

as he would like to oblige his friends, he was sure on his side that they would not wish to injure the government by asking for expenditure which the Auditor-General did not consider authorized by action of Parliament. The advantages to Sir John, which every other Prime Minister since has found, was that this enabled him to reject improper proposals without creating ill will. The Public Works Commission would serve the same purpose to protect Ministers, for many requests made to a government would appear absurd and unjustified when examined from the standpoint above indicated, but their absurdity does not prevent the applicants from urging them with ferocity and submitting with rancour to their rejection—a rejection which is seriously imperilled on the approach of every election.

I would regard it as essential that at least one member of the Public Works Commission should be a man of vision, of wide information and with a belief in the future of Canada, for such a Commission would fail if it did not build for a future, which we are bound to believe, should be one of regularly expanding prosperity.

These commissions should be small, permanent, with members of the highest class. We have now three Commissions which so discharge their duties that the presumption is in any particular case, that their decisions are sound. Their duties are both to collect facts, and to give decisions on those facts. I refer to the Railway Commission, the Purchasing Commission and the International Joint Commission. The two new Commissions which are now proposed, would have a less difficult task, viz: of accurately ascertaining facts and clearly expressing them.

I trust I have established that we would reach by such a system as this proposed, increased efficiency on both sides of government. I am aware that it attacks the solidarity of the government. It preserves solidarity in the Cabinet, but it dissolves the solidarity of the executive ministers' responsibility. The solidarity of joint ministerial responsibility covers more sins than the mantle of charity. This is in outline the scheme I submit for the consideration of the House, as a matter for discussion.

I may point out certain effects it should have beyond those already indicated, viz: the opportunity for constructive legislation given to the Cabinet, the placing of ministerial responsibility within its departments at its highest degree, and increasing parliamentary responsibility and parliamentary control. It would inconvenience a Cabinet, for the more the actions of any