

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Section 11 of the said act stipulates:

(1) Where the municipal project in respect of which a loan is made under this Act is completed to the satisfaction of the Board on or before the 31st day of March, 1966, the Board shall forgive payment by the municipality of twenty-five per cent of the principal amount of the loan.

That provision means that the municipalities which have completed their projects—undertaken with a loan contracted by the said municipalities under the said act or statute—before March 31, will get 25 per cent of the principal amount of the loan, which is quite a considerable portion of the loan which they will not have to reimburse.

The problem, since the expiry date is near—March 31, 1966, is not far off—is that several municipalities will not be able to complete their projects before that date.

That problem is of great concern to me for the very good reason that several municipalities in the riding of Lotbinière took advantage of the provisions of that act, Mr. Speaker.

I am speaking in particular of the municipalities of St. Sophie de Lévrard, St. Antoine de Tilly, St. Apollinaire and St. Pierre les Becquets.

All these municipalities located in Lotbinière riding took advantage of this beneficial legislation, the Municipal Development Loans Act.

So, Mr. Speaker, if the expiry date for the termination of the works is March 31, 1966, should some municipalities not have time to terminate their works, I would beg and implore the indulgence and the goodwill of the minister to see whether there is a possibility of an extension.

I see the minister is not here, but I am confident his parliamentary assistant will favorably receive the request I respectfully submit. I will go further. I am morally sure the minister will favour this request for the benefit not only of Lotbinière and Quebec municipalities but of all municipalities throughout Canada which have used the provisions of this act.

Without further comment, I will yield the floor to the minister's parliamentary secretary. If he is more taciturn than he should be, I will accept his discreet comments, but I shall keep the hopes, if not the conviction, that this extension will be granted.

Mr. Jean Chrétien (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Lotbinière for his interest in the important question raised this week, that of

[Mr. Choquette.]

the expiry of the act passed in 1963 providing for \$400 million in loans from the federal government to the municipalities to help them relieve acute unemployment which is less of a problem today.

As stipulated in section 11 of the act to which the hon. member referred earlier, if the works are not completed by March 31, 1966, the municipalities will not receive the extra payments which he mentioned.

However, during the week the Minister of Finance received in his office various ministers of Municipal Affairs of Canada who outlined the problems involved. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) explained to them the difficult position of the central government which must, of course, abide by the statutes as they stand.

On the other hand, I must say to the hon. member that I am not in a position to make a decision myself, but that within a few days, perhaps tomorrow, the Minister of Finance will probably be in a position to give a final answer to all members of the house interested in this problem, as well as to all mayors of municipalities in various provinces who are expecting a reply one way or the other. I assure you that a decision will be made shortly.

[English]

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 10.22 p.m.

[The following items were passed in committee of supply this day]:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

A—Department—
Marine services—

5. Administration, operation and maintenance including fees for membership in the international organizations listed in the details of the estimates, pensions, grants and contributions as detailed in the estimates, the payment of expenses, including excepted expenses, incurred in respect of Canadian distressed seamen as defined in section 306 of the Canada Shipping Act and, in respect of the Canadian coast guard service, authority to make recoverable advances for transportation, stevedoring and other shipping services performed on behalf of individuals, outside agencies and other governments and authority, notwithstanding section 30 of the Financial Administration Act, to make commitments for the current fiscal year not to exceed a total amount of \$24,689,500, \$41,512,600.

5b. Administration, operation and maintenance to extend the purposes of transport vote 5 of the main estimates, 1965-66 to include contributions and payments, as detailed in these estimates, in connections with, or towards the costs of repairs, operation or maintenance of certain canal property and facilities transferred pursuant to the Public Lands Grants Act, \$781,000.