

Supply—Finance

in telephone bills which he claimed in 1957-58 represented waste and extravagance?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Before the hon. member goes any further, perhaps he would be interested to know why this further supplementary estimate of \$40,000 is required.

Numerous unforeseen developments involving the provision of additional telephone service account for this additional requirement. One item not anticipated when the original estimate was made was the expansion of service for members of parliament in the House of Commons and in the west block where they now occupy rooms. There has been a substantial increase in the telephone service on parliament hill. Similarly, it was not anticipated when the original estimate was prepared that the house would adjourn for only three months during this current fiscal year as against the usual five or six months. This has also added considerably to the requirement.

The Congo crisis has increased our telephone expenditure in the Department of External Affairs and the Department of National Defence. The inauguration of a parole board and the setting up of royal commissions and committees on publications and government organization are also among the contributory obligations that were not foreseen when the item was first prepared. Moreover, effective November 1 the Bell Telephone tariff covering the cost of installation and movement of equipment was increased by 150 per cent. The charge for the movement and/or installation of a telephone was increased from \$2 to \$5. This increase in the movement of telephone equipment from November 1 has been a very substantial factor in the increase in cost. The average number of moves and installations per month throughout the government service is 300 telephones. I think hon. members can see why it is necessary to have this additional amount of \$40,000.

Mr. Cardin: The minister has been giving us reasons why the increase of \$40,000 was necessary and, of course, I was questioning that figure, but I also referred to the fact that since 1957-58 this particular item has increased almost \$500,000. I wondered whether the minister thought that the problems he now faces were problems that the previous government did not have to face?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I think we are facing some problems that the previous government did not have to face.

Mr. Benidickson: I am disappointed with the Minister of Finance, regarding the increase in telephones, telegrams in the estimates which have risen to the extent they

have, when he starts off by saying that these are largely attributed to expenses—and he puts this at the top of his statement—which would lead one to judge that they perhaps belong to parliament hill. First of all, I would point out that the members on parliament hill, to an extent never before, belong to the government party. Whether or not they are getting telephone consideration that is different than in the past I do not know, but I want to bring to the minister's attention the fact that I have made an offer to the Sergeant-at-Arms, and other authorities in this house, in asking for a second telephone such as I would have if I were carrying on normal business, to pay the additional expense. I feel it is ridiculous for me to have to continually change places with my secretary because we have only one telephone.

I have been denied the opportunity of personally paying the extra \$1.50 per month for that extra service which I would certainly have in my office in the normal course of business. I have not asked that the crown pay the additional cost but have offered to pay it myself and that privilege has not been afforded me. I have offered to contact the Bell Telephone Company in this regard but because of the red tape that is involved in the government service I am denied that privilege.

I think it is very unfair for the Minister of Finance to suggest on the basis of economy that a good portion of this increase in the expenditures is attributable to parliament hill. Certainly this increase of \$40,000 cannot be attributed to that small portion of the service on parliament hill, and certainly not to the very small opposition that is assembled here in this parliament.

Mr. Aiken: Before the minister answers, if he intends to, one thing ought to be straightened out. I should like to comment, in case the impression is left otherwise, that long distance telephone calls made by all members of parliament are paid for by those members.

Mr. Benidickson: The members of parliament pay for their own long distance calls.

Mr. Aiken: I thank the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River for his assistance. He has said exactly what I intended to say. I should not like the impression to get abroad that the government is paying for private members' telephone calls.

Mr. Chevrier: The hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River has brought to our attention a point with which I think the minister should deal. We have before us now this substantial increase in the cost of telephone service. The hon. member for Richelieu-Vercheres has