

*Unemployment Continuance Act*

employment and Farm Relief Continuance bill, which is before the committee at the present time, or on matters incidental and relevant thereto. It is important that that should be clearly understood. We are not now at the second reading of the bill, but in committee, and as is well known, the purpose of the consideration of a bill in committee is to elicit from the government explanations as to the meaning of the legislation, the intent of the government with respect thereto, and also information as to the extent to which and manner in which expenditures under similar legislation in the past have been made. By this motion, all further opportunity to secure information of the kind is denied hon. members of this house.

Mr. STEVENS: You have all day to-day until two o'clock to-morrow morning.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Let this be clearly understood; there can be only one speech on the part of each member in committee. I submit that under these circumstances it is impossible to have any real or adequate discussion. One question may be asked by an individual member but that is all he is permitted; there is no way of following up the discussion in any form.

It is perfectly apparent, Mr. Chairman, that the introduction of closure in this manner at this time is not for the purpose of expediting the enactment of any measure with respect to relief, but clearly for the purpose of shutting off all discussion on the subject. May I make that abundantly clear by referring to the course of the opposition since the introduction of closure at a previous stage in the proceedings of the house. Closure was introduced on Wednesday morning, at which time the resolution was carried and the bill given its first reading. On Wednesday afternoon we proceeded with the next stage of the bill, which was the second reading, when an amendment was moved by the opposition. Had the opposition intended to obstruct, it is perfectly apparent that that was the time at which it would have availed itself of the opportunity to have its members individually speak. As the house well knows, however, there was but one speech from the opposition on the second reading, at which time an amendment was moved, setting forth in two paragraphs the position of the opposition in regard to the measure. That amendment was moved by the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Mackenzie). That hon. gentleman made the only speech from this side of the house on that occasion, and when the amendment was voted down not another

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

speech was made on the second reading either from this side or from the other side of the house. Instead, the second reading was allowed to pass in order that the house might go immediately into committee. In the light of that fact it is impossible for anyone to say that action from this side of the house has been in the nature of obstruction to this measure.

May I go a step further and say that when the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett) last night intimated his intention to introduce closure to-day, he gave the house, as will appear in Hansard, very clear evidence of the fact that he himself had received, from the ex-Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe), intimation that we on this side of the house had expected to conclude the committee stage of the discussion yesterday and to proceed with the third reading of the bill to-day. The Prime Minister's words are there, to the effect that that was what he had gathered from the ex-Minister of Justice. The ex-Minister of Justice has since explained, what the Prime Minister himself will know better than anyone else, that no one on this side of the house in regard to any measure that is being considered in committee is in a position to curtail discussion completely. While most of us were hoping and expecting that the committee stage of the discussion would end yesterday, and that the third reading would be proceeded with this afternoon, yet the fact that members of the opposition were unable to get from hon. gentlemen opposite much of the information they were seeking had the effect of prolonging the discussion further than would otherwise have been the case. And for that reason the discussion was not concluded last night. Now, notwithstanding that fact, notwithstanding that we have on Hansard of yesterday the record of the intention of the opposition as expressed by the ex-Minister of Justice to the Prime Minister last night and known by the Prime Minister at the time he mentioned his intention to move this motion of closure to-day, the Prime Minister comes along in the first minute of proceedings in committee to-day and applies closure, affecting all three sections of the bill, though as you, yourself, Mr. Chairman, well know, even the first section has not yet been passed. I quote from yesterday's proceedings at page 1557 of Hansard as follows:

The Chairman (Mr. Hanson, York-Sunbury): I would ask the hon. gentleman, who knows the rules, to observe them. We are discussing section one of this bill.

As you yourself have said, Mr. Chairman, section one of the bill is the only section that