

Supply

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[English]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The questions as enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

CONCURRENCE IN MAIN ESTIMATES, 1992-93

Hon. Gerald S. Merrithew (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved:

That the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1993, laid upon the table on Thursday, February 27, 1992, less the amounts voted in Interim Supply, be concurred in.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period, ending June 23, 1992, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bill. In view of recent practices do hon. members agree that the bill be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council and Minister Responsible for Constitutional Affairs): Madam Speaker, I am honoured today to speak about full supply for the Main Estimates for the fiscal year 1992-93.

This year the Main Estimates total \$160.5 billion and through these estimates the government is seeking Parliament's approval for \$48.8 billion in new spending authority. The remaining \$111.7 billion represents statutory payments that have received previous parliamentary approval.

These Main Estimates reflect this government's continuing commitment to eliminating waste and inefficien-

cy, as well as divesting itself of activities and organizations that no longer serve a vital public need in order to reduce costs and strike a proper balance between Canada's demands for federal services and their ability as taxpayers to pay for them. In this regard much has been achieved over the past seven years.

Program spending now represents only 16.7 per cent of Canada's gross domestic product as compared to 20 per cent in 1984.

During the period the annual growth in program spending, including Public Service salaries, has averaged only 4 per cent as compared to an average inflation rate of 4.3 per cent.

These achievements show the government's commitment to increased efficiency through the rigorous control of expenditures as well as the implementation of innovative management practices. They also reflect our commitment to good management and to the careful stewardship of the taxpayers' dollars. Our record is one of success.

The year-over-year increase in the Main Estimates is the outcome of a number of decisions and factors affecting the budgets of all 135 programs delivered by 116 departments, agencies and Crown corporations appearing in the estimates.

This increase can be divided into two broad categories: adjustments to statutory items, which amount to a net increase of \$1.3 billion, and changes to voted items which amount to \$1.7 billion.

Statutory spending is \$112.1 billion or 70 per cent of total estimates. Spending in this category includes such things as: major federal transfers to Canadians in respect of Old Age Security, guaranteed income supplements, family allowances and unemployment insurance benefits; transfers to the provinces under the equalization program for health, education, and social assistance; general Public Service programs; and public debt charges.

It is important to note that the major factor underlying the growth in the voted portion of the Main Estimates is the continuing requirements of items funded initially through 1991-92 Supplementary Estimates. Items approved through 1991-92 Supplementary Estimates and included in the 1992-93 Main Estimates reflect the incorporation of new policy and workload increases