

## CITY CENTER BOARD BARS HALASZ AGAIN

Rejects Proposal to Reconsider  
Conductor's Dismissal—One  
Director to Quit in Protest

The board of directors of the New York City Center of Music and Drama voted yesterday afternoon against reconsideration of its dismissal of Laszlo Halasz as director of the New York City Opera Company. Because of the action, Frederick F. Umhey, executive secretary of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, walked out of the meeting and said he would resign his position on the board.

Howard S. Cullman proposed the movement for reconsideration—a matter that also was discussed at the board's meeting on Jan. 15—but he agreed to stay with the board when his movement was voted down. Gerald F. Warburg and John A. Warner, other board members who have been known to be pro-Halasz, also said they would not resign.

"It's the most outrageous thing ever done to a man," said Mr. Umhey in commenting on the dismissal on leaving the meeting. "I can't go along any further with a board that does such things. I resent the basic unfairness, the undemocratic procedure. I'll write my letter of resignation tomorrow to Newbold Morris, chairman of the board."

### Evidence Collected Since Fall

After the meeting Mr. Morris said the matter was "now finally and irrevocably closed." The board, he said, had not stated previously its grievances against Mr. Halasz publicly because it did not want to injure him. But he said an impartial investigating committee had collected evidence against Mr. Halasz last fall.

"The committee," he stated, "was shocked to learn of the tyrannical abuse of power, duplicitous intrigues and breaches of contract that had created an atmosphere of hate, unhappiness and insecurity detrimental to the morale of the opera company. The board was faced with the alternative of the ultimate collapse of the opera company because conditions had become intolerable."

Twenty members of the company had tendered resignations because of Mr. Halasz, Mr. Morris said. He quoted them as saying "they could no longer continue after eight years of abuse."

Mr. Morris cited as an example of breach of contract what had happened last spring, when Mr. Halasz was angry about the postponement of the production of "The Dybbuk."

"Mr. Halasz," he said, "resigned and forced a walkout of his staff,

confronting the board with the ultimatum of no spring season unless he could present a new production of 'The Dybbuk.' This Mr. Halasz did, knowing full well the financial difficulties of the institution at that time. Only when Morton Baum called the staff together and informed them that a season of opera would be given at City Center that spring in any case, and they returned to their posts with alacrity, did Mr. Halasz withdraw his resignation and go through with the season."

There were difficulties on the road, too, Mr. Morris added, and Abner Stilwell, president of the Chicago Music Foundation, informed the board that future performances in that city would be jeopardized if Mr. Halasz remained.

Against this, Halasz supporters produced a wire from A. Y. Wilson, immediate past president of the Detroit Grand Opera Association, who said:

"Because of complete confidence in Laszlo Halasz, the members of the board of directors of Detroit Grand Opera Association are anxious that Mr. Halasz be re-engaged. This should be done in interests of future relationships of Detroit Association and City Center."

Mr. Halasz, when told of Mr. Morris' charges, said they were "not specific enough to answer." Any further comment would be made by his attorney, Milton Pollock, he declared.