Supply—Privy Council

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to the minister for that detailed information. However, he did not give us any idea when the commission is going to report. I was wondering whether the commission is in the position of endeavouring to give interpretation to the Biblical words "from everlasting unto everlasting".

Possibly the minister would also tell the committee what reports were secured from Puerto Rico. He covered the various parts of Canada, but it might be of interest to know what reports came from Puerto Rico and other areas abroad. No doubt the minister can furnish this information.

The minister also mentioned it would be much easier if we were to place these questions on the order paper. Our experience has been that when we have put them on the order paper we are not given the answers. We do not too often have the privilege of being able to ask questions of a minister, who has available to him all the information on matters like this.

I should also like to find out how much has been paid to date to the two chairmen of the commission and to the members of the commission. How much have they received to date? After all, these are matters of importance. A commission that holds $4 million worth of sittings and which intends to hold many more million dollars worth of sittings is naturally one in which the taxpayer has some interest. It is only because of that fact that I burden the minister with obtaining this information, which I should like to have.

Mr. Favreau: Mr. Chairman, I have here the global sum paid for three years, as well as the amount provided in the present estimates, for the commissioners' honoraria. The total amount paid for 1963-64 was $51,450.

Mr. Pugh: Each?

Mr. Favreau: The total amount. The total amount paid to the commissioners for the period 1964-65 was $129,300. The total amount forecast for 1965-66 is $140,000. The amount placed in the estimates for this year is $140,000.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I did not quite get those figures. How much have the chairmen received to date by way of honoraria?

Mr. Favreau: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I do not believe I have those figures. I will take the question as notice.

[Mr. Favreau.]

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, I was intrigued with the response given by the minister to the Leader of the Opposition in connection with the research activities and staff of the commission. I drew the comparison in my mind between this and another form of research about which we were speaking earlier. It seems to me that this is fairly indicative of the disorientation which exists among the members of the government over the relative importance of matters in this nation.

I do not want to get into a discussion about the B and B Commission and its soup to nuts approach—a fair amount of which is nuts, incidentally—but I would draw a comparison between this type of research and the necessity for research into economic activities by the combines investigation branch.

Listed in the estimates for the 1966-67 fiscal year for the entire operation—not just for research but for the entire operation—of the combines investigation branch is the amount of $903,200, while the royal commission on bilingualism, and for such an absurdity as biculturalism, for 1966-67 has opposite it the figure of $1,200,000.

• (3:30 p.m.)

It seems to me if you put a little more emphasis on the research dealing with economic products and economic activities leading to some corrective measures, in so far as our economy is concerned, that you would be doing this nation an awful lot more good than you are by continuing to dip into the taxpayers' pockets to pay for a royal commission which, from my reading of the interim report, will probably accomplish nothing more than paying out fantastic amounts of money for individuals to exercise their imaginations in developing concepts and theories as to what should and should not exist in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Favreau: The commission submitted a program to Treasury Board concerning the expenditures which were subject to control and because of that control, Treasury Board evidently continues to control the expenses of the commission.

Certain projects were reduced and finally a comprehensive program was assumed for the fiscal period for which expenditures are required from the house.

It must be noted that the staff salaries which amounted to $1,132,700 last year in the estimates voted by the house, were reduced this year by $574,700, to $558,000.