

federal moneys to other levels of Government. That increase in cost is estimated to have risen by \$2.5 billion, an increase of 17.5 per cent.

That was a point I was getting to in my speech. Now that I have an opportunity to put it on the record, let me say that this is an area where there will be a significant increase in costs. These funds will help pay for necessary programs such as health care, university education and others. We also know that there is an increasing number of elderly people in Canada. The pay-outs alone in old age pension, supplements and spousal allowance are forecast to increase by almost 10 per cent, or over \$1 billion. We also know that there has been a heavy increase in cost as a result of our attempt to deal with the unemployment question in Canada. Those costs have jumped by 133 per cent to approximately \$3 billion, as compared to the \$1.25 billion last year.

In response to the question dealing with the budget, I am sure that Ministers concerned with the Treasury will be able to respond to the Hon. Member's question with more specific details. However, I have attempted to respond in some manner to his question.

Mr. Huntington: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member's answer obviously is that there is no cash flow projection within the Estimates whereby a Member of the House, no matter how diligent, can recognize just what the first quarter cash flow needs of the Government are.

In reply to my first question he did say that the budget would be coming down. Would the Hon. Member not then agree that Members would be far more informed and knowledgeable about a \$19 billion borrowing requirement, requiring \$14 billion for the first quarter, if the budget came down before this Bill was presented to us?

Mr. Harquail: Again, Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that the Hon. Member will agree that we need some consistency in order to have an orderly and consistent flow in fiscal management. This gives me the opportunity again to point out the declining interest rates and the lesser cost of money recently. All Members and that Hon. Member in particular would have to agree that lower interest rates will afford the Canadian Government the opportunity to obtain money at less cost. That is a point which must be emphasized. That fact will obviously put us in a much better position in the coming weeks and months than we were in at the beginning of 1983.

As far as the cash flow is concerned, there must be some built-in flexibility, as I am sure the Hon. Member realizes. I have tried to highlight some of the spending programs that we will have to spend the money on as a Government. I have tried to present some of the projects that are of concern to me in the Atlantic area which certainly pertain to the continued economic and industrial development in northern New Brunswick which we would all want to see.

I repeat that this just proves the remarks I made when I commenced my speech—

Borrowing Authority

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order. There are other Hon. Members seeking the floor. I must interrupt the Hon. Member.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to direct a question to the Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail). I must say that I was encouraged by the over-all tone of his presentation; I appreciate hearing that kind of optimism.

I would like to pursue a point that he raised in his speech on Tuesday of this week. I was not in the House at that time but I have had the opportunity to read *Hansard*. He made reference to the fact that we have seen a turn-around as well with respect to the economy. This was after he had indicated that there had been an increase in housing starts, as modest as they are. At least it is a positive direction. He went on to say that we have seen a turn-around as well. Could he elaborate on this turn-around that has occurred?

Mr. Harquail: Mr. Speaker, I would first like to make the observation that I also think it is encouraging to see the Hon. Member has returned to the question of the economy and to his responsibility to deal with economic questions in the House. I congratulate him on that.

I did not have the opportunity to complete my remarks about the good news. I was talking on Tuesday of this week about the decline in interest rates for borrowing money at the banks and the decline in the inflation rate. The good news was also about the housing starts at \$1.5 billion. Any properly informed person would agree that this is good news.

• (1240)

I laid on the Table and on the record all the other aspects of the increase in sales of passenger cars. There was an increase of 37 per cent from July, 1982, to 66,800 units in December, 1982. That is something else which has been put forward by your own Party, and has been a very important indicator.

Concerning housing and the construction of cars, your very Leader, the Leader from Oshawa—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order. The Hon. Member should address his remarks to the Chair, please.

Mr. Huntington: Yes, and they should be short.

Mr. Cosgrove: There is so much good news. You should hear it.

Mr. Harquail: Yes.

Mr. Cosgrove: Listen and learn. Clean out your ears.

Mr. Harquail: I think Your Honour will agree with me that the important items involving billions of dollars, as Hon. Members opposite have pointed out, and which I consider very serious and important, cannot be dealt with in 30 seconds. I am only following the lead given in the past week or so, when people have gone on to speak for five or ten minutes into the Question Period and other times—

Mr. Huntington: Practise answering questions!