

Oral Questions

than the Main Estimates, with the total outlays forecast for the next fiscal year, then total expenditures are up only 9.6 per cent, the lowest rate of increase in four years.

PRESENTATION OF FUTURE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, again my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. In order that we may get a fair overview on spending in the coming year, would the Minister assure the House that there will be no more Supplementary Estimates or additions to the Main Estimates he has already tabled?

Hon. Herb Gray (President of Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, as far as I am aware there will be no further Supplementary Estimates for the current fiscal year, 1982-83.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gray: With respect to the next fiscal year, as I said in my statement in the House on February 22, there will be, as in the past, Supplementary Estimates, but it is our intention to accommodate them within the envelope reserves which I made public at the time of making my statement. They are included in the total expenditure outlay figure forecast that I brought before the House which will involve an increase in expenditures compared with total outlays last year of 9.6 per cent, the lowest rate of increase in four years.

COST OF PROPOSED PRESS COUNCIL

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. In view of the fact that one of the key proposals being made by the Minister of State for Multiculturalism to control Canada's press is a government sponsored press council which would be funded to the extent of \$4 million per year over four years, could the Minister confirm that money for this has not been included in the Estimates and that that \$4 million per year over four years will have to be added in the form of Supplementary Estimates?

Hon. Herb Gray (President of Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, first I want to say that my hon. friend is quite wrong when he said the Minister of State for Multiculturalism proposed a press council to control Canada's press. That is not the intention of the Hon. Minister or of the Government at all. It is my recollection of the proposal that essentially it is for a voluntary body. In any event, if there is a proposal brought before the House to set up such a body, the expenditure in question will be requested in Supplementary Estimates that will be accommodated within the total expenditure figure I brought forward and tabled in the House on February 22. As far as I am aware, it will not be an addition to the total expenditure forecast which I made known on February 22. In any event, the expenditure will have to be voted on and accepted by the House.

WESTERN DEVELOPMENT FUND

POSSIBLE USE IN CONSTRUCTION OF REGINA WATER PIPELINE

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration, the Minister who is also in charge of the Western Development Fund. The Minister knows that the Ipsco steel plant in Regina will be totally shut down by March 18 of this year. He also knows that there is a desire and a need on the part of the citizens of Regina for a water pipeline to Lake Diefenbaker. Could the Minister inform us, as the Minister in charge of western Canadian development, whether there has been any proposals made to the federal Government by the provincial Government regarding the Water pipeline to Regina from Lake Diefenbaker?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I should point out that there is no Minister specifically in charge of the Western Development Fund, but as the Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Western Affairs, I would be glad to answer the question and point out to the Hon. Member that the largest percentage of allocation of that fund was put toward the modernization of the railway system in western Canada. Part of those funds were directly targeted toward western Canadian industry to help it prepare for a more modern, up-to-date industrial base in that region so that it could take advantage of the major opportunities and potential that vast undertaking will provide for the creation of permanent jobs and economic activity across Canada.

I want to point out to him specifically that Ipsco is in a position to make proposals under that fund. Considering the very strong interest of the Hon. Member, I hope he convinces his colleagues to go along with the proposal put forward by the Minister of Transport to agree to that major modernization of the Crow rate so that we can get on with the business of developing railway lines in a proper way in western Canada.

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ENERGY

SAFETY OF NEWFOUNDLAND OFFSHORE OIL RIG WORKERS

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. I can put it fairly specifically to him because I am sure he will be aware of what I am getting at. Did the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources at any time seek professional ice or weather advice, or direction with respect to the safety of offshore drilling rigs before he entered into his current round of debates with the Government of Newfoundland? Was the Minister's departmental advice sought? Did he give it? If it was not sought, who on earth is in charge of marine transport matters in the country? Is it he or the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, because we are talking about the lives of hundreds of men on those offshore rigs?