

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, February 20, 1961

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

STANDING ORDERS

CONCURRENCE IN THIRD REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Miss Margaret Aitken (York-Humber) moved that the third report of the standing committee on standing orders, presented to the house on Thursday, February 16, 1961, be now concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

CANADIAN AND BRITISH INSURANCE COMPANIES ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING INVESTMENT AND OTHER POWERS

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance) moved the first reading of Bill No. S-5 (from the Senate) to amend the Canadian and British Insurance Companies Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

FOREIGN INSURANCE COMPANIES ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING CLASSES OF ASSETS THAT MAY BE HELD

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance) moved the first reading of Bill No. S-6 (from the Senate) to amend the Foreign Insurance Companies Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE MANUAL, 1955

Motion No. 47—Mr. Roberge:

For a copy of the new insurance coverage manual issued in October 1955 by the unemployment insurance commission.

Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I have been advised by the unemployment insurance commissioners that these manuals contain operational instructions, that they fall within the class of internal communications within the department, and that on that ground they are privileged documents. In view of that I would ask that the hon. member consider dropping this motion.

Mr. Winch: May I ask the minister why there is so much secrecy about documents of this nature?

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member content to drop the motion?

Mr. Roberge: Yes.

Order discharged and motion withdrawn.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE MANUAL, 1950

Motion No. 48—Mr. Roberge:

For a copy of the insurance coverage manual issued in January 1950 by the unemployment insurance commission.

Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour): The same observation applies to this motion, and I would ask the hon. member to consider dropping it.

Mr. Winch: May I ask the same question? Why is there so much secrecy about these documents?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): May I ask the minister to let this motion stand? His suggestion that it has always been the practice to regard these documents as privileged is not fully accepted at this moment, and I do not think that is the practice, in the particular context.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The motion is not debatable. If the hon. member in whose name it stands is not content to have it withdrawn, it should stand.

Mr. Churchill: On a point of order, the hon. member for Essex East does not accept the minister's statement that it is a privileged document, I do not believe it is within the competence of the hon. member to reject the statement made by a minister of the crown. It is a matter for the disposition of the house.

Mr. Winch: In view of the fact that the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order; this is not a debatable motion.

Mr. Winch: The point of order is debatable, sir.

Mr. Speaker: When a motion is called it is open to a minister whose department is concerned to object to the production of a document on the ground that the production is contrary to public policy. It is open to the house to disregard that objection and pass the order, but it is not a debatable motion.