

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

TERMINATION OF BUDGET DEBATE—CONSIDERATION OF REDISTRIBUTION PETITIONS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address my question to the government house leader. In view of the fact that the rules provide for a six day budget debate, which would mean that the present debate would carry on until next Monday evening, we are prepared to forgo Monday and end the debate on Friday if that is agreeable to the government.

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, this suggestion would be very agreeable to the government. I would propose, in the light of what has been said, a meeting with the other house leaders immediately to see whether we can reach some arrangement to provide for the termination of the budget debate on Friday, consistent with protecting hon. members' opportunities to speak.

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question for the house leader. Could the house leader tell us when the government proposes to go ahead with the debate on the redistribution petitions?

Mr. McIlraith: I am glad to welcome back the house leader for the official opposition, and I hope he had a very good Easter. Our plans, which have not been confirmed, were to begin that debate on Wednesday of next week but, as I say, that is not a firm decision.

Mr. Harkness: That is the redistribution debate?

Mr. McIlraith: Yes.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

MEDICARE—INQUIRY AS TO LEGISLATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the Prime Minister's statement the day before the Easter recess that he hoped medicare would be on the order paper when we got back, and in view of the fact that it is not on the order paper, can he now say when we may expect this legislation?

[Mr. Marchand.]

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): I still hope to have it on the order paper before long, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Knowles: But hope springs eternal.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

BELL ISLAND, NFLD.—ASSISTANCE TO UNEMPLOYED MINERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): My question is for the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the right hon. gentleman what other steps are being taken by the government to assist the 850 workers who will lose their employment at Bell Island, apart from providing them with one way tickets out of their native province?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Every possible step is being taken that can be taken.

LABOUR RELATIONS

ONTARIO TRUCKING STRIKE—IMPLEMENTATION OF 40 HOUR WEEK

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Labour I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. It has to do with the very serious trucking strike that is causing so much difficulty and trouble in our country. Is a settlement imminent? Also, will the Prime Minister say whether representations have been made to the government that if the 40 hour work week provision in the federal labour code were carried into effect the strike could be settled at once?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I can only say, in addition to what has been said by the minister, that the chief conciliation officer of the government is meeting with the representatives of the parties at this moment. I hope there will be a good result from that meeting.

Mr. Diefenbaker: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the Prime Minister say whether representations were made to the government of Canada that if it would insist on the carrying out of the legislation passed by parliament for a 40 hour week, rather than achieving the 40 hour week over a period of three years, the strike could be settled at once?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, representations have been received on both sides of that particular issue.