

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Industry):** Mr. Speaker, this program is turning out to be remarkably successful, and has resulted in very large investment providing a great number of jobs in areas which have been designated. There is some hope that in the not too distant future some of the areas currently designated will come off the list by reason of a reduction in chronic unemployment, and as this is done and as unemployment shows itself to reach the specified level in other areas, the areas so qualifying will be included.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I am afraid we have reached a crossroad at this moment. The question period this afternoon has now gone on for about thirty minutes—a full thirty minutes, I understand. The Chair realizes full well, of course, that if we were to be guided by the amended standing orders approved last session this would be the end of the question period. My suggestion to hon. members, though of course I am here to follow their advice and guidance, is that we should abide for the time being with the changes agreed to at the last session without prejudice to the right of members—

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** —to debate this question or to submit representations on a more appropriate occasion. There is to be a formal debate this afternoon, and it may be it would be more appropriate to have such a discussion tomorrow or at some other time, depending on the wishes of hon. members.

My suggestion would be that we call orders of the day subject, as I said, to the right of hon. members to submit arguments tomorrow. If this is not agreeable, the Chair will hear arguments on the subject. I understand from discussions I have overheard that there are views both for and against the applicability of these rules in the current session. However, the suggestion of the Chair at the moment is that we call orders of the day and that we consider this matter tomorrow or at some time which may be agreed upon between the various parties.

**Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek):** Mr. Speaker, I feel this is a form of closure. I have been up and down several times in the last half hour. Whether you have seen me or not does not matter, but I have tried to exercise my duty as a member of the house and I have as much right as any other member to ask a question under the rules as

[Mr. Simpson.]

they stand. There should be no restriction to 20 minutes, 30 minutes or 34 minutes. The fact that the question period has already lasted more than 30 minutes led me to believe that Your Honour intended to allow us to continue to ask our questions, and I am going to object to your ruling.

**Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Public Works):** I too would ask the house to consider whether discussion of the rules could not be delayed until some more appropriate time than today.

**Mr. Churchill:** It is six and a half months since parliament last met.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Naturally there seems to be a great desire today, since it is several months since the house last met—

**Mr. Churchill:** Six and a half.

**Mr. McIlraith:** —to ask questions, and perhaps we could postpone a discussion of what the period should be until a more suitable occasion. In the meantime, without prejudice to the position at all, a few more questions might be permitted. I think this would be agreeable.

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the minister has taken the position of Solomon with such wisdom as to be convincing. I think if his suggestion were accepted we should get along very much faster. As a matter of fact it is almost seven months since the house last sat, and naturally there are many questions to be asked. I think the suggestion of the minister should receive general support, for in that way no one would be incommoded.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the understanding of the Chair that we should proceed on the basis that there is to be no limitation on the length of the question period this afternoon, or is the opposite view to be taken.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Well, my proposition was that there should be no determination as to what the length of the question period should be today but that the matter be postponed for decision. I suggested that today, in view of the fact that many members seem to have questions, we might be a little lenient in enforcing the half hour rule.

**Some hon. Members:** As a right.

**Mr. Simpson:** I have a question to ask the Minister of Industry in relation to my previous question. The minister indicated that when a certain rate of unemployment is