

leaves the harbour. It is like a training ship—all bustle and activity but the ship never puts to sea.

• (8:50 p.m.)

Mr. Boulanger: Tell us something new. This is old.

Mr. Nesbitt: Nothing has changed.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): This government likes to give the impression that it is the latest word in technocracy and efficiency.

An hon. Member: This is a 1912 speech.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): We have had good examples of it. It was amusing to watch the President of the Treasury Board this afternoon trying to explain how it was that we got rid of the Postmaster General and put the Post Office into the Department of Communications, because the Post Office was part of the communications system, and then trying to explain by some metaphysical contortions why it was necessary to take the Post Office out of Communications, without saying frankly that the Minister of Communications (Mr. Kierans) had made such an unholy mess of the Post Office they had to take it out.

When we hear hon. gentlemen opposite talking about efficiency, we have only to consider the snafu of the last few days. Here we have a memorandum from the assistant director of the Public Service Commission sent to the various departments of government, setting forth proposals for a program to hire certain Francophones and intimating that \$2 million will be available for this purpose. The President of the Treasury Board does not know anything about it.

Mr. Gibson: That's what you think.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): May I say to the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth (Mr. Gibson) that I at least have accepted the minister's word.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That is more than he has done.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I am sorry to hear that he has not. But no such memo could be sent out to departments of government unless it was with the knowledge and consent of either the President of the Treasury Board or someone in the Prime Minister's office.

Mr. Francis: Nonsense.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): No one would dare to send out a memo promising departments that \$2 million in addition to the regular appropriation would be available unless this had been approved either by the President of the Treasury Board or by someone in the Prime Minister's office. I accept the statement of the President of the Treasury Board that it was done without

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his knowledge and consent. When I asked the President of the Treasury Board this afternoon who initiated and authorized this memo and where it came from, he went around and around talking about gestation. There never was a more difficult birth on the floor of the House than the one we watched this afternoon as the minister laboured through an answer.

Mr. Nesbitt: It was a good argument for abortion.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): The fact is that he knows who initiated it and is afraid to tell the members of this House. The President of the Treasury Board said this afternoon that this legislation would make the executive more responsible to Parliament, but he did not set out in any particular where the legislation would help make the executive more responsible to Parliament. The fact is that Parliament is more and more losing control of the purse-strings. Under our new system estimates go to committees which do not meet until the session is well under way, and then they are rammed through committee in the last few hours. There are only certain days on which estimates can be debated and we find that when we come to the end of those days many of the estimates have not been dealt with. Money is voted without estimates ever having been discussed. The Crown corporations do not report to committees in many instances. The report of committees that have looked at the estimates are not discussed in the House.

An hon. Member: What about opposition days?

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): The report of the Public Accounts Committee is not discussed. The only way in which we can raise in the House the complaints of the Auditor General regarding government mismanagement is to raise the matter on one of the allotted days or by moving a motion under Standing Order 26. I think that Parliament is exercising less and less control over the executive. Instead of hon. members opposite treating this matter so lightly, it might be more advisable for them to take their responsibilities seriously. Members on both sides of the House should take whatever steps are necessary when this legislation is before the House to insist on the type of controls which Parliament should exercise over the executive and over the purse-strings. The mere reorganization of departments will have little value for this country unless we have from the government a clear statement of the policies that lie behind their administrative changes.

Let me give one or two illustrations. For several years we have been asking in the House for a clearcut statement of the government's science policy. The President of the Treasury Board has had some responsibility for science policy. Perhaps after this reorganization a minister of state will be given the responsibility for looking after science policy. If hon. members took the trouble to read the first volume of the report of the Senate Committee on Science Policy, they would see there one of the most damning indictments of the government.

It points out that \$1 billion a year which Canada spends on research is, in the main, wasted. It points out