

and intelligible basis. I think it is true to say that considerable improvements have been made in the last few years. However, perfection will never be achieved and I would be the first to admit that there remains plenty of room for further improvement. Ideally perhaps, once the departments fully appreciate the total budgetary problem and are prepared to assess their priorities within their own resulting limits it might be that we are doing our best to work ourselves out of a job. While the departments are in fact showing an increasing appreciation of our problems, partly at least because we are now taking the trouble to explain them to them, circumstances are constantly changing the emphasis within the service of a developing country such as ours and new problems of coordination will constantly arise. What is more, the very existence of this final screen may be expected to keep the departments' quite proper ambitions under reasonable restraint.

Not only does the increasing tightness of the budget as our methods improve conduce to departmental efficiency but also the constant prodding and questioning that Treasury Board officers must do should tend also to create an atmosphere in which ill-considered proposals cannot arise whether they must be submitted to Treasury Board for approval or whether they are within the area of jurisdiction of the department itself. The only qualification I see here is that this constant prodding must be carried out intelligently as regards the substance of our comments and must be offered to the departments as a lay view which might serve to prevent the experts becoming so engrossed in their work as to prevent them from stepping back and looking at the forest as well as the trees. All this must be done in a manner which recognizes the high degree of conscientiousness with which the vast majority of departmental officers carry out their work. It must be done in a manner which expresses the fact that all civil servants, whatever their job, are working for the same ultimate employer, the taxpayer.

As a civil servant, I have approached this topic from the point of view of a member of the staff of the Board. I have, therefore, concentrated my attention on the organization of that staff and the methods by which it produces the information required by the Board as the basis of its decisions. The decisions themselves rest with the Board itself subject to the **general** direction of Cabinet which, in its turn, is responsible to Parliament and, ultimately, to the people of Canada.

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