

Supply—Secretary of State

hardy for me at this point, while the Fowler report is being studied by the committee, to attempt to give hon. members here, or persons in the general public, a date upon which construction will be started or completed.

We are aware of the pressures which have built up in the city of Montreal with regard to this matter. Hon. members from Montreal, particularly the deputy chairman of committees, the hon. member for Saint Jacques, have brought this question to my notice almost daily. I appreciate that a great many people in Montreal have been dispossessed of their homes in this area so that the land might be cleared for this construction. For this reason, I should like to pledge to the committee that there shall be no delay in reaching a decision.

Other matters were raised, in particular the question raised by the hon. member for Carleton and answered by the hon. member for Lapointe. I should like to have the opportunity to make a statement at some length with respect to what was said by the head of the Civil Service Commission and the policy which has been undertaken in the last few years. I am not attempting to be provocative, but I believe the hon. member for Carleton—and I am sure he would not want to do this—has done a disservice to the commission. However, in view of the lateness of the hour and the few minutes left to me before ten o'clock, and since the Prime Minister indicated only today in the house that he would be prepared next week following a meeting with representatives of the Civil Service Federation to make a full statement in this chamber, I feel this is not an opportune time at which to pursue the matter. My poor words, in any case, would do nothing but foreshadow words which are far more responsible and important to all those engaged in the public service in Canada. This being the case, I think I have completed my remarks. I hope I have dealt with all the other questions asked this evening.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. We have refrained from mentioning the time. We did not even quarrel with the statement made by the minister a moment ago as to what time she thought it was. But we think there should be some understanding about what we are doing. My colleagues here are prepared not to notice the clock until the estimates of this department have been dealt with but we hope there may be an agreement after that point to call it ten o'clock.

[Miss LaMarsh.]

Mr. McIlraith: On the point of order, I should like to appeal to the committee to complete all the estimates tonight. As outlined in an answer to a question by the hon. member for Medicine Hat on Monday afternoon, there is a situation in which certain casual employees of the department cannot be paid. A good many of the small service contractors cannot be paid and many persons are suffering real hardship since they cannot receive their pay because of the delay in completing the estimates.

I therefore appeal to hon. members to complete consideration of that item in the R.C.M.P. estimates which it was thought by all hon. members had been called yesterday with the estimates of the Department of Justice, but which was inadvertently omitted, as well as the estimates of the Department of Fisheries. If we could do this tonight, it would be very much appreciated.

Mr. Starr: I want to say a word on the point of order. In the continuing spirit of co-operation which we have extended to the government in the consideration of these estimates throughout all the departments, and realizing the hardships which may be encountered by many who have to depend on their pay or salaries, we are prepared to sit until all the estimates have been passed tonight. We do this to help the government out of the predicament in which they find themselves, and in order that no hardship may be felt.

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Chairman, I heard the Minister of Public Works (Mr. McIlraith) tell us earlier that the Government had no more funds to pay civil servants and contractors, and I intended to suggest that they borrow from Household Finance or some company of that kind in order to pay their employees.

However, I do want to tell the Government Leader that we are prepared to co-operate concerning the estimates.

The house leader of the Conservative Party also tells us that he is prepared to co-operate, but I should like to know what this means.

If that means that several Conservative members will rise and speak until two o'clock tomorrow morning, we object. As for us, we feel that the study of the estimates could be all over in five minutes.

Mr. Chairman, we do not know the intentions of the New Democratic party, or those of the Conservative party, for that matter,