

Hon. T. A. Crerar: Honourable senators, it is not my intention to ask any further questions of the honourable Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Haig), but I wish to make a few observations of a somewhat general character, and to suggest to him that the new administration should take under serious consideration these matters of supplementary estimates. When I first came to Parliament the traditional practice year by year was that in the main estimates the Government laid before Parliament its requirements for the coming year, and supplementary estimates were confined wholly to some new circumstance that might arise which could not have been foreseen when the regular estimates were prepared and submitted to Parliament. In the present year we have had three groups of supplementary estimates. The first lot was submitted by the old administration, and then before Parliament prorogued a further lot of supplementary estimates were submitted. Now we are meeting in a new session under a new administration and we find further supplementary estimates submitted for our consideration. The total of these various supplementary estimates submitted to Parliament is almost \$200 million. It is worth recalling that in 1939, before the war, the total supply asked of Parliament was around \$550 million. So that already we are coming near the point where we are asking for supplementaries equal to almost half of that sum.

I would suggest that when the estimates for 1959 are under consideration by the Government, as they will be very shortly if indeed they are not now, the Minister of Finance should make a new departure. I am quite free to say that this habit of asking for supplementaries after supplementaries was, in a measure, a product of the methods that developed during the war. But we should get back to more solid ground. The Leader of the Government is a member of the administration, and I warmly congratulate him on that fact. I hope he will take under consideration, and possibly pass on to his colleague the Minister of Finance, this suggestion. Let the Minister of Finance serve notice on the departments that they must present in the main estimates the estimates of their total requirements for the next fiscal year, and that the supplementary estimates—and in each session there should not be more than one bill for supplementary estimates—should be confined to those unforeseeable things which arise subsequently to the presentation of the main estimates. I offer this suggestion because we are growing into a very loose habit in connection with the handling of the taxpayers' money.

As the honourable senator from Rosetown (Hon. Mr. Aseltine) suggested last night, some of the items in the supplementaries submitted to Parliament by the new Government are consequent upon new developments; but more than half of the eighty-odd million dollars comes from various departments. If you look over these series of supplementary estimates you will find some of the departments asking for more money in each of the supplementaries. Well, that to me is a very slipshod habit to fall into. I can understand the new administration's position, and I am willing to make very large allowances for it. After all, the ministers are new to their jobs and it is the most natural thing in the world—and I think my honourable colleague from Gulf (Hon. Mr. Power) would agree with me in this—that the officials in the departments will press for more money if they think there is a chance of getting it. I can understand how under these circumstances departmental officials will go to their new minister and say, "Well, now, here are things we must do and we want you to ask for a supplementary estimate." I can give you a few illustrations. Take the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, for which the honourable senator from New Westminster (Hon. Mr. Reid) has a great affection.

Hon. Mr. Reid: You can say that again.

Hon. Senators: Oh, oh.

Hon. Mr. Crerar: Their request in the main estimates, of which we are voting a portion in this supply bill, was for a total of \$34,250,000. That was for the C.B.C. radio and television services. Then the international services asked for over \$1,800,000, or a total in the main estimates, as can be seen if you examine them, of over \$36 million. Well, honourable senators, \$36 million is a substantial sum of money. At least it used to be considered so. We find in these supplementaries brought down by the new administration that they are asking for another \$8,155,000, or a total for this fiscal year for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation of over \$44½ million. Now, where is this going to end? I am not asking questions about it today but I am drawing to the attention of honourable senators that this practice surely must find some limit.

The only other item I wish to refer to—and I could cite a score of other items if I wished to do so—is that of National Health and Welfare benefits, under the heading of Indian and Eskimo Health. In Vote 261, which was in the main estimates, the total asked for was over \$17 million; and in the supplementary estimates, in Vote 709, we are asked to supply an additional \$1,600,000, or a total for Indian and Eskimo health services of