

March 3

Drew Challenges C.C.F. Over Labor Law Attack

In the most spirited debate in the Legislature this session, the C.C.F. forces, including 19 Labor representatives, moved toward a showdown with the Drew Government last night on the issue of labor relations in Ontario.

Arthur Williams (C.C.F., Ontario), after hotly assailing the Government's labor record, challenged Labor Minister Daley to produce the Government's labor legislation if it had any.

He was challenged in turn by Premier Drew to move a want-of-confidence motion at the end of his discussion.

"I must, in view of the course the debate is taking," said the Premier, "express the hope that the member will be logical and move a want-of-confidence motion."

No such motion was introduced by the C.C.F. Opposition.

The debate was enlivened by interruptions so frequently that Speaker Stewart called several times for order. Asides were numerous, and the Speaker took exception to one declaring that he was "not hard of hearing," and reminding the House that "I am not the Speaker of the Government. I am the Speaker of this Legislature."

Asks Copy of Measure.

Mr. Williams participated in cross-fire with the Premier and several of his Ministers and concluded his address by asking bluntly for a copy of the Government's labor legislation. Labor Minister Daley told him just as bluntly: "The answer is no." Mr. Williams thereupon observed that he could only conclude the Government didn't have any, adding: "That is, if I'm not out of order."

"You certainly are," retorted Attorney-General Blackwell.

Mr. Williams assailed bitterly treatment of organized labor by past Administrations back to 1933, especially the sending of police and troops into Stratford and New Toronto and other centres where strikes were in progress, and insisted labor had learned that Liberal or Conservative Governments were

all the same in their attitude toward labor.

He added the taunt that the C.I.O. was going to be driven out of Ontario at the time of the Oshawa strike in 1937, "yet, here sits that terrible man who was responsible for the C.I.O. coming into Ontario." He pointed dramatically to C. H. Millard (C.C.F., York West).

This Government, in its reference to labor legislation in the Throne Speech, he charged, "are leaders in very truth—leaders in buck-passing. They've tried to keep their skirts clean, that's all. A year ago they skated around the labor question most adroitly," refusing to name Opposition members to the Liberal labor committee.

"Positive Stand."

Here Premier Drew took strong objection, insisting his party did take "a positive stand," reminding him it was not in power then and inviting a want of confidence motion now that it is in power.

Criticism that the Government, instead of introducing its own code, had said it would extend the Federal Labor Relations Code for war industry to all industry where applicable, was answered by the Premier, who pointed out that under the War Measures Act the Federal Code superseded any Provincial legislation.

The Premier added that he would extend labor legislation to the whole labor field by legislation to be introduced this session, and while the Province had no choice but to accept the Dominion labor legislation for war industry, it would be extended to cover "the balance of the field."

Mr. Williams charged, however that "the issue has been completely shirked" and the Government had "sought refuge" in the Dominion order.

He declared both Labor Congresses had not approved the Code. Only their presidents had spoken, and he quoted a telegram from "the largest union" (United Automobile Workers, C.I.O.) which objected to adoption of the Federal Code as not meeting labor's demands or fulfilling the promises of Premier Drew. It related only to war industries and was not permanent.