

CIVIL SERVICE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER APPOINTMENTS
AND THE ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATION
OF THE ACT

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister) moved:

That the name of Mr. MacInnis be substituted for that of Mr. Woodsworth on the special committee on Civil Service and Civil Service Act.

Motion agreed to.

TRADE AGREEMENT WITH GERMANY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. A. BRADETTE (North Timiskaming): I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Trade and Commerce. A few days ago the minister told the house there were negotiations with Germany in regard to a trade agreement. This morning there is a despatch to the effect that on the first of April Germany will place restrictions on Canadian goods unless Canada makes an agreement with Germany before the Imperial conference.

Hon. H. H. STEVENS (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I did not catch all that my hon. friend said, but the answer, I think, is this: the government at the present moment have no statement to make on the subject.

NORTH AMERICAN LIFE ASSURANCE
COMPANY

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister): Yesterday evening the hon. member for West Edmonton (Mr. Stewart) indicated that he thought my statement as to the common stock held by the North American Life Assurance Company was inaccurate. I find this morning from the Superintendent of Insurance that the actual percentage is 5.63, of which bank stocks, loan companies' stocks, and consumers' gas companies stock amounts to 5.16, and other utility and industrial stocks, $7\frac{1}{100}$ per cent. I fancy it is the latter figure to which the hon. gentleman referred.

Hon. CHARLES STEWART (West Edmonton): I do not think I said the statement was inaccurate. I merely pointed out that common stocks were less than one-half of one per cent.

Mr. BENNETT: They are 5.63 per cent.
[Mr. Stevens.]

UNEMPLOYMENT AND FARM RELIEF

CONTINUANCE ACT, 1932—CONSIDERATION OF
RESOLUTION

The house resumed from Friday, March 11, consideration of the motion of the Prime Minister that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to resolve itself into committee of the whole on the following proposed resolution:

Resolved, that it is expedient to introduce a bill to amend chapter 58 of the statutes of Canada, 1931, striking out the word "March" in section 8, and substituting the word "May" therefor.

Hon. H. H. STEVENS (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, for the past two weeks the house has been listening to a very lengthy debate on this resolution.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Two weeks?

Mr. STEVENS: Nearly two weeks. During this time many rather impassioned speeches have been delivered, directed largely to an attack upon the government on constitutional grounds. Perhaps it is advisable, once in a while during the course of a debate of this kind, to bring the attention of the house back to precisely what is proposed in the resolution. Last year an act was passed which was very fully considered by the house. This measure, which was presented in a constitutional manner, asked the house to clothe the government with certain authority and powers. There was very sound reason for the request. This country, in common with other countries throughout the world, was suffering under a very serious economic depression, and there was prevalent throughout the country a considerable degree of unemployment. While the house was in session it became evident to all that a condition was likely to arise in western Canada of the nature of a national calamity. The Prime Minister brought to the attention of the house the conditions due to the crop failure particularly in Saskatchewan and parts of the other provinces. In one large section there had been three successive crop failures, and the Prime Minister described it at the time as a great national calamity. I think the house generally most regretfully concurred in that view and it was felt that the situation was so grave that it warranted extreme measures. It was unknown at the time and unknown for some months thereafter just what the extent of the calamity was, and furthermore it was difficult for the government, and certainly most difficult for the house, to judge of what measures might be necessary to deal with the situation. I shall not go into any laboured argument in regard to that point