

March 7

SALSBERG RAPS JOB REFUSAL OWING TO RACE

An amendment to the Government's anti-discrimination bill, making it an offense to refuse a person work on the ground of racial origin, was urged in the Legislature yesterday by Joseph Salsberg (L.P., St. Andrew) in the Throne Speech debate. Mr. Salsberg said it was not only undemocratic but criminal for an employer to refuse a man a job because of the man's racial origin.

Holding aloft a photostat copy of the reason given by an official of a war plant for declining to hire a certain individual, Mr. Salsberg said this official was quite frank in saying that the applicant was turned down because of his race.

"There is a manpower shortage," said Mr. Salsberg. "This official placed his prejudice above the needs of his industry, above the war effort. "In this particular case the man was sent to this industry by National Selective Service. And because National Selective Service requires a reason for a plant's refusal to employ a man it sends out, this official gave as his reason one word, 'nationality.' I say it is criminal, and the Attorney-General should consider adding a section to his anti-discrimination bill making such practices an offense."

Parley of Labor Leaders.

Mr. Salsberg urged the Government to call without delay a conference of labor leaders to discuss the best possible legislation for labor. He praised the Government's decision to create a 48-hour week in industry, but stressed that it would be valueless without adequate consideration for workers' wages. The question of the minimum wage was inseparable from the problem of postwar prosperity, he asserted. Mr. Salsberg proposed that a public inquiry be held into the wage question in Ontario.

The member for St. Andrew criticized the Workmen's Compensation Act for deducting one-third of a worker's pay while incapacitated to injury.

Old-age pensions should be increased to \$40 a month, and the Province should relieve municipalities of their share of unemployment relief, Mr. Salsberg continued. He felt that the Throne Speech did not indicate a basic approach to solution of civic taxation problems, and the situation in some municipalities was critical.

No Desire to Wage War.

Dealing with labor problems in general, Mr. Salsberg, in urging that the rights of labor be given adequate consideration in any proposed measure, declared that the trade unions had no desire to wage war against the Government or against the employers. It was the desire of the trade union movement to work in harmony and co-operation with all bodies and individuals.

"The Speech from the Throne, with all its shortcomings, offers a basis for co-operation in this House and for the adoption of legislation of a generally progressive, reform character," said Mr. Salsberg.