

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Marler: Mr. Speaker, I have some difficulty detecting much urgency in giving a reply to the hon. gentleman.

Mr. Brooks: It seems to be urgent for Montreal.

Mr. Marler: It would seem to me that the subject could be much more fully discussed on my estimates and when they come up—

Mr. Fleming: When?

Mr. Brooks: We hope you will know more about it.

Mr. Marler:—I shall be glad to reply to the implications of the hon. gentleman's question. Actually, however, two icebreakers have been engaged in the task just as they were last year and just as they have been in the past. A further icebreaker was delivered to my department about a week ago, and I think it is probably engaged in work in the neighbourhood of Quebec at this time.

With respect to the story that a convoy was being organized, the hon. member for Saint John-Albert sent me the clipping from the *Montreal Gazette*, and if the hon. gentleman who has just put the question would read the clipping I think he would see that it definitely has the character of what might be described as speculative information.

Mr. Brooks: It was officials of your department who speculated.

WATER RESOURCES

UPPER THAMES VALLEY AUTHORITY—
REPRESENTATIONS FOR
FEDERAL AID

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. W. Mitchell (London): I wish to ask the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources a question. Has the minister received representations from the city of London and surrounding municipalities since he refused the petition of the upper Thames valley authority for additional grants to develop the conservation measures in that area and, if so, what action has been taken?

Hon. Jean Lesage (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources): Under the Canada Water Conservation Assistance Act the federal government can contribute to water conservation projects at the request of the provinces. I wrote some time ago—and I mentioned it in the house—to the appropriate minister in Ontario giving the reasons why it was not possible to contribute to the upper Thames conservation scheme. According to my memory I have received no further representations from the minister.

[Mr. Brooks.]

Mr. Mitchell (London): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister not agree that the construction of the Fanshawe dam was only the first step in the over-all conservation plan for the area?

Mr. Lesage: I do not know that the Fanshawe dam might not be considered as a separate project, standing by itself. I believe it could.

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): I would like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources with regard to the work of the upper Thames valley authority. Would the minister tell the house what cost-benefit ratio is expected by the federal government in order to justify federal participation in this conservation project?

Mr. Lesage: A reasonable ratio, sir.

Mr. J. W. Monteith (Perth): I would like to ask the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources if he would explain how he deems a contribution of less than \$4 million unjustified in the light of the fact that millions in property loss would be prevented, while at the same time the counties of Perth, Oxford, Middlesex and Kent would benefit directly from the conservation project?

Mr. Lesage: The hon. member is trying to give a résumé of the brief I received, which was about 50 or 60 pages long. He is not even doing justice to the brief. I, in turn, on the orders of the day, could not do justice to the lengthy reply I gave.

Mr. Nesbitt: May I ask the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources one further supplementary question. Having regard to his answer to the question just asked him, what does he consider a reasonable cost-benefit ratio?

Mr. Lesage: It would be difficult on the orders of the day to give a course in economics to the hon. gentleman.

IMMIGRATION

SUPPLEMENTARY AIRLIFT FACILITIES FROM
UNITED KINGDOM

On the orders of the day:

Mr. John B. Hamilton (York West): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. In view of yesterday's newspaper reports of complaints of overcrowding on the immigration airlift, has the minister considered, with the Minister of Transport, whether the seating arrangements on these planes have been approved by that department?