

CROLL BILL FOR UNIONS PROGRESSES

**Hepburn Government Warns
Amendments to Be Made
in Committee Hearing
Before Finally Approved**

HAS SECOND READING

Premier Hepburn and his government permitted David Croll's "freedom of trade union" legislation to get second reading in the Legislature last night, but warned that certain clauses of it were not acceptable to the government as they now stood and that when the bill reached committee stage they would demand an exhaustive consideration of them.

"We're not going to do anything foolish," said the Prime Minister, "and I'm prepared to have the House sit a whole day to discuss this legislation in committee before it is finally approved."

Speaking before the Prime Minister, Hon. Norman O. Hipel, Minister of Labor, said that offending sections would be struck out and amendments made in committee to ensure that union activities would be taboo in working hours.

Claiming Ontario had the most advanced social and labor legislation and paid the highest rates, with the exception of New York City, on the North American continent, Mr. Hepburn asked were it reasonable to even imagine that a government, with such labor-benefitting policy to its credit, would stop to prevent any man from joining the union of his choice. There was, he submitted, no legal obstacle to such a goal so long as the union was "a lawful union."

Two years ago now, said he, he had taken his political life in his hands when he had defied John Lewis and the C.I.O. and had taken the steps which barred that organization from "promoting anarchy" in this province as it was promoting anarchy in the United States.

Repeats C.I.O. Opposition.

The United States, he submitted, was still suffering from the work of Lewis and his "gang" because certain states there hadn't had the courage displayed by the government of which he was the head.

From newspaper clippings of the 1937 election campaign, Mr. Hepburn quoted his own declarations that while he believed in the right of any man to strike, he believed also in the right of any man to work—work unmolested and unafraid of the "lawless Lewis element."

"And I say right now," he told the Legislature amid desk thumping "that if there was a sit-down strike attempted in Ontario tomorrow the full weight and resources of the province would be promptly placed at the disposal of any municipality that sought our assistance."

While he was "a good friend of labor," it behooved him, in dealing with this bill, to proceed slowly and cautiously, in order that "nothing foolish" be done and that the primary purpose of the legislation be carried out without any subsequent aggravating complications. In many instances, said he, employees were just as much the cause of industrial trouble as employers—and the situation, generally speaking, had to be weighed carefully.

Croll Urges Bill.

Mr. Croll emphasized that Prince Edward Island and Ontario were the only provincial jurisdictions in Canada in which similar legislation had not been enacted and claimed that it was more moderate and simpler than many of the allied statutes.

"Very briefly," he said, "it gives employees the right to form a union or to join one and it penalizes the employer if he threatens them or fires them because they do so."