

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

renewal or a pollution treatment plant are extremely complex and time-consuming. First of all, a feasibility study has to be made. Then, a by-law often has to be placed before the local ratepayers. In addition, plans have to be drawn, a detailed application must be submitted, and then there is the processing of application, amendments, and finally approval must be granted. Then, tenders for contracts have to be let, and so on, until the contract is completed. I think I have given enough detail to explain why such projects take a year, or even years sometimes, to complete.

This is why there is considerable urgency in my question, and why it is important that municipalities all across Canada know what to expect in terms of desperately needed capital assistance, so they will have confidence to proceed with essential works. The Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities thought the matter of such urgency as to present a brief to the government in January of this year, urging an extension of the 25 per cent forgiveness of principal and interest on approved loans to municipalities for certain capital works.

This is why the municipalities I represent, which are members of the Greater Vancouver Sewage and Drainage Board and the Greater Vancouver Water Board have asked that I work for the extension of this very practical form of assistance, or at least attempt to learn what alternatives the government has to offer before the legislation expires in March, 1970, and all significant municipal service projects come to a halt. The government has proclaimed that it is concerned with the problems of urban living. Daily we hear questions underlining problems of pollution, housing and of an insufficient supply of economically priced serviced land for homes. The recent housing task force report recommends at page 43 as follows:

The federal government should make direct loans to municipalities or regional governments to assist them in assembling and servicing land for urban growth.

The imminent effect of the expiry of the forgiveness provisions of the municipal loan fund, without any word from the government about the specifics of alternative proposals or expanded assistance to accomplish precisely what the task force recommendation envisages, is of concern to many municipal leaders and is, I think, an apparent conflict with the recommendations of the task force.

I should like to quote from a recent Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities press release which will illustrate what I have been saying:

The Federation, again speaking for the municipalities of Canada, states emphatically that the National Housing Act program which provides for loans, and the forgiveness of a percentage of these loans, for the servicing of land (trunk sewers and sewage treatment plants) must be continued if Canada's minimum housing needs are to be met.

• (10:10 p.m.)

In addition, the Federation states that this program must be expanded in order to enable the municipalities to assist in achieving a much higher production of housing to substantially reduce the current shortage.

It should not be forgotten that this shortage is, in itself, a major contributing factor to the high cost of housing and that, in order to be able to properly service the land needed for the new housing stock, the municipalities require this kind of financial assistance.

The municipalities are gravely concerned that the task force report implies a termination of this program, without any proposal for its substitution by a program of superior value. The Federation cannot agree with any policy that would see this program terminated.

Neither would I, without a suitable alternative. I hope then that the minister is able to provide the house with definite and detailed answers, because if the housing problem is urgent then I submit to you that my question is equally urgent.

Mr. Stanley Haidasz (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): On behalf of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer) I would like to say that the information available to me indicates that already more than 1,400 loan approvals totalling approximately \$300 million have been granted to about 900 municipalities in all provinces since the scheme referred to by the hon. member was introduced in 1960.

The possibility of continuing the extension of the 25 per cent loan forgiveness provision for municipal capital works projects is currently being examined, and a decision on this is expected at a later date.

INDUSTRY—DEVCO—COMPULSORY
RETIREMENT OF MINERS

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, since October 1 I have been putting questions to the minister in charge of the Cape Breton Development Corporation and objecting to the compulsory part of the pre-retirement leave plan of Devco. It