

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

a requirement under the new standing order 26.

A number of similar motions have been made in previous years. On March 23, 1959 Mr. Speaker Michener made the following ruling:

I have felt that the question of unemployment, which is a continuing one, can scarcely be brought forward under rule 26. The circumstance alleged by the hon. member for Essex East, namely a joint release by the Department of Labour and the dominion bureau of statistics, scarcely alters the situation, in my opinion, to a point where the house should be asked to interrupt its ordinary business.

A similar ruling was made by the Speaker on February 17, 1960 at page 1152 of *Hansard* of that day. The Speaker is reported as follows:

In dealing with this application to interrupt our ordinary proceedings of this day under standing order 26 in order to embark on a discussion of "the grave unemployment situation in the country as revealed in a government press announcement made today," I remind hon. members that this is not a new problem for the Chair. Unfortunately the problem of unemployment is a continuing one and has been a continuing one. As I recall it, motions of this kind have been advanced or attempts have been made to deal with the general problem of unemployment under standing order 26, and I have taken the view in the past that that is not an appropriate procedure for a continuing general problem which this undoubtedly is.

• (2:30 p.m.)

On another occasion, in a ruling made on January 14, 1958, Mr. Speaker stated:

There has been a great deal of talk about the unemployment situation during this session and I am sure there will be a great deal more without allowing this additional debate which would interfere with the planned routine of the business of the house. Hence, I do not consider it a debate which should be entered upon at this stage.

The Chair recognizes readily that the motion raises a matter which is of importance and urgency. I am sure it is of important concern to all hon. members of the house. However, a careful and objective interpretation of the relevant standing order cannot, in my view, justify the acceptance at this time of the hon. member's motion.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### LABOUR CONDITIONS

#### UNEMPLOYMENT—REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT PROGRAM TO ALLEVIATE CONDITION

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** I should like to address a question to the Acting Prime Minister arising

from the latest statistics on the labour force issued this morning. These show that both the labour force and employment figures registered larger than seasonal declines between November and December and that fully 4.7 per cent of the labour force is unemployed.

Would the Acting Prime Minister tell us whether the government is now reconsidering the policy, as stated by the Prime Minister, to de-emphasize job producing policies in favour of reliance upon training programs, and whether in view of increasing unemployment which is not being offset by the training programs the government will now introduce additional useful programs to alleviate the obviously growing unemployment in the country?

**Hon. Paul Hellyer (Acting Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, our programs are designed to produce the maximum of employment both in the short and in the longer range. Certainly, the investment in the manpower training program is designed to equip those being trained to re-enter the labour force in a manner which would be most beneficial to them and to the Canadian economy. I can assure the hon. gentleman that this is a matter of continuing concern to the government, as I am sure it is to all Canadians, and that every possible step within the power of the government will be taken to maximize employment opportunities for Canadians in all parts of the country.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I presume the answer to the questions I asked is, no. I should therefore like to direct a further question at this point to the Minister of Forestry and Rural Development.

In view of the fact that unemployment in the Atlantic provinces now amounts to 7.1 per cent of the labour force, and that it amounts to 6.8 per cent in Quebec, would the minister inform us whether his department intends to introduce additional useful programs which might be implemented even on a regional basis to lessen the high unemployment rate in those parts of the country?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Forestry and Rural Development):** Mr. Speaker, as soon as I have the pleasure of heading a department created by the house, I will gladly bring in legislation for that purpose.

[*English*]

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** A supplementary question, first, to the Minister of