

the Governor General will proceed to the Senate chamber to-day, the thirty-first of August, at 4 o'clock, p.m., for the purpose of proroguing the present session of parliament.

I have the honour to be,
sir,

Your obedient servant,

F. L. C. Pereira,
Assistant Secretary to the
Governor General.

The Honourable the Speaker
of the House of Commons,
Ottawa.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

SUGGESTED ADJOURNMENT INSTEAD OF PROROGATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. STANLEY KNOWLES (Winnipeg North Centre): In view of the seriousness of present conditions and the possibility that it might be desirable to call parliament or some of its committees together, may I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether consideration has been given to the suggestion of not proroguing parliament but adjourning it, as was done during the war.

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Acting Prime Minister): No consideration has been given to the suggestion that parliament be adjourned instead of prorogued. I mentioned it to one or two, and there would be some rather serious objection to that course at this time. It was felt that if conditions required the meeting of parliament it could be brought together with sufficient dispatch to care for any situation that might arise.

INQUIRY AS TO DATE OF OPENING OF NEXT SESSION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. W. CHESTER S. McLURE (Queens): I wish to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. Now that we know prorogation takes place to-day, will he inform us when the opening of the next session will take place?

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Acting Prime Minister): I can add nothing to what was said in the house by the Prime Minister on that subject.

PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

PRESS REPORTS OF YESTERDAY'S PROCEEDINGS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Peel): May I ask the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs if he has anything to add to the statements which have appeared in the press this morning regarding a rather serious dispute between the Canadian and Russian delegates at the peace conference in one of its proceedings yesterday?

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs): I have nothing to add, and my experience would allow me to entertain the hope that if I had further information I might have something to subtract.

SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Macdonald (Brantford City) in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

110. Annuities Act, \$448,006.

Mr. KNOWLES: I am in support of this act, and the activities carried on under it. However, I wish to ask a question relative to a change which has been made as the result of an item in a recent auditor general's report. As I understand it, until recently the annuities branch was issuing, among its various contracts, what is known as a last survivor contract, either until the death of both of the survivors, or for a guaranteed period of, we will say, ten or twenty years. Apparently the auditor general discovered that there was no authority for the guaranteed provision attached to a last survivor contract, and accordingly the annuities branch has discontinued issuing that kind of contract. I understand there is no question about the rejection of contracts issued prior to the matter being pointed out by the auditor general. These contracts were made by the government and signed, so they are valid. Such contracts however are not now being issued. I am not one to ask that the government do something for which there is no provision through parliamentary legislation, but I should like to know whether consideration has been given by the government to amending the act so as to provide for the kind of contract to which I have referred.

Mr. MITCHELL: The question as to the decision or the opinion expressed in the auditor general's report is under review between my department and the Department of Justice.

Mr. McLURE: Are these annuities sold by salaried men, or on commission? I notice that agents' commissions total about sixty per cent of the vote.

Mr. MITCHELL: They are sold on straight commission.

Item agreed to.

111. Fair wages, conciliation and industrial disputes investigations, \$188,974.

Mr. KNOWLES: This item has to do with conciliation and I should like to speak briefly in connection with it. One matter of major