

WOULD WIDEN COMPENSATION ACT'S SCOPE

Farmers, civil servants, hospital employees and employees of standard hotels, municipal corporations and school boards will come within the scope of the Workmen's Compensation Act under the provisions of an amendment introduced in the Legislature yesterday by Labor Minister Charles Daley.

Mr. Daley said the present act excludes farmers from participating, and the amendment brings them within the act's scope, putting farmers on the same basis as employees in any other industry.

Another section empowers the board to provide medical aid for totally disabled persons. It also repeals the sections which provides that silicosis claims must be made within five years. Under the new amendment there is no time limit for claims. Another section says that no compensation shall be paid unless the claimant has been exposed to silicosis dust for five years before the date of infection. This is now reduced to two years.

The Labor Minister told the House that the amended act extends coverage to new employments such as employees of the 1,200 standard hotels in the Province, the 15,000 hospitals employees, and other occupations. In the case of dairies, creameries, bakeries and window cleaning concerns, the act is amended to eliminate the limiting provision of "six or more employees." Junkyard employees are also brought within the act's scope.

As far as additional benefits are concerned, the Minister said a complete financial survey is now being made of the board, and therefore no change in benefits is contemplated at present.

Referring to the extension of the act to the Provincial service, Mr. Daley said it was the practise of Government departments to refer accident cases to the board for adjudication and to pay the compensation awarded by the board, but it was optional with the departments.

"It is claimed that if the act is such a splendid thing for employers at large, it should be as good for the Government as an employer who makes the law," said Mr. Daley. "The ammendment has been made broad enough to include not only the departments of the Provincial service by the boards and commissions appointed by the Government."

DEBATE HALTED ON LABOR BILL OWING TO SNAG

Given second reading only after an acrimonious debate lasting nearly six hours, the new Ontario Labor Relations Bill ran into further snags in committee in the Legislature yesterday. In fact, on the fourth of its 15 clauses, Premier George Drew terminated discussion for the day and the House went on with estimates.

"There's no use attempting to go ahead with this this afternoon, with comments not directed to any particular point," said the Premier, moving the committee rise and report progress.

The break came during questioning by Arthur Williams (C.C.F., Ontario) concerning intended composition of the new Labor Relations Board. Though Labor Minister Daley had said the labor congresses, building trades and railway industries would be represented, Mr. Williams demanded "simply and flatly" whether the Government intended to have any one on the board representing organizations "known as the Amalgamated."

Previously Premier Drew had said that, since it was enabling legislation, the Government couldn't tie itself down to details in advance, but gave assurance that the board would be representative and that the Government must and would assume responsibility for it.

Mr. Williams interpreted this as a "flat refusal to indicate the sources from which these people are to come," and demanded explicit information as to "the Amalgamated." Premier Drew remained silent.

"In Britain we take it that silence means assent," declared Mr. Williams.

"We take it in Canada as Canadians," shot back Premier Drew, commenting that there was no use going on and moving that the committee rise.

A tangle between Mr. Williams and the Speaker, in which a House vote supported the Speaker, enlivened the closing minutes of the debate on the bill in second reading Thursday.