

*Business of the House***BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

ORDER OF BUSINESS AS SET OUT ON ORDER PAPER

Mr. Speaker: Notices of motions for production of papers. No. 5; Mr. Fisher.

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources): Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreeable to the hon. member for Port Arthur?

Mr. Fisher: I should like an explanation as to why this should stand.

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): After motions, the next item as I see it on my order paper is introduction of bills; then, first reading of Senate public bills, and then government notices of motions.

Mr. Speaker: We must have different order papers.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mine is dated Monday, March 23.

Mr. Speaker: The next order of business after motions is: private members' day, fifth allotted Monday—notice of motions for the production of papers.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I have an order paper for Monday, March 23. It says:

Daily routine of business:—Presenting reports by standing and special committees; motions; introduction of bills; first reading of Senate public bills; government notices of motions.

Mr. Speaker: There are no bills to be introduced today. That is why there is no item set down.

Mr. Fulton: Look at standing order No. 15.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

UNEMPLOYMENT—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 26

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): Under the provisions of standing order No. 26, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to move the adjournment of the house to discuss a matter of urgent national importance, namely the serious unemployment situation as revealed today in a joint release of the Department of Labour and the dominion bureau of statistics which has not shown any decrease in unemployment as forecast by the government. This is a matter which bears with increasing severity on certain regions of Canada.

Mr. Speaker: 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

[Mr. Argue.]

house should be asked to interrupt its ordinary business. That is my present disposition, but before disposing of the matter I do not want to overlook any sound argument tending to show that this question should be debated today and that we should interrupt our normal business for this purpose.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Since Your Honour has asked for sound arguments, may I have the honour of being the first to indicate the sound arguments which we on this side of the house have in mind to justify, in Your Honour's judgment, the presentation of this motion at this particular time.

The government through the Minister of Labour on August 16 last in a debate in this house indicated that the unemployment situation in Canada was improving, and that we could expect to see a gradual amelioration of the problem from that time onward. The fact is that this morning the Department of Labour and the dominion bureau of statistics issued a monthly report which reveals that the number of persons without jobs and seeking work was estimated to be 537,000 in February, a figure virtually unchanged from January. This situation means that Canada has a higher percentage of unemployed workers than any other country in the western world, and it would seem to us—

Mr. Green: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is carrying on with the debate. He is not speaking to the point of order.

Mr. Speaker: I think the point is well taken that the hon. member is really proceeding as though the motion had been allowed. The point is this. What difference is there between this Monday and last Monday, when a motion could have been moved by way of want of confidence to deal with this unemployment situation? As a matter of fact I recall now that it could not have been moved because the subject has already been debated this session. I am not sure how the hon. member could overcome these obstacles, both that we have had debates so directly pointed toward the unemployment situation that I doubt whether a new want of confidence motion could be permitted on this subject, and second, as the hon. member has just remarked, that there is no change in the figures; we are dealing with a continuing situation.

I feel the hon. gentleman should not attempt to debate the subject matter, but if he has any sound argument in support of debating this question at this particular time, indicating why it has become a matter which would justify the interruption of our ordinary business, I feel he should address himself to this point.