

Statement of Estimates

programs are increased by \$293 million, the combined 1970-71 budgets of all other programs in this category have been reduced from 1969-70 by a net total of \$52 million, to an amount of \$4,698 million. This reduction, and the resulting requirement to absorb salary and price increases within this lower total allocation means a considerable decrease in real terms of the cost of these programs.

Leaving aside the servicing of the public debt for which there is no option but to pay, the programs for which increases are provided relate to the basic priorities of the country: national unity, social justice, education and economic development here in Canada and in the developing countries.

The planned levels of strength in the Public Service continue the downward trend indicated in the estimates of 1969-70. The table which appears on page LXX of these estimates shows that this downward trend will continue in 1970-71 and indicates a reduction of about 7,500 in the planned level of continuing employment.

The tabling of these estimates marks a major step forward in an endeavour by the government to improve the process of resource allocation and to better inform Parliament and the people of Canada of the objectives, operations and costs of the departments and agencies of government. The form of these estimates is radically different from that which has been followed for more than half a century. For the first time the expenditure proposals respecting departments and agencies are clearly formulated in terms of programs. The objectives and sub-objectives of each program are stated and the nature of the program further amplified through a description of the activities carried on in pursuit of program objectives.

The aggregate of expenditures proposed to Parliament for each program is classified first in terms of these activities and second in terms of the portions of the aggregate to be devoted respectively to operations, to capital and to grants and contributions. Data are provided, under the same classifications, for the forecast expenditure for 1969-70 and the actual expenditure for 1968-69.

When a program involves large expenditures on capital there is provided a table listing the major projects and showing for each the expected total cost distributed between expenditures up to and including the current year, the expenditures forecast for 1970-71 and the subsequent total until completion.

[Mr. Drury.]

In previous estimates all items for loans, investments and advances were grouped together at the back of the Blue Book. In the new form such items are shown alongside the related budgetary expenditures in order to be more informative.

Greater detail on manpower, on grants and contributions and on revolving funds for quasi-commercial operations is provided. Improvement has also been made in the information provided on Crown corporations.

The Blue Book contains for the first time an explanatory foreword which seeks to clarify the technical terms used which, in the past, may have been difficult to understand. Included in the foreword are a number of tables summarizing the details of the estimates which will help to provide a better over-all picture.

All of this material is contained in one bilingual volume replacing the separate English and French Blue Books of former years. I have no doubt that our experience in the House and in committees reviewing estimates will suggest further modifications in form. We will be glad to receive suggestions for further improvement.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the estimates in the form I am now tabling provide a clearer and more informative presentation than we have had heretofore of the proposed allocations of fiscal resources to the budgetary requirements of Canada.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my first remarks should be directed to the form of the estimates that are being provided to us. I think it will be an interesting innovation to handle them in this way. I do not want to appear to be nitpicking, but in the past the Auditor General's report was always deemed to be too thick and cumbersome and the books came apart and this year the Blue Book of estimates exceeds in size even the biggest report ever made by the Auditor General. It may be a matter of mechanics but we will see how it works out. That is my comment in that regard.

There is another comment I would make with regard to the form of the estimates. I refer to the insistence upon the publication of strengths of departments only on the basis of man-years required. I would say this is deceptive in many ways. It does not show the distribution of personnel within a department to the degree that is really warranted for the examination of the estimates and the various salary levels, now that we know that confidential instructions have been issued by the