

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEDNESDAY SITTINGS—PRECEDENCE TO BE GIVEN GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister) moved:

That on Wednesday, the 18th of March, instant, and subsequent Wednesdays to the end of the session, government notices of motions and government orders shall have precedence over all business except questions by members and notices of motions for the production of papers.

Mr. ANDREW KNOX (Prince Albert): I do not know what procedure I should follow in regard to this matter but I feel certain that a great number of the members object to having private members' day cut off so early in the session. We use up these private members' days for the purpose of bringing before the House items of importance in many cases, and we have a long list of motions on the order paper which will not be reached this session if the private members' days are cut off. I had a resolution on the order paper last year, which, for the reason that private members' days were cut off, I was unable to present to the House, and we finally had to bring it to the attention of the House in another way, a way that was forced upon us at that time. I sent in the same resolution this year in what I considered to be ample time, namely the end of October last. I found at that time that I was twenty-fifth on the list. It looks as if I might not be able to reach the resolution for some time, and I would certainly ask that Wednesday be left as private members' day for some time to come.

Mr. GOOD: Before allowing this motion to pass, I should like to ask the government its intention with respect to Mondays.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend will observe that no notice has been given, so far, with respect to Mondays. It remains private members' day for the present.

Mr. GOOD: Will the government give the House any assurance that if this motion is allowed to pass, Mondays will be left for a very considerable time yet?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Mondays will not be taken without due notice in advance.

Mr. J. S. WOODSWORTH (Centre Winnipeg): Mr. Speaker, I would urge that in some way we should be assured, either at this time or later, that private members will have an opportunity of bringing forward these resolutions. A good many of us come from constituencies where, perhaps, questions coming before the House and naturally brought forward by the government, do not fully meet

the needs of our electors. Some of us come here representing groups that have hitherto not been very largely represented in this House. Some opportunity ought to be afforded for introducing resolutions that have not so far had a place on the agenda of the government business, and I trust that in some way the government will see that that opportunity is given.

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, a brief glance at the order paper will make clear that the House should not consent to this motion passing unless we are given a very definite assurance at least as to Mondays. We have had no shadow of assurance from the Prime Minister in that regard; so far as assurance goes, he might as well not have spoken. The order paper still has ten pages of private members' motions. I do not suggest, because I know if I were in the government myself I could not suggest, that there would be time for the discussion of all of those motions in the one session, and I do not think it would be reasonable to expect it. But there are many important resolutions on the order paper, very few from members of the opposition, but many from other members, especially from hon. members to my left. Under conditions that everyone admits obtain during this session, during all the sessions of this parliament, where reasonable expedition is accorded all government measures, where there has been no show of obstruction, it should not be necessary to curtail Wednesdays at the present time with not the slightest assurance as to Mondays not being curtailed next week or the week following, and no time at all given to the discussion of these questions.

I take this occasion to refer for a moment to a resolution which stands in my name, resolution No. 29, relating to an immediate revision of the tariff. I do not assume any air of importance beyond the ordinary member when I say that no one would suggest that an opportunity should not be given, should not be assured, for the discussion of this resolution. As yet it has been called, I think, twice, certainly not more than three times,—twice, or once, about eleven o'clock at night and the other time a few minutes before six o'clock on a Wednesday. Nobody would suggest that it could have been gone on with at that time. If the House is to discuss this question, that discussion should certainly be in advance of the budget if there is any hope of substantial results. I do not suppose that the budget will be delivered until the fiscal year is over, but in any event, this resolution should be reached in advance of the