

Adjournment Debate

Now here is a \$12 million construction project, the data centre, which would stimulate considerable employment in the area, especially in the trades and construction sector. The President of the Treasury Board has a responsibility to withdraw the freeze on the project. We face a long winter of discontent as it is. Preliminary studies indicate a high correlation between crime among our citizens and the high unemployment rate in the Sudbury basin. The minister must be aware that a plant similar to the one contemplated in Sudbury has been given the green light in St. John's, Newfoundland. As a matter of fact, Lundrigan's Limited has been awarded a contract and work is already started. We know that the cutback program has been alleviated in areas where the effect would be adverse, and that is as it should be. We in the Sudbury basin should be treated in the same way. The government has a most serious responsibility to ensure that every opportunity for employment is made available. That means construction of the data centre now and not next fall after a general election.

An hon. Member: Great speech, John.

Mr. Rodriguez: Those are the realities, brother.

● (2227)

Mr. Maurice Harquail (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) indulged in his usual rhetoric tonight. His remarks had nothing to do with drafting and everything to do with accusations of electioneering. He has bootlegged accusations in here this evening. He has spoken about subjects other than the one he put down for the adjournment debate.

This debate does give me an opportunity on behalf of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Buchanan) to set the record straight. I know from personal experience that the minister has been involved in this matter just recently. He is very seriously interested in the ongoing developments with respect to the Sudbury data taxation centre. Construction was originally

scheduled to begin in the late fall of 1978. The schedule proposed completion of the facility in the late fall of 1980.

During the review of the Public Works Canada program as a result of fiscal restraint, it was decided to delay this schedule by one year; that is, to begin construction in the fall of 1979 with completion in the late fall of 1981. That is the schedule being followed now.

Our analysis indicated that for construction to begin in the fall of 1978 it would be a requirement that Public Works Canada use a system of phased construction. It was also established that if a construction start were deferred until a complete single contract package could be completed, there would be cost savings on the project. This was estimated at approximately \$390,000. This factor, coupled with the fact that Public Works Canada would be able to secure interim accommodation to permit the start-up of national revenue operations in 1978 and carry this interim operation through to 1981, led us to conclude that deferral of this project for one year was preferable.

The present schedule for this project calls for tenders to be called in mid-June, 1979 with a construction start in mid-September. This schedule is based on an expenditure of \$4 million in 1979-80. Public Works Canada will make every effort to call tenders in mid-April, 1979 and to have construction start in mid-July.

Whether or not this early schedule is possible depends on two factors: first, whether the department can allocate an additional \$1 million to the project in the 1979-80 fiscal year; and second, if Public Works Canada and its consultant can manage within the exceedingly tight schedule to complete the contract documents to permit an April tender call.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until two o'clock p.m. tomorrow.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.30 p.m., without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.