

Mr. J. H. BLACKMORE (Lethbridge): Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as this is the first full day of the session and I am sure nearly everyone is weary, I wonder if it would be asking too much to ask Your Honour to call it eleven o'clock.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: It is rather hard for Your Honour to call it eleven o'clock, but if my hon. friend would like to move the adjournment of the debate I do not think there would be any objection.

On motion of Mr. Blackmore the debate was adjourned.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie King the house adjourned at 10.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 2, 1943

The house met at three o'clock.

CRIMINAL CODE

PROVISION FOR FEMALE JURORS IN TRIAL OF FEMALE PERSON

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 4, to amend the criminal code.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Explain.

Mr. CHURCH: The bill will enable women to serve on juries in criminal cases. I call the attention of the house to the fact that the right of female persons to sit on juries is subject to section 921 of the code, which reads:

Every person qualified and summoned as a grand or petit juror, according to the laws in force for the time being in any province of Canada, shall be duly qualified to serve as such juror in criminal cases in that province.

The reason for that will be found in section 92, item 14, of the British North America Act, which provides that:

The administration of justice in the province, including the constitution, maintenance, and organization of provincial courts, both of civil and of criminal jurisdiction, and including procedure in civil matters in those courts . . .

—shall be a subject upon which the legislatures may exclusively make laws. For instance, the statutes of Ontario relating to the constitution of juries, and fixing qualifications, contemplate the fact that jurors are male persons. This bill will be effective only in so far as the provincial legislatures agree to amend their own acts in consequence of such a federal enactment. Women serve in the high court of parliament and there is no reason why they should not serve on juries. A similar bill was brought forward in 1927-28

and it was stated then that women were too temperamental, but they are no more temperamental than some of the men attending some of the conventions.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

DEBT LEGISLATION

DISALLOWANCE OF ALBERTA STATUTE BY JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. In view of the decision handed down by the judicial committee of the privy council regarding Alberta's debt adjustment legislation and its consequent effects upon the debt adjustment legislation of the other prairie provinces, will the Minister of Justice give the house some assurance that steps will be taken by the federal government to protect the farm debtors who will otherwise be left to the tender mercies of their creditors?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is clearly a question that should be placed on the order paper.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): May I ask the Minister of Justice when he will make some statement on the farm debt situation, which is very pressing in the west? The minister promised in the latter part of July—

Mr. SPEAKER: As I have already said, I think that is a question that should be put on the order paper.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): Will the minister make a statement as to when he will say something in the house?

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

QUESTIONS AND MOTIONS FOR PRODUCTION OF PAPERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Leader of the Opposition): May I direct the attention of the Prime Minister to the considerable number of questions, and notices of motions for the production of papers, which have already been placed upon the order paper. During the past two sessions it has been arranged, I believe, by consent, that these questions and motions should not await the conclusion of the debate on the address. I suggest to the Prime Minister that an opportunity be provided later this week for the presentation of answers to the questions on the order paper