

Government Organization

this bill. Therefore before we have completed discussion of the bill I think hon. members will have to consider how parliament can function most effectively with respect to this new department.

If there is to be ministerial responsibility in the areas which are assigned to the minister, then obviously there must be a provision in the statute to make sure that the related parliamentary committee is given a full understanding of the activities and programs that are to be carried out by the new department. Unless we are willing to provide this kind of parliamentary responsibility, we will be irresponsible in allowing the minister to assume powers which in normal situations are not usually granted to any minister. Perhaps in our further consideration of this legislation I may be able to elaborate on this subject a little more, and if there is agreement in the house I will even be prepared to introduce an amendment in that regard.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by adding to the feeling which was expressed by my colleague, the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby, and by the hon. member for Egmont as well as, may I point out to the minister, by many people in the areas of slow growth and of poverty which should get the benefit of the activities of the minister's department. In my opinion sufficient facts and details have not been given us about what the minister and his department will be doing to assure us that its establishment will make a difference to these areas. The minister is one of my favourite ministers, but too many people, myself included, have feelings of apprehension with regard to this department and the minister in charge of it similar to those we had when he was put in charge of the Department of Manpower and Immigration.

Today I want to deal with one aspect of the minister's responsibility. I refer to the implementation of the agreements which he or the former minister signed with the provinces of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Quebec. I have a good deal of sympathy for the ARDA and FRED programs under these agreements because I believe they are moving in the right direction. However, I submit that so far as they commit the federal government to the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars for education—and I approve of that particular program—they wipe out and make a mockery of all the principles which this minister and the Prime Minister have enunciated over the years that in their one Canada education, as

[Mr. MacDonald (Egmont).]

they see it, is the sole responsibility of the provincial governments.

Since I only have a short time in which to speak I will not put on the record the dozens, if not hundreds, of statements which the Prime Minister and the minister have made about the subject in the most precise terms. I shall simply quote just a few. The first is in a book called "Federalism And The French Canadians", which is a volume of articles written by the Prime Minister. It is contained in an article entitled "Federal Grants To Universities" in which the Prime Minister quotes with approval the position taken by Mr. F. A. Angers who said:

In general, the Canadian state is not the central government, but the central and the provincial governments taken together... In matters of education the Canadian state is the provincial state, and none other.

Later in the same article the Prime Minister said:

—Consequently, if there is federal legislation to grant taxation money for provincial purposes, this legislation is illegal for the excellent reason that the federal government cannot by law have money in its coffers which it then claims should be used for provincial purposes.

I will come back to that later but let me say now that we are spending tens of millions of dollars on education under agreements with the provinces.

In a brief which the Prime Minister prepared for the Quebec Federation of Industrial Unions for submission to a Quebec royal commission in 1954 the Prime Minister spelled out his views again. He said that if Ottawa regularly provided funds for the building of schools simply because all the provinces need more money or do not care enough for education, the federal government would be violating the first principle of fiscal collaboration and, greater still, it would be attacking the very basis of the federal system. Those were the views of the Prime Minister written before he became Prime Minister.

What happened after he came to Ottawa? He was able to convince the then prime minister and the present minister who is piloting this legislation through the house that he was correct. As a result of his point of view the federal government took the decision to get out of agreements which the former government had reached with the provinces in the field of university education and of technical and vocational training. The then prime minister, Mr. Pearson, speaking on