

Arrow Aftermath

Charges Union Heads Break Pact for Jobs

A former president of Lodge 717 (Turbo), International Association of Machinists, said last night union officers were violating the union's contract with Orenda Engines Ltd. to take jobs for themselves while ignoring the rights of their members.

"Instead of protecting their lodge members, they have taken jobs with Orenda outside their own job classification," said William J. Thibedeau, adding: "It is a shame when men have to revert to subterfuge to stay alive."

Mr. Thibedeau also charged "several of these officers" with the Monday signing of a contract with Orenda which would provide for severance pay for the membership. He said this contract had been turned down by the union membership in December.

"I don't understand this," he said. "Getting the severance pay is a good thing, there is no doubt about that. But, as a member of the negotiating committee I was never informed and neither were some of the others."

Referring to cancellation of regular meetings of Lodge 717 (Turbo) and 717 (Aircraft) previously called for tonight, he said "this is without precedent. Under the by-laws, such meetings must be held. Are they afraid to face their membership?"

Mr. Thibedeau said all top union officers were now back at work and, while some were back in their own classifications, others were guilty of violation of contract by taking jobs of considerably lower rating and outside classification.

He named as offenders: Arthur Broadhurst, a vice-president of the lodge; Thomas Sowerby, a member of the shop committee;

and Bernard Coles and Donald Hudson, executive officers.

He said these men, all fitters or fitters general, had taken jobs as assemblers and, then, instead of working on a West German order for CF-100 spare parts had gone over to the experimental wing to work on the Avro car as fitters.

"This is terrible," said Mr. Thibedeau, adding that Robert McKay had refused to work under these circumstances and walked out. "It sickened him."

He said William Weir, a member of the safety committee, and Mr. Sowerby, also greatly upset, were planning to protest under established grievance procedure later today.

Mr. Thibedeau said executive officers of the local, the shop committee and not more than two safety committee members were allowed top seniority under the contract in their respective occupational groups.

However, an article in the union's contract with the company read: "When work is available in any occupational group from which there has been a layoff, seniority is the same at the time work becomes available and shall determine the employees to be recalled."

"Every previous employee that has seniority in the said occupational group shall be recalled before any other person is transferred into or hired into that group."

"There should be assemblers back there on those jobs, not union officers," said Mr. Thibedeau. "Let the officers take their place on the bottom of the seniority list. As long as they go back to work under another disguise, there will never be a call up."

He added: "I don't blame the company. This is just a group of weak people who are looking after themselves before they look after the rest."

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