

Supply—Finance

in more detail later, perhaps when the superannuation act is before us. Before we do that, I would suggest to him that perhaps he might find it helpful if he were to examine the explanation in the earlier part of the public accounts of just this sort of thing, the difference between budgetary and cash charges. There is quite a good elaboration in there under the heading of the superannuation account.

Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood): There is one thing which the minister said which I should like explained. He spoke about keeping the accounts strictly current from now on. On page 6, the report the minister tabled says that there is no provision in these rates for future increases in the general level of salaries. Is that consistent with what the minister said about keeping it strictly current?

Mr. Abbott: I think so. I am not an actuary, of course, but I am told that the present rate of 6 per cent for men, with a matching contribution by the government and a contribution by the government for past services if the civil servant is entitled to pay in his share and claim that, will keep the account current, provided each time there is an increase in salary the government puts in a contribution which will bring it in line. That is what the \$23 million is here to cover, the actuarial liability for the increase in salaries which we granted last December.

Items agreed to.

Mr. Brooks: May I suggest that we revert to item 563, as I see the Minister of Agriculture is here.

Mr. Abbott: I would prefer, Mr. Chairman, if it meets with your approval, that we continue with these estimates. We may have some little discussion on that item, and there are a great many items that are urgent. I think now we shall have to continue through the estimates, and I hope to come back to agriculture.

Miscellaneous grants—

587. Contribution towards the national women's organization program in connection with the prosecution of a thrift campaign, not to exceed \$10,000.

Mr. Abbott: The National Council of Women and the Canadian Association of Consumers last year put on a campaign to encourage thrift. I must say that in view of the increase in savings, whether it is due to the campaign the ladies put on, it has been most successful. In the last nine months the rate of savings in Canada has nearly doubled. Whatever may have been the reason, I am sure the ladies' campaign contributed to it. They approached me, through the Bank of Canada I may say, and

[Mr. Abbott.]

asked whether the government would be prepared to make some contribution to assist in the printing of a booklet, the travelling expenses which some of them had, and so on. I took it up with my colleagues and we agreed that we should pay up to \$10,000 which was appropriated out of the vote for unforeseen contingencies.

In order that the house may have an opportunity of asking me about it, I put an item in here to reimburse that account.

Mr. Ferguson: I had a letter the other day from a church in my riding asking for a page in a cookbook which was to cost \$15. I am going to advise them to apply to the Bank of Canada, because they are pikers asking \$15 for a whole page. Here we are growling about taxes and we have to pay \$10,000 to tell people how to save.

Mr. Thatcher: I am inclined to agree with the member who has just spoken. I think those expenditures are in the category of luxury spending. I feel that grants of this kind should be cut out in the coming year. It is one way in which we could cut down. After all, I suppose there will be a \$5 billion budget, and the minister is always asking about ways in which we can cut his expenditures. Here is one.

Mr. Abbott: I wish that I could get some suggestions for savings in really substantial amounts. I have high admiration for the work that is done by the National Council of Women and the Canadian Association of Consumers. They are very representative organizations of women. We make grants to many worthy things. When the executive of this organization came to me, it seemed a reasonable thing to assist this worth-while work to that extent. If all the grants were as well spent as that, I would not be too worried.

Mr. Knowles: Could the minister say whether there have been contributions to either of these organizations in the past, and could he say whether it is intended to repeat this contribution?

Mr. Abbott: No, this is once and for all. The ladies decided that here was a great chance to help fight inflation by encouraging saving. They asked the government for \$10,000 to assist them in their travelling expenses and so on. So far as I am aware, it is one of those non-recurring things.

Mr. Knowles: Is it not the case that there was a grant of about \$15,000—I am just speaking from memory—to the Canadian Association of Consumers three or four years ago?