

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On motion of Hon. Donald Smith, bill referred to Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce.

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 9, 1964

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Acting Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-135, for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service for the financial year ending 31st March, 1965.

Bill read first time.

SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

Hon. T. D'Arcy Leonard: Honourable senators, I propose to ask leave of the Senate to move second reading now, but before doing so perhaps I should give an explanation.

I am prepared at this time to explain this bill, and it is my thought that that explanation might be helpful to the members of this house. Some questions might be raised which, if I cannot answer them this afternoon, I can do so tomorrow. Any necessary discussion can take place today, and then the debate can be adjourned until tomorrow in the expectation that we shall be able to complete second reading then.

If this course meets with the approval of the Senate, I will move second reading now.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: Honourable senators, I see no objection to the procedure suggested by Senator Leonard. If I adjourn the debate after he has given his explanation honourable senators will have an opportunity of studying the bill and thus be prepared to discuss it tomorrow.

Hon. T. D'Arcy Leonard, with leave of the Senate, moved the second reading of the bill.

He said: Honourable senators, in the first place I apologize for the fact that this bill is being presented by somebody other than the honourable Leader of the Government (Honourable Mr. Connolly, Ottawa West), who is unavoidably absent. I shall do my best as his pinch hitter.

Honourable senators will find that copies of Bill C-135 have been distributed and are in their folders. This bill, which is commonly known as an interim supply bill, is cited as Appropriation Act No. 9, 1964, but in point of fact it is only the sixth interim supply bill of this year. Appropriation Acts Nos. 2, 3 and 4 were all applicable to the financial year that ended on March 31, 1964.

I know that when honourable senators are considering interim supply bills they like to have in their minds the whole broad financial picture of Government expenditures and, accordingly, I will mention certain figures. The main estimates for 1964-65, tabled last March, totalled—omitting the final hundreds—\$6,812,410,000, of which the amount required to be voted by this Parliament was \$3,951,590,000. The balance represented statutory expenditures, that is to say, obligations authorized by previous parliaments and commonly called uncontrollable expenditures, such as interest on the public debt. That balance amounted to \$2,860,819,000, and it is not affected by this bill. In its consideration of the main estimates the House of Commons so far has reduced them by \$600,000, so the present total of the main estimates is \$6,811,810,508.

In addition, Supplementary Estimates (A) totaling \$404,691,736, were tabled last June, the main item being that with respect to the Columbia River program. In the last two weeks Supplementary Estimates (B), totalling \$61,620,145, were tabled, the main item being for winter works programs. At the present time the grand total of the main and supplementary estimates is \$7,277,522,389.

To this date interim supply bills have provided the Government with funds amounting to \$2,712,028,509, which is sufficient in the normal process of government for the financial requirements of running the country's affairs up to November 1, 1964. This bill provides for a further appropriation of \$740,710,974, which is the estimated amount needed to cover expenses up to December 31, 1964, leaving an amount of \$964,562,907 which in due course must be authorized by Parliament either by further interim supply bills or by the ultimate and final approval of the estimates.

At the outset I give the Senate the usual undertaking that the passing of this bill is without prejudice to its right to consider and deal with the estimates on any subsequent occasion as fully and as effectively as if this bill had not been passed. I should say also that the bill is in the usual form of interim supply bills.

This bill authorizes two-twelfths of the major amounts of the estimates or, in other words, roughly two months' supply. There are some items in respect of which only one month's supply or no supply is asked for, and in all cases these are votes of which a larger relative proportion was previously granted. In addition there are several votes of which more than two months' supply is requested.

Parliament is concerned, naturally, with any cases where more than normal supply is requested, and because of this fact special