

issues associated with Canada's new and rapidly expanding role in international affairs provided plenty of topics for discussion.

What sets this period apart from later years is the attention that the committee gave each year to departmental administration. At the outset it was necessary for Associate Under Secretary Hume Wrong to provide the committee with a general overview of how the department functioned. Thereafter, an average of five hours or one quarter of the committee's time was devoted to an examination of the department's finances and methods of operation as opposed to foreign policy subjects. An additional hour and a quarter was spent on approving grants to various international organizations which entailed a further review of administration. Members took these administrative subjects seriously. Fifty-four per cent of the 35 member committee turned out to question departmental officials. While these meetings did not last as long as some devoted to more politically charged policy issues, there was a high rate of participation and sustained questioning. (See Table 2) Areas of most consistent interest to members were recruitment procedures and standards for the foreign service and the acquisition and furnishing of properties abroad. In fact, the most intense discussion of the entire period centred on the purchase of Canada House in New York. In 1957 a record 76 per cent of the members turned out for three meetings on this politically sensitive issue. When a minority Conservative Government threatened to renege on an agreement concluded by their Liberal predecessors, a barrage of questions persuaded the Government to change its intended course of action.⁵

Another reason for the interest in the department's operations stemmed from the inability of the committee to curtail what the Official Opposition regarded as the extravagant expenditure of funds for the acquisition by the Government of real and personal property abroad. While in theory the committee was to give its approval to the department's estimates, it very quickly discovered that there were substantial blocked funds in foreign currencies over which it had no