

*Supply*

• (1550)

Between 1992-93 and 1993-94 transfers to persons and provinces increased by 1.7 per cent whereas total capital operating expenditures by government departments will decrease by 0.8 per cent.

Notwithstanding the extent of recent government cutbacks, the Government of Canada remains committed to the green plan. Although a 10 per cent reduction in green plan funding was announced in accordance with the December economic statement, green plan funding increased by \$64.7 million over the planned 1992-93 levels. Other changes to green plan funding levels in the estimates stem from the February 1992 budget which saw the reallocation of moneys for future years.

Expenditure control initiatives are not limited solely to placing fiscal restraints on current operations. We are also restructuring. As a result of the February 1992 budget close to 40 agencies have been wound up, merged or consolidated. It is estimated that \$56.6 million will be saved in 1993-94 due to this rationalization.

The concept of cost recovery and user fees is becoming increasingly popular as a means of collecting government revenues to pay for services that benefit only a small portion of the population. At the same time such an initiative removes the obligation from taxpayers to involuntarily pay for services they do not use. With the pressure on this country to reduce its deficit primarily through lowering the government expenditures and not through tax increases, the government is placing the emphasis on supporting higher priority programs that benefit all Canadians.

By adopting user fees and cost recovery, the government is attempting to provide an improved service it might not otherwise be able to afford and ensures the best use is made of scarce resources. This will also foster a more service oriented market-based sensitivity in government as it becomes more attentive to its clients needs.

To assist departments with the implementation of user fees, several pieces of legislation have been introduced and approved by Parliament over the past few years. With this renewed interest, the amount of money received annually through user fees has doubled to well over \$3 billion in the last eight years. It is expected that this trend for revenue generation will continue.

The initiatives I have outlined are only a sampling of the many initiatives the government is currently promoting. It is committed to reforms that will continue to assure a high quality of service to Canadians at a reasonable cost.

Finally the 1993-94 main estimates now before the House are representative of a government serious about restraint and reform in order to benefit all Canadians. Given our success to date I know we are on the right track. I am confident Canadians will welcome the changes we are initiating and considering for the future in the areas of cost reduction and enhanced program delivery.

These initiatives will be pursued in a manner that will allow us to organize and operate government programs to ensure continued prosperity for all Canadians.

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a broad question with one specific. I do not expect the hon. member to be able to answer the specific but I will bring it forward anyway.

I wonder how serious the government really is in cutting fat and costs in terms of looking at things. It seems to me it cuts things that are embarrassing. It cut the Law Reform Commission, the Court Challenges Program and anything that could politically embarrass it and it says that is cutting the fat. It does not cut anything that is not embarrassing that is fat.

The hon. member said the government tried to cut back. In what serious way did it try to cut back? How did it seriously look at these programs?

I know the provincial governments are dealing with this. I know the minister of finance in British Columbia personally and I know the provincial treasurer in Ontario. They have had to go through department after department cutting back and looking at what was really essential and trying to preserve what really helped people.

• (1555)

I was looking through this briefly. There are billions and billions of dollars of expenditures. I see something called the Northern Pipeline Agency on which we spent \$469,000. I know personally that the Northern Pipeline Agency was set up under a previous Liberal government in the 1970s to supervise the building of the pipeline that