

prices because a series of railway strikes in British Columbia had cut off their regular source of supply.

The Auditor General reported that \$822,000 was not a proper charge on the Canadian Livestock Feed Board Account since it did not relate to feed grain purchased by the Canadian Livestock marketing operation of the Board.

The Board's chairman informed the Committee that when the rail strikes occurred, the Board was under considerable pressure to provide assistance to the British Columbia feeders, and obtained a release of 300,000 bushels per week at export prices from the Canadian Wheat Board's export stocks in Vancouver.

Your Committee concluded that the Canadian Livestock Feed Board had no authority under the Livestock Feed Assistance Act to make such payments and therefore acted improperly in using public funds for purposes not intended by Parliament.

PARAGRAPH 78—Errors in Public Service Superannuation Account pension calculations. (*See Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issues Nos. 30 and 35, dated May 22 and June 26, 1975*)

Since 1962, the Auditor General has reported regularly on the high incidence of error in the Public Service Superannuation pension calculations. The problems arise from the complex nature of the Public Service Superannuation Act and its accompanying regulations which change periodically; the multiplicity of pay records in government departments across Canada; and the length of service of superannuates.

Your Committee was informed by the Department of Supply and Services that for reasons of cost and accuracy, automated systems were not the solution to these problems. Instead, steps were being taken by the Superannuation Branch and the Treasury Board Secretariat to simplify the reporting requirements imposed by the Act and the Regulations.

Your Committee recommends therefore that the Treasury Board Secretariat review those provisions in the Public Service Superannuation Act and its accompanying Regulations that relate to the reporting requirements of superannuation by the employer; and to establish standard reporting procedures to which all government departments and agencies will conform.

PARAGRAPH 64—Cost of unused accommodation. (*See Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issue No. 31, dated May 27, 1975*)

Your Committee is concerned about those recurring cases in government departments where rent is paid for unused accommodation.

In this particular instance, the Department of Manpower and Immigration was at fault. Because the Department

revised its initial space requirements and held up the approval of layout plans, occupancy was delayed by five months. As a result, a rental cost of \$61,000 for unused accommodation was incurred.

Your Committee in previous reports to the House has recommended that these rental expenses should be a charge on the department occupying the space and not on the Department of Public Works. Departments would therefore be more careful to avoid these non-productive payments.

PARAGRAPH 50—Overpayments of adjustment assistance to Ugandan refugees. (*See Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issue No. 31, dated May 27, 1975*)

In 1972, overpayments of \$188,500 were made to a group of Ugandan refugees under the adjustment assistance program by the Canada Manpower Centre in Vancouver.

The Auditor General revealed serious deficiencies in this operation in a number of specific areas.

The Department of Manpower and Immigration acknowledged that this particular manpower centre was clearly unprepared to handle this abnormal situation. Extensive use was made of untrained casual staff and the manpower resources of the Howe Street Centre in Vancouver were fully extended.

The Deputy Minister reported that there had been incompetence on the part of the regular staff, and that as a result, transfers and dismissals were made.

The Deputy Minister also reported that recovery action for the overpayments was being undertaken in 23 cases, leaving 299 cases outstanding.

Your Committee is of the opinion that the Department must press the recovery procedure more vigorously.

PARAGRAPH 72—Imported Oil and Petroleum Products Compensation Program. (*See Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issue No. 34, dated June 17, 1975*)

Your Committee questioned the Auditor General and officials from the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Energy Supplies Allocations Board on this program which was implemented in the 1974 calendar year to cushion the economy from the impact of the rapid increase in the price of foreign crude oil used in Canada. It provides compensation to oil importers for increases in certain elements in the cost of imported crude oil and petroleum products, the main one being increases on or after December 1, 1973, in taxation by governments which are members of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries). In return these importers agree to restrain wholesale prices in accordance with government guidelines.