

Supply—Treasury Board

about the rules or regulations in connection with hearing aids. We do not know how much a hearing aid should cost. We do know there is a tremendous spread between the manufacturing cost and the selling price, and we know that the price of batteries is continually rising. Further, there is a terrific disparity between the cost of repairs in this country and the cost of repairs in Great Britain, and between the price of hearing aids in this country and their price in other countries.

We also know that under the national health plan in Great Britain hearing aids are included in the medicare program. Further, we know that according to the estimates for the year ending March 31, 1969, the cost of the consumer affairs branch of the department is going to be \$394,400. That is a lot of money. It is a great amount to be taken off little people and others who pay income tax. Those people who can ill afford to pay this taxation are going to demand that they get some kind of worth-while consumer protection. I think they have a right to get it, and this business in connection with hearing aids is one particular area in which they have the right to get protection.

The terms of the legislation establishing the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs set out that the minister shall:

(a) initiate, recommend or undertake programs designed to promote the interests of the Canadian consumer;

(b) co-ordinate programs of the government of Canada that are designed to promote the interests of the Canadian consumer;

(c) promote and encourage the institution of practices or conduct tending to the better protection of the Canadian consumer and co-operate with provincial governments or agencies thereof, or any bodies, organizations or persons, in any programs having similar objects; and

(d) undertake, recommend or assist in programs to assist the Canadian consumer to be more fully informed about goods and services offered to the consumer.

Instead of spreading myself all over the map about a hundred things in which the consumer needs protection I have chosen to document the vital need for consumer protection with respect to hearing aids.

Item agreed to.

(The following items were agreed to):

5c. Bankruptcy Act—Administration, \$109,000.

25c. Consumer Affairs Branch, \$175,000.

The Chairman: This completes the supplementary estimates of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The committee

[Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway).]

will now consider the estimates of the Treasury Board.

TREASURY BOARD

7c. To authorize the Treasury Board to delete from the accounts certain debts due, and claims by, Her Majesty, each of which is in excess of \$1,000, amounting in the aggregate to \$19,067,138.26, of which \$44,570 represents an item that has been carried as an asset in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities, \$44,571.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, I have a few words that I want to say on this item but in view of the understanding that we conclude the supplementary estimates at four o'clock I think I can make my remarks when we are on the resolution preceding the interim supply bill.

Item agreed to.

L117c. To authorize in the current and subsequent fiscal years, notwithstanding the Financial Administration Act, where sums are due to federal government departments and agencies from the working capital advance established by Vote L99e, Appropriation Act No. 4, 1966, for the provision of data processing and related services, the payment from those sums of amounts payable by the said departments or agencies to the said working capital advance, \$1.

Item agreed to.

The Chairman: This completes the estimates of Treasury Board. The committee will now consider the supplementary estimates of the Department of Fisheries.

DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

Fisheries Management and Development—

15c. Grants, contributions and subsidies in the amount and subject to the terms specified in the sub-vote titles listed in the details of estimates, \$1,065,000.

Item agreed to.

17c. Estimated amount required to recoup the Fishing Vessel Indemnity Account, the Lobster Trap Indemnity Account and the Fixed Fishing Gear and Shore Installations Indemnity Account established under Vote 540 of the Appropriation Act No. 5, 1955 and Vote 527 of the Appropriation Act No. 6, 1956, to cover the net operating losses in the said Accounts as at March 31, 1968, \$157,700.

Item agreed to.

The Chairman: This completes the supplementary estimates.

Perhaps I should point out to the committee that vote 15c is the revised estimate of the Department of Fisheries. The initial estimate was not proceeded with.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): The one that was carried is in the amended form in accordance