

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, January 15, 1971

The House met at 11 a.m.

• (11:10 a.m.)

VACANCY

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received a communication notifying me that a vacancy has occurred in the representation, namely, of H. Russell MacEwan, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Central Nova, by resignation. Accordingly I have addressed my warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a new writ of election for the said electoral district.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

UNEMPLOYMENT—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the House under Standing Order 43 to present a motion. I do so because of the many people across Canada who are making statements about the critical unemployment situation and the desirability of having some of these people appear before the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration so that we can get the picture and come to grips with the problem. I therefore ask leave to move, seconded by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard):

That the critical unemployment situation in Canada be referred to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, and that the committee consider calling witnesses who can underline the seriousness of the problem and who have proposals to make, including the Minister of Labour for Quebec who has stated that there could be a revolution in that province if unemployment gets any worse.

Mr. Baldwin: And the Leader of the Opposition who has been travelling around getting information.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members have heard the motion proposed by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre under the terms of Standing Order 43. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: There is not unanimity. The motion cannot be put at this time.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

UNEMPLOYMENT—DESIGNATION OF ONE MINISTER TO CO-ORDINATE DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES AFFECTING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): I would like to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. As the policies of six departments—the Department of Finance, the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, the Department of Transport, the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and the Department of Manpower and Immigration—largely determine the condition of the Canadian economy and consequently the level of employment in the country, has the government given consideration to designating one minister, preferably the Minister of Finance, to co-ordinate the policies of these six departments as they affect general economic conditions in the country so that a co-ordinated and more effective attack may be made on the problem of unemployment?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has been a member of cabinets in the past and he knows that the best way of co-ordinating government policy is through the cabinet itself. Many countries have tried the experiment of appointing super economic ministers and invariably they have failed. I do not think it is a useful precedent.

UNEMPLOYMENT—LAY-OFF OF EMPLOYEES BY AIR CANADA

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): I have a supplementary question. I might just say that the results to date do not indicate—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Hees: May I carry on with my supplementary question? We used to have co-ordination, but not you fellows.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Hees: I will now carry on with my supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

An hon. Member: Tell us about your cabinet, George.

Mr. Hees: Will the Acting Prime Minister look into the reasons why Air Canada, a government controlled Crown