

Mr. Hellyer: There are two things which the minister said which I found quite surprising. First of all, he attributes part of this increase to the Congo crisis. Surely, Mr. Chairman, the government does not budget so closely that it has no leeway for potential crises. There have been crises almost every year for many years. Surely, in his estimating, the minister makes some allowance for the inevitability of international situations.

Second, the minister said that there had been a considerable increase in the functions which are being carried out by government; that is, we know there have been extensions, and new services are being provided, but what the minister did not explain is where the cutting has been done, where he has trimmed off the fat, where he has found the waste, extravagance, and so on, that he used to speak of so eloquently. Perhaps the minister would now tell us what increased functions and requirements there are that make for additional telephone services. He might also tell us in what directions he has been able to make savings, what sections of what departments he has eliminated in the thrift under which this government operates the affairs of the country?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): If I started out to answer that question we would be here for a good many hours. In this item we are asking for \$40,000 to cover additional telephone service at Ottawa and might I suggest, now that the explanation has been given, we reserve that other larger and interesting question for a suitable occasion.

Mr. Regier: I noticed that one of the last members in this house has his office in the west block, namely the hon. member for Peterborough. Exactly how much did it cost the government of Canada to persuade the Bell Telephone Company to supply the hon. member for Peterborough with a telephone? I mean the installation cost?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I have just said the installation cost of putting in a telephone has been raised from \$2 to \$5, an increase in the Bell Telephone tariff that became effective on November 1. In addition to this cost of installation, of course, there is the monthly charge and beyond that, the service charge.

Mr. Regier: If I might pursue this a little bit further; take a matter of four months, five months or six months, plus the installation cost, and it would run to roughly \$30. I understand there are about 40 members in the west block. Does the minister consider it exactly fair to blame members of parliament in the west block for the \$40,000 expenditure,

or even for any significant portion of it, and to list that as the initial reason for the expenditure of \$40,000?

Mr. Benidickson: I want to re-emphasize to all my colleagues in the committee that I would not have raised this point had not the minister in defending the increase of \$40,000 in the telephone account attributed it in the main to expenses on parliament hill for members of parliament. First of all, I think he had better tell us how many members of parliament have actually been located in the west block. There are not very many. If we had that number we could then easily do the mathematical part of the equation ourselves. The sum of \$3 or \$4 apiece would be involved in installations over there.

I have raised my personal grievance only because of the aspersions that were cast on members of parliament and everybody else on parliament hill with respect to their telephone bills.

The minister has referred to some special, extra line in a member's office. I was not asking for a special line in my office; I was asking simply for an extra telephone which would cost me personally \$1.50 a month, or something of that kind, which I indicated I was prepared to pay. I have given full credit to everybody. I am not casting aspersions on the Sergeant-at-Arms who is enforcing the economy of the house. The Minister of Finance suggests there is extravagance here. I wish to point out there was no extravagance here. I offered to pay for my own extra telephone, as I would have to do anywhere where I was in business. There is such economy being practised here that I could not pay for my telephone myself, despite the fact that the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka points out that we are billed personally and individually for our long distance calls and we pay for them. Because of that I saw no reason whatsoever why I could not be provided by the Bell Telephone Company with an extra telephone, be billed for it personally and pay the \$1.50 a month, or whatever it might be, for this telephone which I would have if I were carrying on business in a similar office elsewhere, rather than have to jump up and down and take the telephone from my secretary, or vice versa.

It was only because the minister suggested that this extra amount was largely attributable to extra expenses for telephones on the hill that I raised this as an example. I want to assert that there is the utmost economic control of telephones on parliament hill, to the extent that I cannot even pay for that kind of service out of my own pocket.