

custom is to sit, and it is the intention of the government if the Address is not disposed of to continue the session on Wednesday.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Will the minister say when that became the usual custom?

Mr. ROBB: Last year we sat on Ash Wednesday.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The first time, was it not?

Mr. ROBB: I do not recall whether it was the first time or not, but I do recall that a list of holidays was prepared for governing the civil service, and Ash Wednesday was not one of those holidays.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from Friday, February 12, consideration of the motion of Mr. J. C. Elliott for an Address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session, and the proposed amendment thereto of Mr. Sutherland (South Oxford).

Mr. R. K. ANDERSON (Halton): Mr. Speaker, before addressing myself to the motion under discussion, and to the amendment thereto, I wish to make a few remarks concerning a statement made by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Motherwell) during his speech on the present debate last week. The minister delivered a very amusing address, although I cannot say it was instructive, during which he said:

One question upon which the opposition and myself are agreed is that we get down to business.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we on this side fully agree with that statement. We have been expecting that the government would show some sign of bringing down their legislation, and we are prepared to deal with it the moment it is brought in. The Minister of Agriculture proceeded as follows:

Let us see what kind of business we have been engaged in so far as the result of the obstructionist tactics of the opposition.

Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the statement that the opposition are practising obstructionist tactics. Obstruction, in parliamentary language means, to prevent or hinder the passage of legislation introduced by the government. What legislation have hon. members prevented from passing up-to-date? What business has been presented by the government for hon. members to consider? I have before me the orders of the day, the routine of proceedings for to-day, Monday, February

[Mr. Robb.]

15, 1926, and it does not in any way differ from similar orders placed in our hands from day to day since the beginning of the session. I notice under the order "Introduction of bills" that there are no bills for the consideration of the House; and up to the present moment the government has not presented any measures for us to deal with. The next order is the special order "Consideration of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne." Now, Mr. Speaker, the government cannot say that we have not applied ourselves to the discussion of that Speech. The members of the House have discussed it so ably and so vigorously that the government has been practically paralysed and rendered dumb. Hon. members of the three minor groups have apparently entered into a conspiracy of silence and the debate has been carried on by members of the opposition. The next order is in connection with private bills, and there are only two of those bills on the order paper, moved by members of the House. The next order "Questions" contains 140 questions asked by private members, none of which has been answered by the government. The next order is "Notices of motion for production of papers." I see that forty-nine of these motions have been presented to the House by members of the three opposition parties in the House. None of them has been presented by followers of the government. The next order is "Notices of motion." These notices of motion bring forward certain resolutions inviting expressions of opinion by the House, generally relating to public business of importance to the country. These are all brought in by private members, largely on this side of the House, and two or three by the minor groups in the House, but none by the followers of the government. This circumstance makes it evident that the followers of the government have not up to the present period of the session taken any interest in the business of the country. The next order is "Public bills and orders," and all of these have been presented by private members of the House, largely on this side. None of them has been presented by followers of the government and none by the government itself. The next order of business is "Government notices of motion." This order of business contains only one notice, and that is a notice of motion for the adjournment of the House. To-day we have another motion which appears for the first time, namely the motion presented by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) a few moments ago, asking that a special committee be appointed to select the standing committees for the session. This notice appears after the House has been in session for