

*Business of the House*

[English]

**LABOUR CONDITIONS**

## UNEMPLOYMENT—FORECAST FOR NEXT FEBRUARY

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Labour because he is always very frank and open. I assume the department has made an estimate or forecast of the rate of unemployment this winter, in particular the month of February. Can the minister disclose this forecast to the House now or in the debate later? It would be very helpful to the country and to that discussion.

**Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour):** The only figure I can speak about with accuracy is the figure for the month of October which indicates that for the first time seasonally adjusted unemployment rates show a reduction in that serious problem. Second, there are more Canadians at work today than at any time in Canadian history.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. It seems we are now embarking on the debate which will begin in a few minutes. The question period has expired.

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**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

## WEEKLY STATEMENT

**Mr. Baldwin:** I wish to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council the intentions of the government with regard to the business for this week and next week.

**Mr. Jerome:** Today, of course, is an opposition day. Tomorrow we will call the motion standing in the name of the Minister of Finance with reference to the surtax on shirts. That will be followed by resuming committee of the whole on the emergency powers bill. This will be followed by the statutory instruments bill, the CNR finance and guarantee bill, the Buffalo-Fort Erie bridge bill, the packaging and labelling bill and the statistics bill. It is intended that Thursday of next week will be another allotted day for the opposition.

**Mr. Baldwin:** In view of the fact that the debate which we were on on Tuesday and which it is proposed to continue on Friday overshadows all of the program, will the Parliamentary Secretary discuss with his minister and the Minister of Justice a proposal to limit speeches in committee of the whole to ten minutes, with one contribution in respect of each clause, and also consider whether steps could be taken by agreement to complete that bill tomorrow provided there can be some agreement among the members of the Liberal caucus?

**Mr. Jerome:** We would be delighted to pursue any efforts in that direction, Mr. Speaker.

[Mr. Marchand.]

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS****BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

## ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—LABOUR CONDITIONS—POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO INCREASE EMPLOYMENT—INCREASED UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS

**Mr. David Lewis (York South)** moved:

Whereas there has been a relentless upward climb in the level of unemployment in all regions of Canada, and

Whereas a number of responsible economic authorities have predicted record levels of unemployment this coming winter, and

Whereas, unless special measures are immediately taken, the likelihood of serious increases in the level of unemployment in the Province of Quebec and the City of Montreal will add to an already critical situation,

Therefore, be it resolved that this House calls upon the Government to institute, in co-operation with provinces and municipalities, policies and programs that will increase significantly the number of jobs available this winter and, as a special measure of assistance to those who remain unemployed, to increase both the amount of unemployment benefits and the eligibility period provided by the Unemployment Insurance Commission.

He said: Mr. Speaker, we placed this motion for debate today because it is clear to anyone who looks at the situation objectively that our country is facing a crisis with regard to unemployment. Whether one uses the seasonally adjusted figures or the actual figures, the problem of unemployment in Canada now and the forecast for this winter suggest that the problem is extremely distressing and dangerous. I admit that the seasonally adjusted figures are more appropriate to use in terms of the trend annually, but they do not touch on the human beings involved. The number of people who are unemployed at any time must be of concern to those who want to see justice in our society. The actual figure gives the human story of frustration, idleness and distress. I am going to be concerned with the actual figures rather than the more theoretical seasonally adjusted figures.

When one says that there is an unemployment problem in this country he immediately hears the kind of remark made a few minutes ago by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey), namely that more Canadians are at work today than ever before in the history of our country. That is true, but it is as irrelevant and misleading as it is true. It is irrelevant because it does not touch on the fact that hundreds of thousands of people are unemployed. It is misleading because it ignores the fact that in our country at the present time there is, on an average, an increase of between—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for York South has the floor.

**Mr. Lewis:** I do not intend to waste any time on that comment. When the hon. member gets half his wits back I will listen to him.

What the minister fails to see, although I am sure he is aware of the fact, is that every year there is an increase in the work force in Canada of between 300,000 and 350,000. These are new job seekers. If the number of