

Some additional person-years, are taken up in the Department of National Revenue, for the purposes of enforcement and for the purposes of processing more tax returns which are, I suggest, areas of necessary increase. I believe I earlier made reference in my comments, to the RCMP where additional person-years are required in order to honour obligations to meet the requirements of provinces and municipalities, in large measure.

I think that the person-years we have agreed to and have authorized in these main estimates have been well justified by the ministers from whom the requests have come. However, I would again emphasize that we have looked at these very carefully. We are concerned this year, as we have been in past years, with uncontrolled growth of person-year authorization. I believe that the ministers of the Treasury Board took a very responsible and fair attitude toward the requests of their colleagues.

Mr. Bob Rae (Broadview-Greenwood): I have a couple of short supplementary questions for the minister with respect to actual cuts. On page 46 of the summary, the chart for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation shows an increase. But when we actually look at the figures which are set out in the estimates, it shows that there were actual reductions in the level of expenditure for the next year over last year.

I would like to ask the minister how he accounts for that discrepancy? We have all recognized that the government is abandoning its responsibilities in the field of housing, but I suppose it would be unbecoming for it to admit that is what it is doing. I also recognize that there is this contradiction between the President of the Treasury Board's (Mr. Johnston) desire to be a clone of President Reagan and the parent policies of the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen). But I would like to ask him how he accounts for the fact that item 23(4) of the estimates shows an actual reduction of over \$100 million in the CMHC budget, while the little brief profile shows an increase.

It seems to me that there is something misleading in this and I would like the minister to indicate which of these documents is telling the truth.

Mr. Johnston: I have not had the opportunity to study this particular question in detail, nor do I think that this is the forum in which specific questions on individual departments should be asked. We are not sitting in Committee of the Whole or in the committee on miscellaneous estimates. If the hon. member would agree, I would be happy to try to find an explanation for the discrepancy to which he refers.

Second, with respect to his allegation of being a clone of President Reagan, I never suggested that I was a clone of President Reagan, nor did I suggest that we were implementing his policies. I said we have in the past, and we are continuing, to exercise a policy of restraint.

I noted that many of my colleagues seem to ask, "Well, where are your tax cuts?" We have had tax cuts for seven years. "Where is your restraint?" We have had restraint since

1975. That is the point. We are not trying to follow or in any way support the policies of President Reagan. This has to do with the fact that the government, since 1975, has consistently followed policies of over-all restraint.

Mr. Rae: I referred to a specific area because I was trying to demonstrate that there is a fundamental contradiction in the line being followed by the President of the Treasury Board. On the one hand, he is saying "We are a government that is doing all good things for all of the people," and, on the other hand, the government is cutting down on expenditures for programs which provide housing for the Canadian people.

An hon. Member: That is not so.

Mr. Rae: That is exactly what the President of the Treasury Board has done. All I can say is that it took me some time to look at the estimates and at one or two of these figures. In other areas, such as the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, the provision for the so-called "Industrial Restructuring Program" shows that that money has been taken out of other items of the budget. This means that the real, new additional expenditure is not as large as has been made out by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gray). We notice that there are capital cutbacks and expenditures in the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

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These are just examples I have chosen, going through the estimates in the time available to me. I think we are entitled to know that the government is speaking out of both sides of its mouth at once. It is saying to the Canadian people that it will continue to provide programs when in fact it is cutting back. It holds press conferences to announce brand new programs to provide brand new ideas in terms of industrial assistance when in fact the money is being taken from another item in the department's budget. I think the Canadian people are entitled to know that not only does the government not have a clear idea of what it is doing but even as it does it, it attempts to mislead the people on the true input of the proposals.

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, I did not interpret that as a question but rather as a declaration or debate. I am quite happy to respond to specific questions. I suggest that this is a reconciliation that can be made in the economic development envelope if we are talking about the statements made by the Minister of Finance in October and some modifications made since that time which are largely due to loan repayments into those envelopes or to different costing of some of the programs. The over-all expenditure limits are identical to those established by the Minister of Finance in the October budget and the changes within the envelope structure, I would suggest to the hon. member for Broadview-Greenwood (Mr. Rae), who is obviously not interested in my point of view—

An hon. Member: He is walking out on you.

Mr. Johnston:—now that he is preparing to leave.

Mr. Rae: I am interested.