

the order which I thought would facilitate the business of the house, and in so doing I indicated that we would take up first of all the emergency measures and then the speech from the throne. Later on it was arranged, a matter of general agreement here, that a part of the week would be devoted to the speech from the throne and a part of the week to the emergency measures. That was agreed to, and all I have sought to do, from that time to this, has been to hold the house to its own agreement in the matter of procedure.

I have not been trying to impose my will upon the house as to what business it should take up and what it should not. I have tried, where requests have been made with regard, for example, to veterans affairs and one or two measures of the kind, to further what I believed was in accordance with the general wish of the house. That is all I have been trying to do up to the present and will continue to try to do—to have the house take the order of business that will best facilitate the business of the house, and which will be agreed to by the house itself.

We are now through with the debate on the address, but not with the emergency measures. I think we ought to get through with these measures as soon as we can. When they are concluded we shall then be in a position, I think, to follow a regular order which will be in accordance with such procedure as will enable us to take up other measures than the ones I have referred to, and particularly to get into supply.

Some hon. members have expressed a desire to debate foreign affairs. I am not trying to stand in the way of the house having that debate, but I have to do one of two things. Either I must inform the house that we have decided to conclude certain business before taking up other business, or I must ignore that understanding and take up each question as hon. members opposite wish to have it taken up. This is difficult as they do not agree among themselves. The estimates have been tabled, and I would say to my hon. friends opposite that the government proposes, as soon as we get into supply, having regard to this prior obligation—that is to say, the emergency measures—to arrange for a debate on external affairs, to have this made the first subject of discussion in the house under estimates.

I might mention that there are one or two measures which I understand most hon. members wish to deal with immediately, notwithstanding the existing understanding on procedure. One is to get the bill respecting veterans pensions to the committee on veterans affairs. If it were understood that this

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

might not take more than half a day, and if hon. members are agreeable to that—of course, no one can say how long it would take, but assuming that we had reasonable grounds for believing that half a day would suffice—I would suggest at once that tomorrow a half day be devoted to getting that measure to the committee which has been set up on veterans affairs.

There is another urgent measure; it relates to further payments on wheat. Its early consideration was requested some little time ago. I said that I would try to arrange to have it brought forward at a convenient moment. Unless there is something more pressing, that might be brought up during the evening. We might then continue with the emergency measures on the following day.

Mr. KNOWLES: May I ask a supplementary question? Does the Prime Minister recall that during both the previous debates on these motions he gave the assurance that it was not his intention that they continue in effect for the whole of the session?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is right.

Mr. KNOWLES: He indicated that the time would come when he would propose another motion to re-arrange the business in the light of the circumstances that would then develop. I am not trying to dictate to the Prime Minister the order of business he should propose to the house, but I am suggesting, now that the debate on the address is over, that in all fairness to the house the government should present another motion superseding the motion of December 8 and regularize the proceedings. Day after day Mr. Speaker must re-arrange things on the order paper in accordance with an understanding. Would it not be better to have the procedure regularized by a proper motion of the house?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: No one would be better pleased than myself to have everything made as well known in advance as possible. But I would point out to my hon. friend that what the house has already agreed to under this motion is that we would conclude the emergency measures before we would begin to take up others. There were two things, the debate on the address and the emergency measures. As soon as these are concluded, I will bring in a motion to meet what my hon. friend has in mind about proceeding in accord with rule 15.

Mr. KNOWLES: Standing order 15.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, I mean standing order 15. That is what I have intended all along.