

Supply—Transport

When the minister replies to the various questions that are asked of him, I hope he will tell the committee when it is expected that that report will be available and also whether the government anticipates bringing in during the present session any legislation as a result of the recommendations that are made by the commissioners.

With regard to the estimates themselves, it would be inappropriate at this stage for me to go into items in any detail. The minister has explained the figures that appear in the summary of standard objects, and it will be necessary to review his statement before we can deal with them adequately. However, I noticed one feature about these estimates. In quite a few instances there will have been a vote passed last year for, say, \$1 million and the actual expenditures plus estimated expenditures to the end of the fiscal year will be, say, \$500,000 of that \$1 million. However, the vote in the next fiscal year is, in most cases, as high or even higher than the vote for the present fiscal year. I am wondering whether there is not some padding in the estimates of the department in connection with these particular items. Somebody in the department is just giving himself a little extra leeway to be sure he is not short of money.

This department has many more items than any other department. I think there are 67 items for the Department of Transport out of a total of some 537 for all departments. It might be that if the minister went over these items, having in mind the point I raise, it would be possible to effect considerable saving. As examples, I would give him the items which appear on page 568 of the details, having to do with construction services administration, air services. The vote last year was \$961,383. The amount spent has been estimated at \$860,288. This year the department is requesting a vote of \$1,026,700. Another example is to be found on page 571, telecommunications division, radio aids to air and marine navigation. The vote last year was \$4,236,555, and there was only \$3,979,560 spent. This year the vote is \$4,234,725.

Another example is found on page 573 where the vote was for \$1,606,828 last year. The amount spent was \$1,498,244 and the vote for the coming year is \$1,691,165. There is another example on page 587 where the vote for last year was \$16,715,151. The department only spent \$13 million and yet it is coming back this year asking for \$15,453,350. This vote is for airways and airports, construction of buildings, under the civil aviation division. There may be an explanation for each of these items. I ask

the minister to bear in mind the suggestion that he may find it would be possible to place more emphasis on what was actually spent during one year in calculating how much is going to be requested for the following year, rather than taking into account what was voted in the first year.

Then also with regard to this year's items, and dealing only with the administration item which of course is the one under discussion today, I notice that in the details on page 532 there is an increase in staff of 51. This seems to be very large. Included in that number is an increase in economists. The minister is now going to have eight economists to advise him at his headquarters whereas last year he had only one. Apparently he needs a great deal more advice this year than last. Many of these economists are quite highly paid, the grade 10 receiving from \$7,600 to \$8,200. I should like to know just what work all these economists are going to do at headquarters.

Another question which I think is of considerable importance is the fact that the Department of Transport does not have jurisdiction over some of the governmental activities which parliament intended should be under that department. I refer first to Trans-Canada Air Lines. Trans-Canada Air Lines is now under the control of the Minister of Trade and Commerce; it is one of his hobby horses. Under the act setting up Trans-Canada Air Lines we find that "minister" means the Minister of Transport. When parliament established this crown corporation the bill was introduced by the then Minister of Transport who is now the Minister of Trade and Commerce. He has hung on to this corporation ever since. For some reason or other he has been allowed to have this particular governmental activity, although in cold hard fact it should be none of his business and should be under the Minister of Transport.

We find that the Minister of Transport is responsible for Canadian National Railways. Canadian National Railways holds all the shares of Trans-Canada Air Lines. If Trans-Canada Air Lines wishes to borrow money it is given power, under the amendment of 1952-53 I think it was, to borrow from Canadian National Railways. The whole legislative tie-up is meant to place Trans-Canada Air Lines under the Minister of Transport. Why should it be taken away and given to another minister, merely because he wants to have this extra power and will not give it up? It is about time that this greed for power was checked by somebody in the cabinet. I suggest the man to do it is the Prime Minister, himself.

The Minister of Transport has to supply all the airways. He is responsible for the air