

Today I would like to read the questions and then make a suggestion. The first question is: Who are benefiting most from the Transportation Loan Program? The answer is quite long, about one page, and includes a schedule or a table.

● (1720)

Number two: What are the levels of service provided to immigrants to ensure that the moneys lent to them are not lost through dealings with unscrupulous individuals who might prey on immigrants? There is an answer dealing with the IOM, the International Organization for Migration, about travel arrangements and so on.

Number three: What percentage of the loans are fully repaid? The figures are given.

Number four: What sort of agreements are in place for the collection by government from those who fail to pay back the loans? There is a detailed answer there also.

Number five: Will the level of funding meet the demand of the growing number of refugees and immigrants? There is an answer given, including a forecast.

Number six: What is the minister doing to provide assistance to those persons in the refugee backlog? There is a full paragraph answer to that.

Mr. Chairman and colleagues, since in each case the answer is approximately one page, I suggest we might save some time by simply attaching those answers to the record. The department will then have placed on record in the Senate the answers to the questions raised in debate.

**The Chairman:** Is it agreed, honourable senators?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

*(For text of answers see appendix, p. 2170.)*

**Mr. Kempling:** I will give you my copy.

**Senator Frith:** That leaves me with only one other question, which, I think, is one that nags most on this subject—the question of the cap. Mr. Parliamentary Secretary, you know what I am talking about, but, for the sake of the record, there is now an upper limit on the amount available for those loans of, I believe, \$90 million. Is that correct?

**Mr. Kempling:** That is right.

**Senator Frith:** The limits would now be set by regulation, without any cap or any limit. That is, you would set a limit but it would be set by regulation, which would not require parliamentary approval.

**Mr. Kempling:** That is right.

**Senator Frith:** I would certainly find it very reassuring if you could tell us that you propose to consult, or at least advise, Parliament of a proposal to increase the limit. I think you propose to increase the limit now to \$150 million.

**Mr. Kempling:** That is right.

**Senator Frith:** If a further increase were to be asked for, would you undertake to find some mechanism by which to give Parliament an opportunity at least to look at and make comments on the proposed increase of the cap so that it would

not be completely removed from parliamentary review? If you could give that undertaking, I will not even pursue the question.

**Mr. Kempling:** On behalf of the minister, I can give that undertaking. As you know, an annual report is submitted to the House of Commons and to the Senate, and there is nothing to prohibit any parliamentary committee from requesting that the minister appear before it. In fact, such a provision is included in our standing orders and required in the statute.

The same applies to the Senate. You certainly could ask the minister to appear before a Senate committee to give detailed information. However, there has not been a request, I might say, since 1951 for any information on this particular portion of the act. But I can give you that undertaking, that we can flesh out the report a little and do those things quite easily.

**Senator Frith:** I would like some undertaking—just to be sure we understand each other, Mr. Secretary—that you would let Parliament know before you pass such a regulation. I am not pushing it to a negative or a resolution, but just before the regulation increasing the cap is adopted I would like an undertaking that you would advise Parliament that you propose to do so, without, perhaps, binding yourself to be limited by a resolution; that you would do it before the fact, rather than telling Parliament in a report after the fact.

**Mr. Kempling:** As you know, the amounts requested by the department would be in the Estimates and they are subject to perusal by the House and by various committees.

**Senator Frith:** In other words, they would have to be in the Estimates and part of an appropriation act in due course, even though you could increase the cap. I am not so concerned about the appropriation. The cause here, it seems to me, is a good one: to make loans to immigrants who come and need some money to tide them over. If you were about to pass a regulation to increase the cap above \$150 million, we would appreciate an undertaking that you would advise Parliament of your intention to do so, and to give Parliament an opportunity to discuss it before the cap was increased—as distinct from what would be in the Estimates.

**Mr. Kempling:** Yes. I am not sure that it would fall exactly that way. From putting together the Estimates for the department and other departments I know that if the cap were to rise from \$150 million to \$200 million, that would have to appear somewhere in the financial records of the government, and therefore it would be open to members to dig that out. People interested in immigration are always looking for these things, and we have some very ardent ones in the House who search for them.

Under the process we have, I do not know whether we would go to Parliament in advance and indicate our intention to raise the cap. That might be an option open to the minister. I do not think she would reject it out of hand, but it is something I would undertake to discuss with her.

**Senator Frith:** If the minister is prepared to take up that option, she could perhaps correspond with us, or let us know through her colleague, the government leader in the Senate.