

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 30, 1960

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

PRIVILEGE

MR. MARTIN (ESSEX EAST)—REPORTED
DIFFERENCE IN UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURE

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): I rise on a question of privilege. On March 24 I asked the Minister of Labour for the latest available figure of live claims for unemployment insurance benefits, and the figure the minister gave was 783,686. At the time I was concerned about the figure, because it was below that which the minister had given for February 4, 9,314 less.

I see that according to today's Canadian Press story the dominion bureau of statistics gives the figure of the number of people regarded as live claimants as of February 29 as being not 783,686 but 814,200.

Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour): When I gave this figure to the hon. member for Essex East on Thursday, February 24, I stated that there were 783,686 live claims. The bureau of statistics figure is 814,241. The difference is accounted for by the fact that the bureau includes fishermen. The figure I gave the hon. member did not include fishermen.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): May I ask the minister a question? Will the minister say that when he gave the figures in the month of January fishermen were not included? In any case, fishermen out of work are still human beings out of work.

Mr. Starr: I am unable to say whether or not the figure I gave for January included fishermen. I would have to check on that, but I do say that fishermen were not included in the figure I gave for March because they have also been excluded by the unemployment insurance commission from the unplaced applicants' list.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillin-gate): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Labour, in the light of the answer he gave to my friend the hon. member for Essex East that fishermen were excluded from the number of those counted as unplaced

applicants, whether that means that no attempt is made by the commission to find jobs for fishermen.

Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, most certainly the national employment service always endeavours to find jobs for people; but if they live in areas where their means of livelihood is fishing some difficulty is experienced in placing these people at work in the winter time, and in occupying them in something they have never done before in their lives.

Mr. Pickersgill: Does the minister mean that no record is kept of the names of those persons?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I think this cross-exchange is more of a debate than a proper question for this time of day. I wonder if the hon. member could not find another time to pursue the matter.

Mr. Pickersgill: With the greatest deference, this point was raised today by the minister, and it is a very urgent matter if it is true that these names are not considered for employment.

Mr. Starr: Mr. Speaker, that is most untrue.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am asking, that is all.

Mr. Starr: In the figures released by the unemployment insurance commission for both the unplaced applicants and the live claimants, fishermen are not shown as part of those figures, but they are included in the figure of the dominion bureau of statistics to which the hon. member for Essex East referred today.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

EASTER ADJOURNMENT

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister) moved:

That when this house adjourns on Wednesday, April 13, it stand adjourned until Monday, April 25, 1960.

Motion agreed to.

THE BUDGET

TABLING OF BUDGET PAPERS

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): I ask leave to table copies in English and in French of the annual budget white paper—and for the convenience of hon. members as well as of subscribers to the