

CANADA

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

Thursday, March 27, 1930

The house met at three o'clock.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

FURTHER SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
FOR 1929-1930

A message from His Excellency the Governor General transmitting further supplementary estimates for the financial year ending March 31, 1930, was presented by Hon. Charles A. Dunning (Minister of Finance) and read by Mr. Speaker to the house.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Dunning, seconded by Mr. Crerar, moves that said estimates be referred to the committee of supply.

Hon. CHARLES A. DUNNING (Minister of Finance): I wanted to make an explanation with respect to that. The special committee on Canadian National Railway affairs has not yet been set up. It is desirable, I believe, that estimates of that character should be referred to that committee, and an effort is now being made to set it up, but this being a supplementary for 1929-30 should really be passed through both houses and assented to before the end of the fiscal year. I think it would be better if for the present the motion to refer could be deferred pending the setting up of the special committee. I presume we cannot refer a matter to a committee which is not yet in existence. Later on in the day the whips may be able to arrange the personnel of the committee and we may then refer the estimates to it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I remember last year the motion to refer the estimates anticipated the appointment of the special committee on Canadian National Railway affairs.

Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition): I think a motion to refer the matter to a committee, without naming the committee, would be in order. There are in the supplementary estimates two or three matters that require very careful consideration by the house. One involves the expenditure of over \$4,000,000, if my memory serves me aright, in acquiring railway lines in the United States and that is a question of policy that we must very carefully consider. We probably

could discuss it on a motion to refer, but these estimates should certainly come before the committee of supply.

Mr. DUNNING: They will come back to the committee of supply.

Mr. BENNETT: What I had in mind was whether or not it would be feasible to give them the attention their importance demands, having regard to the one item I have mentioned—and there are other items of almost equal importance—between now and the end of the month. That is the real difficulty. To-day is the 27th. There are only four days between now and the end of March. Our fiscal year then ends, but the railway fiscal year does not end until the 31st day of December, 1930, so I suppose there is no difficulty if the matter is not considered between now and the end of March.

Mr. DUNNING: I shall be glad to look into that phase of the question, but there is no desire on the part of myself or the Minister of Railways to rush these estimates through.

Mr. BENNETT: When may we expect the report of the Canadian National Railways? I see the Minister of Railways is now in his place.

Hon. T. A. CRERAR (Minister of Railways): I think it will be ready in a short time. It is being held up pending the report of the auditors.

Mr. SPEAKER: Moved by Mr. Dunning, seconded by Mr. Crerar, that said estimates be referred to a committee for further consideration.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE BILLS

FIRST READINGS

Bill No. 44, respecting a certain patent of Edgar D. Crump—Mr. Blatchford.

Bill No. 45, to amend the Act to incorporate the Imperial Trusts Company of Canada—Mr. Bell (Hamilton West).