

March 16

Salsberg Says 8 Firms Violated Labor Laws

Eight Canadian companies, six of them in Ontario, were named in the Legislature yesterday by Joseph B. Salsberg (L.P. St. Andrew) as having violated the spirit and intent of Dominion and Provincial labor regulations. Mr. Salsberg rose to reply to an editorial in *The Globe and Mail* of March 3 which demanded that he name the facts and give details of his previous House charges.

The eight companies charged by Mr. Salsberg are the Ford Motor Co. of Canada, Windsor; Wright-Hargreaves Gold Mines, Ltd., Sylvanite Gold Mines Ltd., the Canada Bread Co., Ltd., Toronto, Canadian Westinghouse Co., Hamilton, the Electro-Metallurgical Co., Welland, the Halifax Shipyards and the Imperial Optical Co., Toronto.

At the outset Mr. Salsberg denied the truth of the charge in the editorial that he is "in the business of stirring unrest by hurling wild accusations. . ." He referred to a recent radio speech in which he pointed out that many employers did abide by the new labor regulations and as a result many industrial crises were peacefully solved.

Science of Obstructionism

"But I did say that undemocratic and provocative firms refused, under one pretext or another, to conclude collective bargaining agreements and to recognize the trade union of their workers," said the member for St. Andrew. "I said further that obstructionism was elevated into a science and every legal trick was employed to violate the spirit of the act and to prevent the attainment of improved labor relations."

Mr. Salsberg then turned to the case of the Ford Motor Co. The experience of approximately 900 office workers of the company, the majority of whom joined the United Auto Workers' Union and who tried to achieve collective bargaining, "is an outstanding example of the kind of blind, provocative opposition which many groups of workers have to contend with and which frequently leads to drastic action," Mr. Salsberg declared.

Mr. Salsberg charged the company with finding technical excuses not to open negotiations with the union, with delaying by every conceivable device the judgment of Government labor bodies. He asserted that the company was taking advantage of the no-strike policy of the union to obstruct every action of the union to achieve harmonious relations with management. This company, a branch of a United States company, refused to sign agreements with the same union with which the parent company has contractual relations in the United States, he said.

About Gold Mines

Turning to the gold mines of Ontario, Mr. Salsberg said: "The gold mine owners of Northern Ontario offered violent resistance to the democratic process of collective bargaining and the acceptance of trade unions as a permanent feature in their relations with the miners. The miners' union, to avoid conflict and in compliance with every law and regulation, refrained from using their organizational strength to enforce such a democratic procedure and entrusted their case to a conciliation board headed by the former Justice McTague. But the mine owners refused to abide by the recommendations of that conciliation board, thus provoking the unfortunate Kirkland Lake strike in 1941.

"Since then individual gold-mine owners have challenged and resisted the miners' attempt to gain recognition for their union," Mr. Salsberg continued. "They compelled the miners to follow a prolonged and tortuous path, necessitating the removal of barrier after barrier which these companies and their lawyers set up, before they won what is universally recognized as the essence of democracy, namely, the recognition of the miners' union as the collective bargaining agency."

"The latest of these obstructions are the actions of the Wright-Hargreaves Ltd. and Sylvanite Gold Mines Ltd., who appealed the decisions of the Ontario Labor Rela-

tions Board and who have secured the infamous decision from the National Labor Board which has already been condemned by all parties in this House a few days ago.

No-Strike Policy

"If there are no strikes in the gold mines," said Mr. Salsberg, "it is due to the fact that the miners and their union, the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' International Union, C.I.O., rigidly adheres to a no-strike policy."

The Canada Bread Co. situation was next dealt with by the Labor-Progressive member. The trade union formed by the employees, affiliated to the Canadian Congress of Labor, was certified a year ago by the now defunct Ontario Labor Court as the bargaining agency for the employees, he said. He charged the company with "deliberate delaying tactics" in its negotiations with the union.

"To this day the company has evaded signing an agreement," asserted Mr. Salsberg. "If there is no stoppage of production of bread in this large baking plant, it is only because of the desire of the workers to avoid industrial strife in wartime, though the provocation is almost irresistible."

Mr. Salsberg traced the history of the management-union activities in the case of the Canadian Westinghouse Co., Hamilton, starting in December, 1943. He termed the actions of the company "unmistakable obstructionism and provocation."

"After a year and a half of effort, the union appealed for a conciliation board, which is now being set up," said the member. "But there is no assurance that the company will not continue to sabotage the conciliation board or that it will abide by its recommendations."

Check-Off Clause

In the case of the Electro-Metallurgical Co., Welland, Mr. Salsberg said the company flatly rejected the union's request for inclusion of a union security and check-off clause in the proposed renewed agreement. After prolonged delay, the Dominion Labor Department notified the union that the company rejected the recommendations of the conciliation board, Mr. Salsberg said. On Jan. 17 of this year the Dominion Labor Department sent in a special representative to meet with the company, but the management remained adamant in its refusal to accept the decision of the board.

The Halifax Shipyards, said Mr. Salsberg, rejected the demand of the union for a check-off and union security clause. A Government-appointed conciliation board recommended in favor of the union, "but the company recklessly rejected the recommendation." Unfortunately the union leadership could not resist the pressure of the workers and a strike in the shipyards followed, he said.

Referring to the Imperial Optical Co., Toronto, he said that throughout the negotiations, which started July 1, 1944, the company has blocked every attempt to arrive at an agreement. The union was officially certified Oct. 25, 1944, but the company refused to meet with the bargaining committee until Nov. 22, just three days prior to the expiration of the 30-day period provided by the Federal act.

"Agreement has not yet been achieved," said Mr. Salsberg.