

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, May 13, 1958

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

MAIN ESTIMATES, 1958-59

A message from His Excellency the Governor General transmitting estimates for the financial year ending March 31, 1959, was presented by Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance), read by Mr. Speaker to the house, and referred to the committee of supply.

FINANCE

STATEMENT BY MINISTER RESPECTING SPECIAL WARRANTS

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, may I make a statement to the house concerning some of the financial matters with which the government has had to deal since February 1, and indicate to the house how it is proposed that those matters be treated in the house from this time forward.

Since dissolution on February 1, three special warrants pursuant to section 28 of the Financial Administration Act have been issued. One of these was for the balance of the fiscal year 1957-58. It is No. 1958/222, dated February 7, 1958, and was for the sum of \$544,290,332.32. It was published in the *Canada Gazette*, part I, page 558 of February 15, 1958. The second and third warrants were in respect of the fiscal year 1958-59. The first of these warrants is P.C. 1958/492, dated April 9, 1958, for the sum of \$203,368,605. It was published in the *Canada Gazette*, part I, of April 19, at page 1416. The third warrant is No. 1958/641 and is dated May 1. It is in the sum of \$107,191,590. It was published in the *Canada Gazette*, part I, May 10, at page 1705. The schedules to the warrants as published in the *Canada Gazette* show the amounts involved by items in the relevant estimates.

The statement required by section 28 of the Financial Administration Act I have today deposited with the Clerk of the house in accordance with order No. 40 of the standing orders of the house.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): My hon. friend mentioned the date of May 1; the third category was May 1. Is it May 1 to the present time?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I will touch on that point a little later in my remarks. I am drawing attention, Mr. Speaker, as deliberately as possible to the terms of these warrants and the provisions made by them.

I should like now to point out the way in which the government has studiously avoided going one iota beyond what was immediately required to meet the necessary expenses of government, with the result that the supply appropriated by these warrants is intended to provide sufficient to meet the urgent expenses of government only until the 16th day of May, which is this Friday. Such supply will be exhausted by that date. It is proposed to ask the house tomorrow to grant interim supply for the needs of government until the 31st day of May. That means that early in June a further request will be made of the house by the government for a vote of interim supply. We have in this way sought, to the limit that the circumstances existing would permit, to assure to the house the fullest control over the expenditure involved.

In order that the house may have full information when considering the estimates and the matters to which I have referred I should like briefly first to describe the use made of the warrants during the period in question; second to indicate the manner in which it is proposed that parliament shall have opportunity to discuss fully the use of the warrants in respect of the fiscal year 1957-58 and the fiscal year 1958-59; and third, to relate the warrants of 1958-59 to the forthcoming interim supply bill.

As to the first point concerning the warrant of February 7, 1958, may I say this. At dissolution parliamentary sanction had been obtained to the extent of five-sixths or, to relate it in terms of months, ten-twelfths of all the estimates with the exception of the final supplementary estimates, and in some cases sums in excess of ten-twelfths. There had been passed a series of interim supply bills which appropriated sums required to meet all expenses of government to January 31, and the warrant which was issued on February 7 included the cash needs, and the cash needs only, to complete the programs of the fiscal year ended March 31, 1958, including the elements provided in the final supplementary estimates which had been tabled in January.