

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I ask whether the minister intends to make a statement outlining the government's intention in respect of the closing statement of the conference?

Mr. Basford: Not a statement on motions, but I am here for the question period.

MAIN ESTIMATES, 1970-71

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE TREASURY BOARD

A message from His Excellency the Governor General transmitting estimates for the financial year ending March 31, 1971, was presented by Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board), and read by Mr. Speaker to the House.

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, in tabling the estimates referred to in the message just read I should like to point out that these estimates for 1970-71 amount in total to \$12,910 million, approximately \$892 million or 7.4 per cent more than the total estimates of \$12,018 million for 1969-70. Statutory expenditures, those which result from firm commitments provided for in existing legislation, are going up by 11.5 per cent. On the other hand, growth in expenditures for which Parliament will be asked to appropriate funds—the category in which the government has flexibility in the allocation of resources—has been restrained to a rate of 3.8 per cent.

The comparable increase between 1968-69 and 1969-70 that I indicated when I tabled the 1969-70 estimates at this time last year was \$1,032 million or 9.5 per cent. The year-to-year increase has therefore been reduced by \$140 million, or by more than two percentage points.

The total supplementary estimates for 1969-70 are expected to be \$160 million or about the same as the supplementary estimates of \$152 million for 1968-69. This compares with \$392 million in 1967-68 and even larger amounts in the preceding few years. Any requirement for supplementary estimates in 1970-71 to meet urgent and unforeseen needs will be kept to a minimum in line with the determination of the government to restrain expenditures as an anti-inflationary measure.

Statutory expenditures, those which result from firm commitments provided for in existing legislation, will amount to \$6,323 million or 49 per cent of the total estimates.

Statement of Estimates

Virtually all of the increase of \$651 million in these expenditures falls under the following three headings:

1. Public Debt		
Servicing charges	\$195	million
2. Payments to the Provinces		
Fiscal transfers	156	"
Hospital Insurance	95	"
Medicare	70	"
Post-secondary Education	49	"
Canada Assistance Plan	38	"
3. Wheat		
Carrying costs on temporary wheat reserves and advance grain payments	44	"

It can thus be seen that of the over-all increase, \$651 million, or 73 per cent, is taken up by statutory expenditures, and of that amount, \$408 million is required for increased payments to the provinces.

• (2:20 p.m.)

At this point I might mention that the provincial governments were asked during the last several weeks to provide us with the most up-to-date forecasts of their expenditures under the Canada Assistance Plan and the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act and for medicare and post-secondary education. Their latest forecasts are consistent with the amounts shown in the estimates being tabled today.

The expenditures for which Parliament will be asked to appropriate funds, the category where the government has flexibility in the allocation of resources, amount to \$6,587 million or 51 per cent of the estimates. Additional resources in the amount of \$293 million are going to the following few programs to which the government is giving high priority:

Regional economic expansion, an increase of \$75 million; bilingualism development, an increase of \$52 million; postal services, an increase of \$36 million; Indian and Eskimo affairs, an increase of \$34 million; the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, including police services for the provinces, an increase of \$26 million; air services, an increase of \$22 million; development and utilization of manpower, an increase of \$21 million; international development assistance, an increase of \$15 million; incentives to industry for technological innovation and development, an increase of \$12 million.

Since the over-all increase in items requiring to be voted annually by parliament totals \$241 million, and the above-listed priority