

Supply—Regional Development

that we could have firm prices on which to base our decisions. To our dismay the total bids for the three buildings came in at \$504,415 over the estimates given by our architects.

So we find ourselves in the serious position of suffering from the additive effect of our requested grant being cut by \$1,232,200 and the construction bids being \$504,415 over the estimated price. The result is that we cannot proceed with the construction of the three buildings, nor can we consider some other badly needed buildings which we had hoped to get on with, had we had full support. I think the attached tabulation sheets will indicate our position quite clearly.

Because of the seriousness of the implications in the letter from the vice president of administration attempts were made, through correspondence and other ways, to see whether the request of the University of New Brunswick, fully supported by the Atlantic Development Board, could be met. The letters from the premier of the province of New Brunswick and the minister of economics and resource development—I think it is—Mr. Higgins support the request of the University of New Brunswick.

Many people in the maritime provinces—and not just chauvinistically, either—legitimately feel that if there is one area where we can fulfil a useful role in trying to conduct a bootstrap operation, if one may call it that, it is within the various campuses of the Atlantic provinces. I am making this pitch for the University of New Brunswick, but I should be happy to make it for the University of Moncton, Mount Allison, Dalhousie, St. Francis Xavier, or any of our universities. Here is a pressing and obvious need. As the hon. member for Egmont said, we have been studied forwards and backwards and up and down. And here was one request that was supported by the A.D.B. and ruthlessly cut back by Treasury Board.

I wanted to read a number of letters into the record but I feel guilty about taking up any more time. I have letters to the deputy minister from the president of the University of New Brunswick, letters to Dr. Weeks and other letters, but I will not take any more time. I see the President of the Treasury Board is at the table, no doubt studying the implications of my request. I hope he can persuade his colleagues to support my reasonable request. I hope that those hon. gentlemen will see their way clearly to doing something—and I hope that something will not be another study. The need is pressing. As I was saying, there are people in the maritime provinces who feel that our universities can support the

[Mr. Fairweather.]

sort of role that is performed, in the field of superior education, by institutions such as Boston and Cambridge in the state of Massachusetts. We are ready to undertake this job but we must have support, not only from the Atlantic Development Board, but from the minister and his colleagues.

Mr. Macquarrie: Mr. Chairman, I do not feel like making a speech at this time, although I am pregnant with several—I think our permissive society allows us to use such expressions. Before these estimates pass I wonder if the minister would indicate to the committee with reasonable precision the amount that is contributed by the government of Canada to the Economic Improvement Corporation—the E.I.C.—of Prince Edward Island, which is progressing with a comprehensive plan for the improvement of our province. We want to know how much financial assistance is being given by the government of Canada. Corollary to that, and this is also important, can the minister indicate to the house, and thereby indirectly to Prince Edward Island, when it is likely that we can expect that an agreement between the two governments will be signed so that the things which have been promised to our province in this important field can be brought to fruition.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Chairman, with regard to the first question, I will try to obtain the information and give it to the hon. gentleman before ten o'clock. I do not have it at hand. As to the second question, I cannot say when an agreement is going to be signed because it is supposed to be an agreement between both parties. I hope it will be signed soon, but I cannot tell you when.

Mr. Macquarrie: I understand the premier of Prince Edward Island indicated that this will probably take place early in December. Does the minister feel that this is an optimistic, pessimistic or realistic suggestion.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): I think, Mr. Chairman, that this is a realistic assessment, but I cannot really say, because as I mentioned before, this is supposed to be an agreement between both parties.

[Translation]

Mr. Corbin: Mr. Chairman, my remarks will be brief.

Still, I should like to say how surprised I am at the remarks of the hon. members for Egmont (Mr. D. MacDonald) and for