

Labour if his attention has been called to the reports of large numbers of persons unemployed in the city of Winnipeg, many of whom have been laid off from plants engaged on war work. What steps are being taken by his department to deal with this serious situation?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That is a matter for the order paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: I suggest that the hon. member place his question on the order paper.

Mr. COLDWELL: May I suggest that to these eight thousand people who are reported unemployed in Winnipeg the matter is urgent?

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour): The subject matter of my hon. friend's question has received the consideration of the Department of labour for some time. It is true there are registered in Winnipeg some eight thousand unemployed men and women—I speak from memory—of whom five thousand are women, largely made up, I am informed as a result of the registration, of married women. It is also a fact that work has been continuously available in the Winnipeg district for able-bodied men, in the bush, in the mines and on the farms. Only this morning the regional superintendents of the unemployment insurance commission were in my department when the whole matter was discussed, and we are rapidly working out a solution. Since we tackled the problem, fifteen hundred women have been transferred to the east, and we expect to be able to transfer some of the men. My hon. friend, who comes from the city of Winnipeg, cannot but know of the difficult times we have had there in the past, particularly with single men. I think it is fair to say that many of these unemployed men are of a kind that you get in every country in the world, many of them near the unemployable class, which in itself presents a difficult problem.

With respect to the women, for some months past the armed forces have been recruiting many women for the navy, the army and the air force. That is an avenue of approach to employment at this time.

Not only in Winnipeg but in other large centres of population in this dominion, by the very nature of things there are the seasonal conditions with which we are confronted at the moment, causing what might be called pockets of unemployment. The Department of Labour is working in close cooperation with the Department of Munitions and Supply in an effort to place these people where they can be most useful.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS

CONSTITUENCY OF STANSTEAD—INQUIRY AS TO REPORT OF PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. S. ROY (Gaspe): I should like to direct a question to the government. In consequence of a motion moved by the Prime Minister on July 30 last, the committee on privileges and elections was asked to fix a date for the election in the constituency of Stanstead, Quebec. Has this committee reported on the matter, and if not, will the next committee be compelled to do so?

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): The committee to which the Stanstead election was referred did not make a report before the conclusion of the last session. The committee on privileges and elections will be reconstituted as soon as the debate on the address is concluded, and I purpose, as soon as it is reconstituted, to move to refer to it the matter of the Stanstead election, which comes under controverted elections.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The house resumed from Friday, January 29, consideration of the motion of Mr. W. E. Harris (Grey-Bruce) for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am sure I shall have the sympathy of most hon. members of this house when they realize the trepidation with which the average member of parliament first of all makes his maiden speech in this house, and then—which does not happen to so many—makes his first speech as leader of the opposition. As I said on Friday, I approach this undertaking with great humility. It marks the commencement of a new task, in a new field, and under almost entirely new auspices.

In opening my remarks I shall do something which I had intended not to do, namely, extend congratulations to the mover (Mr. Harris) and the seconder (Mr. Halle) of the address in reply to the speech from the throne. Lest this should be taken as a precedent, may I say at once that having sat in the house for seven years, I think I can conscientiously condemn the practice of filling *Hansard* over a period of some two months, with congratulatory remarks to the two hon. members who