

Inquiries of the Ministry

earliest opportunity in order to restore confidence among the personnel of the R.C.A.F. with regard to their future role in Canada's defence?

Hon. G. R. Pearkes (Minister of National Defence): I am not aware that the personnel of the R.C.A.F. have lost any confidence, Mr. Speaker.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

NEW BRUNSWICK—INQUIRY AS TO GOVERNMENT ACTION TO RELIEVE UNEMPLOYMENT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. J. Robichaud (Gloucester): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. I address my question to the minister as the New Brunswick representative in the cabinet. Has the minister received a telegram from the *Saint John Telegraph Journal* in connection with the 37,000 persons out of work in New Brunswick, asking for positive action by the government to meet the unemployment situation in the province? If so, what action, if any, has been taken by the minister in this regard?

Hon. A. J. Brooks (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, yes; I have received such a telegram. I might inform the hon. member that action has been taken over the last two or three months in this regard by the Minister of Labour and other members of the government.

Mr. G. R. McWilliam (Northumberland-Miramichi): I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Public Works. Can the minister advise the house if any immediate steps are being taken by the government to assure an early start on possible major works projects in New Brunswick, such as the Chignecto canal, to help reduce unemployment?

Hon. Howard C. Green (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member must have been asleep during the last few months. A great many projects have been going on in New Brunswick. Also a great deal of housing has been going on in New Brunswick and in Nova Scotia. However, I am glad to see that he has wakened up at last.

Mr. McWilliam: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, if anyone is asleep it is the Minister of Public Works and his government. There is no sign of any project in New Brunswick.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member knows that the remark he made was not a question of privilege.

Mr. G. J. McIlraith (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I would ask Your Honour—

[Mr. Garland.]

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. McWilliam: May I ask Your Honour, was the Minister of Public Works privileged to make the remark he made?

Mr. McIlraith: Mr. Speaker, I have an important point of order arising out of this matter. I have the fourth edition of *Beauchesne* open at page 147 because of the reference earlier in the day to certain questions and answers. It is very interesting to note that the putting of a question is governed by certain rules, and the answer is presumably governed by the same rules. I think that is clear. It is also clear that a member asking a question must phrase it in such a way as not to contain or imply charges of a personal character. The Minister of Public Works very clearly this afternoon implied charges of a personal character against the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi. Since there have been so many—

Mr. Speaker: I think the point is perfectly properly taken. The Minister of Public Works was out of order in making the statement he did. The same thing applies on both sides of the house. It would be impossible to prevent all of the inferences and, shall I say, aspersions which are attached to questions and answers, and I do not think hon. members would expect me to try to do that.

Mr. McIlraith: I would like to pursue my point of order.

Mr. Speaker: I accept the hon. member's point of order as being well taken.

Mr. McIlraith: Again on a point of order—

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Speaker: I have made my ruling. If the hon. member has another point of order I will hear it.

Mr. McIlraith: Mr. Speaker, my second point of order is simply this. The necessary consequence of ruling that a charge of a personal character made in answer to a question is out of order is that the minister, having made such charge of a personal character against a member, must withdraw it.

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid the hon. member misunderstood my ruling. I did not rule that a charge of a personal character had been made. I simply said that in my view the reply which the minister had given was not in accordance with the procedure of the house. Whether it is a matter which should be withdrawn is quite a different question, of course.