

Exercise of Employee Rights - It must be assumed that employees given the right to negotiate will take advantage of it. Foreign Service stenographers for instance can form their own local unit and can then work through a national employee organization to which they presumably will belong. The managerial responsibility for satisfactory conditions will continue.

Foreign Service Act - The speaker said that without knowing much about the pros and cons he would be personally opposed to a Foreign Service Act that would separate the Foreign Service from the Public Service. Such an Act would result in a severe loss to the Public Service because of the restrictions it would put on movement between the foreign service and domestic departments. He recognized that there were frustrations for the Department of External Affairs but he believed that an extreme solution along the lines suggested would be a bad thing for the Public Service. Furthermore, it would not necessarily be a good thing for the Foreign Service. He said that nothing he had seen in his studies in England or elsewhere had persuaded him that compartmentalizing the foreign service departments had more advantages than disadvantages. There were no historical, legal or constitutional reasons for a separate foreign service.

Bargaining Units - The confinement of bargaining units to occupational groups was mandatory for only 28 months. After that time a group of employees could go forward to the Staff Relations Board and propose a different kind of bargaining unit. It would be quite possible within the law for the Board to establish different kinds of bargaining units so long as they did not cross the boundaries of occupational categories.

Future Outlook - He said that the inception of collective bargaining would not bring paradise. For four or five years life would not be easy. The objectives have been laid down but it is something else again to move toward them. Personnel policy in the government was enormously complicated at the present time. He had found when he moved to the Personnel Policy Branch that there were 112 sets of regulations for which the Branch was responsible. It took three weeks to bring them together physically. Before the Treasury Board could achieve decentralization it must review the policy content in such regulations and define a policy framework within which departments could exercise authority in the administration of the regulations. It would take some time to devise procedures for the delegation of authority to departments in a way that would give them freedom to act but would not negate entirely the final responsibility of the Treasury Board.