

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

for Tuesday will be as follows: first, the Canada Labour (Standards) bill, Government Order No. 97; second, the Excise Tax Act, Government Order No. 94; third, the Canada Elections Act, Government Order No. 98. For Wednesday, if we make sufficient progress on the items I have read out we will proceed with the Canada Elections Act, Government Order No. 98. On Thursday we will have the final allotted day in this period.

Finally, I would call the attention of the House to a notice which will appear in the name of the House leader proposing an extension in the hours of sitting in the next two weeks, in the hope of completing the agenda of business by June 26.

### PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

#### CANADA ASSISTANCE PLAN—REFUSAL OF BENEFITS TO MEMBERS OF B.C. BUILDING TRADE UNIONS

**Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, it is now nearly two months since I first drew to the attention of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) that welfare minister Gaglardi of British Columbia was refusing welfare payments to workers involved in labour disputes. On that occasion the minister replied that such action was contrary to the Canada Assistance Plan, and that if specific instances of refusal were found he would have "no choice but to take appropriate action in terms of reducing the moneys payable to that province under the Canada Assistance Plan".

A number of specific instances were found. I provided several to the minister myself and also copies of a directive sent out by welfare workers on provincial government stationery, stating that welfare payments would be refused to persons involved in a labour dispute. Since then the federal minister has travelled to British Columbia and has met with his counterpart, Mr. Gaglardi. The Vancouver *Sun* of June 8 headlined the result in bold type, "Munro, Gaglardi reach agreement" and in less bold explanation added, "But on what, not specific". The story related that the federal minister had explained that the Canada Assistance Plan provides that welfare should be issued solely on the basis of need. But Mr.

Gaglardi said he was going to keep on doing exactly what he had been doing before the discussion with the federal minister. As one newsman put it, "The farther Mr. Gaglardi got from Mr. Munro's suite—and the closer he got to reporters—the more he reverted to his previous position".

I am now reliably informed that a directive has gone out from Mr. Gaglardi's office to all welfare officers in British Columbia that persons who can show they are completely destitute as a result of current labour disputes are entitled to food vouchers; that is provided there is no food in the house. The directive makes clear that under no circumstances are persons in this category to receive cash welfare payments. If this is so—and I am confident that I can secure copies of the directive within a few days—it means two things: first, the provincial minister of welfare is continuing to break the federal-provincial agreement; second, he is compounding the offence by creating second-class welfare recipients—those involved in a labour dispute.

As an example of what this means, a family of three on social assistance in British Columbia is ordinarily entitled to \$165 and is allowed to have the same amount in the bank. Under Gaglardi's new regime, this family must show that it has no money and no food. They can then get \$70 in food vouchers. They do not get the balance of the \$165; that is, they do not get the \$95 allowed for items other than food—rent, light, clothing and the rest. I think this is a shocking betrayal on the part of a welfare minister. I cannot believe that the federal minister agreed to this further flouting of the Canada Assistance Act. I hope he will not wait for me to collect the evidence of this latest piece of high-handed injustice on the part of a provincial minister. I hope he will demand immediate compliance with both the letter and the spirit of the act.

● (10:00 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, seven weeks have gone by in which families in British Columbia have been denied their rights under the law. During these weeks these families were without light or heat until the family allowance cheque arrived to relieve the worst of their miseries. I think it is time the Minister of National Health and Welfare called his counterpart's bluff and set a deadline by which, unless he lives up to the terms of the law, the provincial minister will find the federal funds cut off. I believe if steps were taken to get the facts to the people of British Columbia, the

[Mr. Gray.]