

Department of Transport Stores

very clear, is that that amount of working capital enabled the department to get by with reasonable comfort. Actually they did exceed their authority by some \$72,000, but subject to that they got along all right. Newfoundland came in, and that certainly warranted some addition to the amount. I suggest, having regard to the fact the department got along last year with only \$72,000 extra, that the figure suggested by the member for Vancouver-Quadra is \$1,400,000 in excess of the \$2,600,000, apart from the additions in Newfoundland, and should be adequate.

Incidentally I quite agree with what has been said, that one should look very carefully at the gross figure for Newfoundland if it is going to be anything like half of the total for the whole of Canada. I put it to the minister that it is in keeping with the spirit of those who brought this measure into the house, on both sides; that this sum of \$4 million is in accordance with what was intended, which was to put pressure on the officials to keep the amounts down. If, in fact, \$4 million does not give them the elbow room which I think it will, then a year from now, on proper representations, it could be changed.

Mr. Chevrier: I am very much impressed by the points made by the member for Greenwood and the member for Vancouver-Quadra. After the explanations that have been given today, I do not think there is any other impression left in this committee but that we want to operate with what we require, and no more. I had been under the impression that with \$1,500,000, we would be somewhat tight. It may be possible to carry on on that basis. We can try. I am willing to accept the suggestion, and I am willing to ask my officers to try, in order to meet the wishes of the committee. I stated that there was some confusion in the minds of the members of the house, and there was a lot of confusion in my mind, as to how this revolving fund operated. For the reasons which I gave earlier, I am willing to ask the officers to try to get along with \$4 million, inclusive of the \$3 million stores.

I have discussed it with the comptroller of the treasury, who is here before me, and he is willing to make an attempt at it, although he thinks it is going to be difficult. In fairness to the committee I should say that if I find it impossible to accomplish this, I shall have to come back next year and ask for another million, or \$500,000, as the case may be. If the committee will accept, then I will move accordingly, if my hon. friend (Mr. Green) will withdraw his motion.

Mr. Green: I think the minister has been reasonable indeed in his suggestion about

[Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood).]

this amendment, and I would ask for leave to withdraw the amendment I moved on the previous occasion.

The Chairman: Has the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra leave to withdraw his amendment?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Amendment (Mr. Green) withdrawn.

Mr. Chevrier: Then I would ask one of my colleagues to move:

That section 1 of the bill, clause 5, be amended to read as follows:

The amount of advances to the Minister of Transport shall at no time exceed \$4 million, including the value of stores from time to time on hand.

I would ask my colleague, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, to move accordingly.

Mr. Howe: I so move, Mr. Chairman.

Amendment agreed to.

Section as amended agreed to.

Section 2 agreed to.

On section 3—*Accounting transactions to be at cost.—Deletion from inventory of obsolete stores.*

Mr. Knowles: May I ask the minister to explain the new section 8 that is provided for by this clause?

Mr. Chevrier: Does clause 3 carry?

Mr. Knowles: Clause 3 of the bill contains both sections 7 and 8.

Mr. Chevrier: I am sorry. Section 8 reads:

The Minister of Transport, with the approval of the treasury board, may direct the deletion from stores inventory of obsolete or unserviceable stores . . .

The present position is that obsolete or unserviceable stores cannot be disposed of to the satisfaction either of the Department of Transport or of the Department of Finance. It will be done now by including an appropriation in the estimates.

Mr. Knowles: Under this section, when the minister directs the deletion of unserviceable stores, does that mean selling them or destroying them?

Mr. Chevrier: It might be done in two ways—by declaring them surplus, and by having them sold by crown assets or destroying them.

Mr. Knowles: When the value of stores so deleted is to be credited to the stores account, does that mean the stores account provided for in this bill, the \$4 million?

Mr. Chevrier: Yes.

Mr. Knowles: All right. The section goes on to say:

. . . and charged to appropriations that may be made by parliament for this purpose from time to time.