

March 17

Employer Becoming The Forgotten Man, Claims Heighington

Protection Must Be Given
Invested Capital and
Those Who Provide Em-
ployment, Declares Con-
servative M.L.A.

HITS STANDARDS ACT

If greater effort is not made to protect the interests of those who are the origin and means of employment, then Ontario may end up with few or hardly any employers left, Wilfrid Heighington, (Cons., St. David), warned the Legislature yesterday.

The type of labor legislation which the Hepburn Government is passing — and he particularly singled out the Industrial Standards Act in this connection—was “making a forgotten man out of the poor employer,” declared Mr. Heighington.

“Frankenstein Monster.”

“Unless protection is given for the capital invested and the risk taken by those who provide employment for others,” he stressed, “then this cumbersome Frankenstein monster that labor is creating around itself may ultimately be the means of crushing labor and depriving it of its employment. We often think that the Workmen's Compensation Act, for instance, is an unqualified boon and blessing to labor, but many of us in public life see all too many cases where instead of speedy and effective method of recovery of a just claim for compensation, the worker is surrounded with technicalities, difficulties, unknown procedure and a blunt refusal and no appeal. The file of every member of this House is filled with complaints on this footing.

“Shackling Legislation.”

“Similarly with the Mechanics' Lien Act. We find that an act which should provide a simple and speedy remedy for wage-earners alone has now been so cluttered up with material, men and others, and special procedure and a court which is hardly a court at all that there seems to be nothing but added expense and delay and a certain amount of disillusionment and despair in the enforcement of the workingmen's rights.”

In short, submitted the St. David member, it was with the greatest difficulty that legislators maintained an even balance—on the one hand protecting the rights of labor, and on the other hand “seeing that all our efforts at recovery are not frustrated or stifled by unreasonable or shackling legislation against business and industry.”

Bill to Extend Power Of Securities Branch To Investigate Fraud

Legislation to Permit Probe Into Any Offense Against Any Department of Pro- vincial Government Intro- duced by Roebuck

New, wide powers of investigation, including inquiry into any fraud against any department of the Government or any municipality is given the Ontario Securities Commission under an amendment to the Securities Act introduced in the Legislature yesterday afternoon by Attorney-General Roebuck.

Retroactive Power.

The bill implements the promise of greater powers for the Securities Commission given by Premier Mitchell F. Hepburn when recently he attacked the company operations of Senator Arthur Meighen.

The terms of the proposed legislation permits the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to appoint any person or persons to make investigations, and declares that any such appointee or appointees shall be deemed to be the Commission for the purpose of the inquiry and shall have the same authority, powers and privileges as the Commission.

The investigatory powers are made retroactive by another clause. The bill states that the investigation may be ordered into offenses committed “either before or after the coming into force of this act.”

Scope Extended.

The appointed Commission is empowered to investigate the affairs of any person or company to ascertain whether there “has been or is likely to be committed any criminal, wrongful, fraudulent or improper act; any offense against the Securities Act; any act which may be unfair, oppressive, injurious, inequitable or improper to or discriminate against any holder, prospective holder, purchase or prospective purchase of any shares or other securities of such person or companies.”

The bill will also authorize investigation of any alleged discrimination “against any creditor, prospective creditor or such person or company or other person or companies otherwise beneficially interested in such person or company.”

Another clause permits investigation “of any act whereby any unfair advantage may be secured by any person or company over any other person or company, or of any fraud upon the Government of Ontario or any department of the Government or any municipality.”