

Pensions

by H.A. Simmons (Overseas) Limited to Technoexport Bratislava for a pulp mill at Ruzomberok.

The full amount of the loan was \$218 million. The loan was to be repayable in 20 semi-annual instalments commencing the earlier of August 15, 1982, and the fifteenth day of the sixth month following the month of commissioning.

As to the rate of interest, in view of the intense competition that prevails among countries in foreign trade, it is not in the public interest for the Export Development Corporation to discuss its participation in export transactions or proposed export transactions. Such information would assist an exporter's competitors both foreign and domestic. Since information on bids, participation or negotiations is given by companies to EDC in confidence, the corporation, to respect that confidence, refrains until the sale arrangements are final, from discussing a deal or even from indicating that it has been approached in a transaction. EDC makes public its participation in direct lending transactions when the financing agreement therefor is signed, and, on request, in credits and foreign investment insurance cases where the exporter or investor consents to publication. If the exporter or investor has not given its consent the reply will so state. When EDC makes public its participation in direct lending transactions it does not, because of the intense competition above mentioned, publish the rate of interest, for the reasons mentioned.

[English]

Mr. Collette: In anticipation of a question from the hon. member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe, it is my intention to answer his two questions on Monday. I would ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Beatty: Madam Speaker, that in itself justifies our waiting until Monday. I just want to indicate to the parliamentary secretary that if he does not give the House the answers to those questions on Monday, I will.

Madam Speaker: Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

PENSION ACT COMPENSATION FOR FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs) moved that Bill C-82 to amend the Pension Act and the Compensation for Former Prisoners of War Act be read

the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure today, on behalf of my colleagues, to move passage of Bill C-82.

[English]

Last July I had the privilege of seconding Bill C-40 which was presented to this House by our late colleague, the Hon. Daniel J. MacDonald. Bill C-40 was considered to be a major breakthrough in veterans' legislation as it granted proportionate pensions to widows of disability pensioners with an assessment of 47 per cent or less. We believe that Canada thus became the only country in the world to have such a program and to recognize in such a tangible way the spouses and dependants of pensioned veterans. Almost all other countries grant widows' pensions only in cases where the death of the veteran was due to war service.

The well-being of veterans and their families has long been the concern of the government and today I am pleased to propose that we enhance Canada's proud record in this area. I am asking hon. members to approve the total elimination of the phasing in process now in place for the payment of proportionate pensions to widows.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lamontagne: Instead of waiting for up to five and a half more years for a proportionate pension, this bill will allow some 23,500 additional widows to receive monthly payments as of July 1 this year.

[Translation]

I therefore ask hon. members to agree that the phase-in period for the payment of proportionate pensions to widows be altogether abolished. Instead of having to wait five and a half years to be eligible for a proportionate pension, 23,500 widows would, under this legislation, start receiving monthly benefits as of July 1 of this year.

Hon. members will recall that prior to the passage of Bill C-40 last summer, widows' pensions were payable to spouses of veterans who had died as a result of their military service. Also, widows of pensioners whose disability was considered at least 48 per cent at the time of their death were also eligible for these benefits. These benefits are still being paid; however, under this bill the proportionate pensions would be paid even if the pensioner's disability was under 48 per cent.

The speed with which the House approved Bill C-40 was quite welcome, but there was still some concern about the phase-in period for the widows' pensions. At the present time, widows of veterans with a 33 per cent or more disability pension receive monthly benefits. The Hon. Dan MacDonald and myself were concerned about the period of time which would elapse before all widows could receive their pensions. At the House Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs and during our many meetings, the Royal Canadian Legion expressed the wish to have this phase-in period amended and