

This brings us to the second problem facing the Treasury Board and its staff. Financial and other similar administrative controls, such as control of establishments, are not set up entirely to ensure that all the demands upon the government for service can be fitted into the available resources. This is of course essential, but there are also important by-products of this process. If the estimating process is carried out in such a fashion as to make the budgets of the various units within the service fit somewhat snugly upon the shoulders of the senior officers who make the administrative decisions, it can be expected that, during the year for which the Estimates are current, these officers will be obliged to consider carefully the priorities within their organization and alternative methods of dealing with problems before they take action which might otherwise lead to waste and inefficiency. It is therefore possible to achieve a degree of delegation of authority and thus to avoid duplication of controls if this situation prevails. After all, the Treasury Board is not set up to run the departments. Moreover, delegation of this order places decisions connected with the execution of approved policy, as with intended proposals, closest to the point of maximum knowledge of priorities and alternatives. The degree to which the Treasury Board and its staff, together with the Civil Service Commission and the administration of the department, achieve this objective may determine in some important degree the efficiency of that department. It should be pointed out here that the problem for the administration of the department is no different conceptually from the problem facing the Treasury Board. Once the total resources available to each at his own level is known, the question is one of determining priorities and of allocation among competing objectives.

Thus, one of the most effective ways at the command of the Treasury Board to eliminate spots where redundancy is suspected is to make the budget for that unit fit even more snugly than is usual elsewhere. This can be expected to result in the administration re-assessing its present functions and methods, given that virtually all such units are under pressure from the public and Parliament to increase their services in new directions. Therefore, while action to eliminate the weak spots that probably exist in any large organization may not necessarily show up as declines in the provision of staff and funds, it may nonetheless be effective.

The third problem or set of problems for the Treasury Board and its staff casts it in the role of co-ordinator of policies and programs. From its central position the Board and its staff can endeavour to ensure that proposals of individual departments are not inconsistent with those of other departments or with government policy generally. Experience gained in assisting one department to solve certain problems can be employed in advising another department facing a similar situation. This is one reason the staff of the Board is organized in the related groups I have described earlier. I should add here that both the Board formally and its staff informally are frequently asked for rulings and advice in situations of this kind.

In conjunction with the Civil Service Commission, the staff of the Board endeavours to ferret out and prevent duplication of function or of effort among the several