

ment of Public Works and Transport, Quebec's Environmental Protection Service and Hydro-Quebec."

The study was to concentrate mainly on the area around Lake St. Louis, the St. Lawrence downstream to Vercheres, Lake of Two Mountains, and the two rivers, des Prairies and des Milles Iles.

Montreal and its heavily developed suburbs, situated at the confluence of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence, are particularly vulnerable to flood damage. Flooding occurs whenever the combined discharge of the two rivers exceeds the natural capacity of channels around the Island of Montreal. The flood hazard is compounded when the water level in the Great Lakes and Ottawa drainage basins is abnormally high, as it has been in recent years.

Several alternatives to be examined by the study board are changes in regulation of the Ottawa River, structural changes in the channels around Montreal, and a program of dyking and land-zoning for flood prone areas.

The following day, October 4, 1974, in a news release, Environment Canada Minister Jeanne Sauvé invited a new federal approach to reduce the mounting toll of damages caused by floods. She said, "Canada has to reduce the toll of personal suffering and financial loss due to floods."

Experience has shown that a flood damage reduction policy based on structural work alone may not be effective. Alternatives to be considered include land use adjustments such as acquisition and zoning, flood warning and forecasting, flood routing through property easements, flood-proofing of structures, up-stream storage, stream straightening, flood by-passing, and dykes.

● (2220)

A resolution passed by the town of Pierrefonds on October 21, 1974, reads in part:

[Translation]

WHEREAS the Hon. Jeanne Sauvé, Minister of Environment, and the hon. Gilles Massé have recently issued a joint press release authorizing a new study of the means to control floodings in the Montreal area;

WHEREAS the committee is not required to submit its report before 1976;

It is resolved that our elected representatives be asked to raise questions in the House of Commons and in the National Assembly to determine what procedures will be taken to restrict floodings during that study and to compensate for the hardships and damages endured by our citizens during that time.

[English]

To the question I asked in December, 1974, which reads:

[Translation]

To this date, what is the total estimated amount of the claims for compensation under the Federal Aid Program for last spring's flood in the Province of Quebec?

[English]

—the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Chrétien) answered:

[Translation]

... the province has provided no official estimate of the expenditures it expects to make for this purpose.

### Adjournment Debate

[English]

To the second part of the question, which was:

[Translation]

Are discussions with the provincial government under way or being arranged to provide for an equivalent amount of money to prevent further floods?

And the answer was:

No discussions have been held with the provincial government to provide any money to prevent further flooding, nor are any such discussions scheduled.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, my three questions are: First, the question posed by the town of Pierrefonds which reads:

[Translation]

What procedures will be taken to restrict floodings during that study and to compensate for the hardships and damages endured by our citizens during that time.

[English]

Second, has the study been as exhaustive as it was stated it would be in 1974, including consideration of acquisition as well as stream straightening?

Third, will federal funds contributed in 1974 and 1976 be cumulative for purposes of ascertaining the extent of the federal contribution to preventive works recommended by the report?

**Mr. George Baker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate the hon. member for his persistence in this matter. I am sure he should rightfully accept some of the credit when this thing is eventually worked out.

Finding the best way of reducing human suffering and damages due to floods in the Montreal area is a very complex matter, as the hon. member stated. The floods are due to one or a combination of three main factors, high flows from Lake Ontario down the St. Lawrence River, high flows in the Ottawa River, and floods from local rivers. To complicate matters further, water levels may be seriously affected by ice jams along the various waterways. It is not then surprising that it has taken several years for the Canada-Quebec technical committee started in May, 1974, to produce a report which will advise us on the most effective and cheapest ways of solving the problem.

In the provisional report, which I have here, which the minister received yesterday and which I received today, the technical people report on studies to change the way the power dams in the Ottawa system are operated to provide a greater measure of flood control without sacrificing hydro-electric power. They report on possibilities of storing more water upstream on the Ottawa for flood control.

They are examining the costs and possibilities of dyking or dredging or removing buildings from the flood plain in the immediate Montreal area. As you can imagine, the weighing of the costs and benefits of these various alternative means of reducing damages is not a simple job. We want the solution to be effective and to cost the least money possible for the taxpayers of Canada and Quebec. The minister hopes to meet with the Hon. J. Cournoyer, the responsible minister in Quebec, in the near future to