

PUBLIC SERVANTS AND ELECTIONS

John J. Carson, Chairman of the Public Service Commission, recently announced new rules, effective immediately, for public servants who apply for leave of absence to seek nomination as candidates in federal, provincial or territorial elections. If their application is refused they will be granted a hearing before the Public Service Commissioners to show cause why their request should not be granted.

Under Section 32 of the 1967 Public Service Employment Act, the Commission may refuse such requests if it is believed that the usefulness of the employees in the positions they occupy would be impaired by reason of their having been an election candidate.

Section 32 does not prohibit public servants from attending political meetings, or from contributing money to a candidate or a party. They are not permitted, however, to seek nomination as a candidate in a federal, provincial or territorial election, unless granted leave of absence without pay.

Applications for leave of absence must be made by employees as early as possible before the nominating convention. If granted, the leave would begin on the day of the nominating convention or the day on which the employees become actively engaged in seeking the nomination, whichever is the earlier, and would end when election results are announced or earlier if requested by the employee. Once public servants are elected, they cease to be employees of the Public Service.

AIRPORT NOISE RULES HOME LOANS

Changes have been announced by Mr. Ron Basford, Minister of State for Urban Affairs, in Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation requirements for housing planned for construction near airports, with National Housing Act financing. The new lending policy is based on forecasts of noise-exposure at each airport, replacing earlier requirements which took a standard form at every airport regardless of size.

CMHC will use NEF (noise-exposure forecasts) contours prepared by the federal Ministry of Transport for major airports. In areas of high noise-exposure in close proximity to runways, NHA loans will not be available. In areas subject to lower levels of noise-exposure, loan approval will depend on the adequacy of sound insulation in dwelling units.

Since 1956, CMHC has restricted NHA loans for housing near airports because of the detrimental effects on living conditions of the noise from airport operations. The revised requirements update this policy in accordance with the latest techniques which have been developed for evaluating noise.

In making the announcement, Mr. Basford said: "The revision of its lending requirements in the vicinity of airports is part of a continuing process by CMHC of updating its requirements in accord with

modern technical knowledge. The revisions were developed in co-operation with the federal Ministry of Transport and the National Research Council. As land-use control decisions fall within the responsibility of the provinces and municipalities, the Corporation consulted with officials of provincial governments during the preparation of the revisions.

"The Corporation's requirements seek to promote good residential environments near airports and to avoid serious disruption of living conditions by airport operations. They will apply only to residential development where NHA financing is sought. I hope provinces and municipalities will be able to use the CMHC requirements as guidelines for their zoning and land-use policies so that in those areas where NHA financing is not used, development is compatible with forecast noise-exposures."

AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION CHALLENGE

The Federal Government has a comprehensive program of market expansion for Canadian agriculture, Agriculture Minister H.A. (Bud) Olson told a group of touring farm writers and broadcasters recently. "We are interested in more than increased sales," he stated. "Expansion for expansion's sake only is not satisfactory. We must not lose track of our first and most important goal - increased returns for Canadian family farmers."

"Market expansion of Canadian agricultural products requires more than an aggressive marketing approach involving market intelligence, promotion and advertising," Mr. Olson added. "It requires the ability to deliver to our markets, be they domestic or export, the kind of product that is wanted, at the time it is required, in the form it is wanted, and at a fair price. The Federal Government is offering leadership in the multitude of activities that is required for co-ordinating this ability. This leadership will be stepped up in the future."

He said that the commodity teams of Project 75, a new program evolved in the federal Department of Agriculture based on a market-oriented food-systems approach, would become increasingly active in the next few months. A market-oriented strategy meant that agriculture would "adjust, adapt and expand on the basis of the needs, of markets at home and overseas", he declared. The efforts of particular segments of the industry, however commendable, might fall short or be frustrated, if complementary actions by other components of the system were lacking.

There were, Mr. Olson went on, growing markets for the kinds of commodity Canadian agriculture could produce - in the United States, the European Economic Community, Japan, Eastern Europe, China and the countries of the "Pacific Rim". "Each one has different needs and requirements and we must learn how to service them," he said. "Once we have done this, we will need to proceed in such a way that it is a permanent market and a premium market."