so close to the eye that it will black out the full moon on a clear summer night. A law requiring or regulating collective bargaining can be held so close to the eye that it seems to be collective bargaining itself. A contract with a union, the demands of union negotiators, a strike, or even a single union spokesman, can loom so large as to obscure the vastly greater area of human relations in our working lives.

There are a great many relationships involving employees and employers which are, and always should remain, beyond collective bargaining in their nature. They exist at the same time as do collective bargaining relations. Their character is such that they cannot be effectively governed by contracts or prescribed by bargaining.

There is another great structure of relationships which lie beyond collective bargaining in time. They are relationships that need to be organized, because they require the organized understanding and co-operation of many people, both employees and employers. They are relationships that are constructive, creative, and dynamic, in contrast to collective bargaining relationships, which are essentially restrictive and protective. Their organization is almost impossible until there has been mutual acceptance of both the values and limitations of collective bargaining. After that mutual acceptance, there is an easier road to the organization of these other relationships.

This book presents an appeal for perspective. In perspective, the problem of collective bargaining must be viewed realistically as to its size and its nature. It must be so placed that it will not obscure the really boundless field of human relations in industry. In perspective, our vision will include the two great areas beyond collective bargaining: the one which is beyond it in character, the other which is beyond it in time.