

*Inquiries of the Ministry***PUBLIC SERVICE**FORT WILLIAM AND PORT ARTHUR—INTRODUCTION
OF FIVE-DAY 40-HOUR WEEK

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Daniel McIvor (Fort William): On a question of real privilege, I wish to thank the Minister of Finance for including Fort William and Port Arthur in the preferred list of places where the 40-hour week will be in operation. I should like to ask the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Is the hon. member now asking a question?

Mr. McIvor: I should like to ask the minister a question. Has he noticed that the parliament of Great Britain expects to increase the salaries of its members by £500 a year?

Mr. Rowe: What privilege is that of yours?

Hon. Douglas Abbott (Minister of Finance): I noticed that, Mr. Speaker.

CUSTOMS TARIFFCLASSIFICATION OF CANNED MIXED FRUIT AS
PEACHES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Finance? Perhaps it should be addressed to the Minister of National Revenue, but in his absence I shall put it to the Minister of Finance. It is based on a press report by Victor Mackie in the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Knowles: Have departmental officials decided that mixed fruit is peaches for purposes of the customs tariff and thereby raised the tariff on the importation of tins of mixed fruit? If so, by what authority was this done?

Hon. Douglas Abbott (Minister of Finance): If I may say so, I think this is a question which most certainly should be put on the order paper. It requires examining the tariff schedule, it is not urgent, and I suggest that it be put on the order paper.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Knowles: I suggest that when it is brought to the attention of members that the Department of National Revenue has altered the effect of the tariff schedule by a departmental ruling, we have a right to get an explanation.

[Mr. Abbott.]

Some hon. Members: Order.

An hon. Member: He is making a speech.

Mr. Abbott: Order paper.

Mr. Knowles: We have the right to get an explanation of that on the floor of the house.

Mr. Speaker: I did not hear the hon. member's remarks. How can I decide if I cannot hear what is said?

Mr. Knowles: The point I was trying to make was—

Mr. Speaker: I heard the first part.

Mr. Knowles:—that when changes are made by departmental rulings affecting decisions that have been made by parliament we have a right to have an explanation from the responsible minister on the floor of the house.

Mr. Chevrier: You should not abuse the privileges of the house.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member may ask a question, but if it is of such a technical character or involves such a lengthy reply that the minister cannot give an answer on the spur of the moment, the minister has the right not to give an answer immediately. Who is to decide? The hon. member says that it is an urgent question and should be answered immediately because a department has issued directives, but I do not think that should be taken as a barometer for deciding as to urgency. Urgency may exist in the mind of the hon. member but may not exist in the mind of the minister who has to answer the question.

Mr. Chevrier: All his questions are urgent.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has advanced various reasons on the point of urgency, but I do not think the public interest will suffer if the hon. member puts his question on the order paper.

Mr. Abbott: Hear, hear.

Mr. Knowles: I shall do that, Mr. Speaker, but I shall put an asterisk beside the question.

SUPPLYUNEMPLOYMENT—MOTION FOR EXAMINATION
BY COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The house resumed, from Tuesday, February 16, consideration of the motion of Mr. Abbott for committee of supply, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Green, and the amendment to the amendment of Mr. Gillis.

Mr. J. H. Dickey (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Defence Production): Mr. Speaker, when this debate was interrupted