

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

providing more funds to municipalities or groups to complete projects which were approved under the Local Initiatives Program and, through underestimating the project, cannot complete same due to lack of funds.

For some reason or other the congenial parliamentary secretary continued to avoid the import of the question and instead, for the benefit of his party, said what glad tidings he had for us about what the government is doing. Tonight I am going to surprise him and say that I think the Local Initiatives Program is good. I give full marks to the government for introducing it, but unfortunately they made a few errors, which anyone can make, and I am going to try to help the parliamentary secretary and the minister overcome these weaknesses.

My question was prompted by several representations made to me because projects which were approved could not be completed due to the fact that costs were underestimated. This is going to leave a good number of projects incomplete and, therefore, the value of such projects and their benefits will be lost. Indeed, the money so far allocated will be wasted. In this regard, I feel it imperative that a good, hard look be given immediately to all projects in order to assess and ensure successful completion.

While I have the opportunity, I think it is worth while to put forth some ideas to the government in line with the Local Initiatives Program. In my opinion, the federal government should broaden the concept of the Local Initiatives Program into a five-year national development plan to strengthen provincial and municipal infrastructures. Every community in Canada requires basic public services such as water and sewage, access roads, fishing facilities, standard housing conditions, medical services, day-care centres and the like. The government should give consideration to providing a program, through the co-ordination of all departments concerned, to work in co-operation with all levels of government to provide the funds through local initiative to achieve these goals.

If consideration were given to such a proposal, the departments of government concerned could allocate funds from their votes in ensuing years to support local initiative. Not only would public services be provided but it would instil a sense of local participation, pride in one's community and a sense of comradeship and community spirit to make a better Canada.

The Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Mackasey) accepted a suggestion that I made in the House a couple of weeks ago that Fisheries and Public Works collaborate with his department to develop a type of project similar to the Local Initiatives Program to allow fishermen to provide new inshore facilities. The minister, whom I admire for his non-partisanship, accepted the idea. I hope something will be forthcoming in this area.

This idea could be broadened to take into account all phases of community infrastructure services with the involvement of local people. This would create a sense of involvement which would contribute toward the objectives of a better Canadian nation. One of the most important problems in our nation today is that of controlling pollution. The government is prepared to spend billions of dollars in this area but it seems to fail to realize that basic

[Mr. Marshall.]

control should be directed at the root of the problems in the area of proper sanitation control in communities.

I have another example. Submissions were advanced by the score in connection with the provision of fishing facilities. They were turned down on the grounds that extended facilities were not justified. Yet similar projects have been approved under the terms of the Local Initiatives Program. This emphasizes the confusion which surrounds the disbursement of government funds and the duplication of effort which occurs. Far better results could be achieved through a combination of effort on the part of all levels of government.

In this connection, I ask the parliamentary secretary to suggest to the minister that when the cabinet next meets it should consider the proposal that the subject of local initiatives programs be placed on the agenda of the federal-provincial-municipal conference to take place this fall. If he needs any help from the opposition, I am ready and willing to assist him in any way possible.

Mr. Ray Perrault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the minister I wish to thank the hon. member for setting forth certain of his ideas with respect to the Local Initiatives Program. As he knows, the government is very responsive to good ideas from whatever direction. As well, I welcome the enthusiastic support accorded to the Local Initiatives Program by the hon. member speaking for the official opposition. This is especially heartening in view of the earlier criticism voiced by one or two of his colleagues on the basis of incorrect information.

As of June 5 the department has granted an extension of time in respect of 1,396 projects to allow them to be completed to the extent of the funds which have been allocated to them. These extensions have been allowed to June 16 and are in line with the minister's announcement made on May 1. Furthermore, the minister stated on June 2 that an additional \$30 million allocated to the Local Initiatives Program would permit some 1,200 projects to be extended to September 30, keeping some 15,000 persons at work until the end of the summer. I know the hon. member will greet this news with real enthusiasm.

The minister has indicated already that the criteria for selecting the extended projects will, in general, favour the quality of life over job creativity. In this regard, I understand there have been 11 extensions involving an amount of almost \$300,000 in the great province of Newfoundland alone. The manpower and immigration department has issued a first list of the projects extended during the summer; it contains some 730 names. That was on June 2, and the number will be greater by now. It is expected that all the 1,200 contract extensions will have been signed within a few days.

The original \$150 million program created 92,500 jobs during the winter, far in excess of the number predicted by certain members of the opposition. One hundred million dollars was allocated to projects promoted by private organizations and \$50 million to projects sponsored by municipal councils. Most of the extended projects are private ones.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.20 p.m.