

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 27, 1951

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ITALY—PO RIVER FLOOD—ASSISTANCE FROM
CANADA

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I now have some further information to give to the house on the question of relief to the stricken people of the Po valley in Italy. This will supplement what I said to the house yesterday afternoon.

Perhaps hon. members will have noticed in the news this morning that the Canadian Red Cross Society in addition to supplies from a stockpile in Geneva is contributing \$15,000 worth of supplies from Canada. These supplies are taking the form of blankets, woollen underwear, shoes, powdered milk and medicines. The society has approached the government with the request that we facilitate the transport of this material to Europe.

I am glad to inform the house that the government has today placed at the disposal of the Canadian Red Cross Society two North Star aircraft. These aircraft will deliver the material to some airport in Europe which has not yet been designated. Through arrangements made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) and the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton), both of whom are in Rome attending the meeting of the North Atlantic council, the supreme headquarters allied powers in Europe have undertaken to deliver the material from whatever airport is selected to the actual scene of the disaster.

I know that the house will be unanimous in its appreciation of the expeditious manner in which the Canadian Red Cross is contributing to the relief of the very considerable suffering which, from all reports, is being endured by the people who have been made homeless in the Po valley area. I am sure also that the house will fully approve the decision to help the Red Cross in getting these supplies to the scene of the tragedy by the quickest possible means.

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I feel sure that the Prime Minister has correctly interpreted the sentiments of the house, and that all hon.

members will welcome the steps that are being taken. We ourselves had occasion to have some understanding of what it means to see positive evidence of sympathy and support at the time of the floods in this country last year. Above and beyond the importance of the articles themselves—and they are extremely important, particularly in a country like Italy where they have not the supplies available that we have—I feel sure that this gesture will give these people heart at a time when they must be suffering in spirit as well as physically.

CAPITAL COST ALLOWANCES

TABLING OF ORDER IN COUNCIL AMENDING
REGULATIONS WITH RESPECT TO DEFERMENT

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I desire to place on the table two copies of order in council P.C. 6384, dated November 27, 1951, amending the regulations with respect to deferred capital cost allowances.

The change in the regulations is designed to provide further relief in cases where a genuine commitment has been made before April 11, 1951. Hon. members will recall that on June 28, 1951, I advised this house that partial relief was being granted with respect to properties in existence on April 10, 1951, and acquired by bequest or inheritance, properties transferred between taxpayers who were not dealing at arm's length, and properties taken over when the whole of a business was acquired in a deal at arm's length.

Order in council P.C. 6384 goes further and grants relief in respect of properties in existence, under construction, or under contract, as of April 10, 1951, provided the taxpayer can establish that he had entered into a genuine commitment which he was obligated to abide by.

Briefly, the amendment in order in council P.C. 6384 authorizes the Minister of Trade and Commerce to grant a certificate of eligibility in three types of cases for property acquired after April 10, 1951, for which a commitment had been made before that date.

First, in the case of new structures, properties are eligible provided the taxpayer can prove that he had entered into a contract with a contractor for the construction of a structure before April 11, 1951, according to plans and specifications adopted before that