

Supply

National research council and atomic energy control board—

National research council—

585. Salaries and other expenses—further amount required including authority for additional expenditures from revenues derived from publications, laboratory fees, plant engineering, shop work and the conduct of its operations generally, \$1.

Mr. Knowles: Perhaps the minister could offer a word of explanation. I believe these dollar items should be looked at more carefully than some of the larger ones. This item covering an amount of one dollar seems to be required for two purposes which I suppose could be a matter of 50 cents each. The amount is required for salaries and other expenses and for certain other transactions. I am sure the purpose of this is not to obtain a further amount of one dollar. If it were the minister could surely provide it from his own pocket. Perhaps the minister can explain.

Mr. Abbott: The explanation is that the amount of the estimates approved by parliament included an amount of \$500,000 to be provided from revenue for salaries and other expenses. There now appears to be some question as to council's authority to make any expenditure from revenue. The purpose of this supplementary estimate is to obtain parliamentary authorization for the council to make expenditures for salaries and other expenses from revenue derived from such operations as publications, laboratory fees, plant engineering, shop work and the conduct of its operations generally in connection with the Research Council Act now under consideration which will become effective before the end of the fiscal year. This is clearly an example of the use of the one dollar item to which I do not share the objection raised in most cases. This is clearly a case in which that kind of item is fully justified.

Mr. Knowles: Without going into the question of legislating by this one dollar item, is it clear that the legislating being done under this dollar item is just for a temporary period?

Mr. Abbott: Just for this current year.

Mr. Knowles: Legislating by an item in the estimates for that purpose is approved by the Auditor General but he does not approve of it being done on a long term basis.

Mr. Green: What provisions are being made for similar expenditures from revenue in the fiscal year of 1954-55?

Mr. Abbott: As I indicated before, there is a bill now before the house amending the Research Council Act which will contain the appropriate provisions.

Item agreed to.

Atomic energy control board—

Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (research program)—

586. Current operation and maintenance—further amount required, \$265,000.

Mr. Knowles: Would the minister explain the reason for this additional amount?

Mr. Abbott: This amount of \$265,000 is made up as follows: the first item provides for expenses arising out of contributions to the superannuation fund under the terms of the Public Service Superannuation Act in respect of employees; the total amounts to \$160,000. The second additional amount is required for the repair of the NRX reactor amounting to \$105,000, which makes a total of \$265,000.

Mr. Green: Will that complete the repairs to the reactor?

Mr. Abbott: I think so, Mr. Chairman, but I would not be quite sure about that because we usually try to get that in at the end of the fiscal year.

Item agreed to.

DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS AND
NATIONAL RESOURCES

Forestry operations division—

592. To provide for contributions to the provinces for assistance in forest inventory and reforestation in accordance with agreements that have been or may be entered into by Canada and the provinces—further amount required, \$100,000.

Mr. Green: I wonder if we could have an explanation of the purpose for which this \$100,000 is to be expended? What distribution has there been between the different provinces not only in regard to this item but of the corresponding item in the main estimates?

Mr. Abbott: The main estimates, as my hon. friend will recall, provide for a total of \$1 million. On this supplementary estimate of \$100,000 the note I have indicates that during the fiscal years 1951-52 and 1952-53 the actual payments made to the provinces for inventory and reforestation combined were short of the authorized ceilings by 20 and 16 per cent respectively. Having regard to this experience and in order to avoid the necessity of conferring with the provinces for the negotiation of new individual ceilings, the minister has approved inventory and reforestation programs submitted by the provinces for the fiscal year 1953-54, the federal share of which amounts to about 16 per cent more than the \$1,225,000