

charges that we have to face, or whatever may be our desire to reduce the expenditure, we must, if we are prudent administrators, see that works which were constructed for a purpose and which are still important to the welfare of the Dominion, shall be properly maintained. For this reason there will always be a large expenditure on account of maintenance.

A large part of the controllable expenditure consists of the salaries of the Civil Service. We have just passed a resolution declaring our belief that most of the Departments are overmanned. As I have not the responsibility of administering a Department,—and I hope Providence will to the last day of my life exempt me from that responsibility—I am not able to follow fully the work of those Departments. We have among us, however, honourable gentlemen who have been heads of Departments who seem to be united with us in the conviction that the Departments are overmanned. They stand as witnesses for those of us who have not come in direct contact with those Departments.

There is one matter to which I desire to draw the attention of the Deputy Heads of the various Departments in Ottawa. We have placed on the Statute Book a Superannuation Act which will be assented to this afternoon. The argument for that Act, which will involve quite a heavy outlay, was that it would permit of the retirement from the Service of quite a number of men who had passed the age when their usefulness was recognized. We are told that hundreds of men will take advantage of that Act and ask to be relieved of their duties. I believe that we should send out a warning to the Deputy Ministers that we expect them to seize the opportunity offered them of reducing the personnel of their Departments by a number equal to the number of retirements under the Act referred to. I know there will be a temptation to promote those who occupy lower positions on the ladder, many of whom have reached the top of their class. Many are giving but 50 per cent of the effective work that they gave when they were in their prime, so that most of the work is done by subordinate officials. When a position is vacated should not the Deputy head of the Department see that it is united with the position next below, in that way abolishing that of the person leaving? I believe that this is the time for the Deputy Ministers to overhaul their Departments and to reduce expenditure. In the report of our Committee we have asked the Civil Service Commission to look into the possibility of not replacing

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officials who go out under the Superannuation Act. Deputy Ministers have admitted to us that when a man is brought into the Service he comes in with the conviction that he is appointed for life. Well, if the appointment of a new Civil Servant or the creation of a new office is such a fatal step, it is opportune and imperative that the Deputy Ministers examine into their Departments before making any appointments.

Some Deputy Minister may say: "It is necessary to replace some of those who go." That being the case, should there not be some central body, such as the Civil Service Commission, to see that the vacancies are filled by transfers from Departments which are overmanned? The time has come when the Civil Service should return to the normal condition which prevailed prior to the war, and when the Deputy Ministers should be asked by Parliament to cooperate in bringing about that condition. I warn the Deputy Ministers that the Senate of Canada will each Session ask what vacancies have occurred during the preceding year, and will inquire into the necessity of those vacancies being filled. We should have a Committee such as there is in Great Britain to watch over the manning of the Departments, and I believe that I express the feeling of the Senate when I say that this House should undertake that task when there is no other organisation to perform it.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Honourable gentlemen, I have to congratulate my honourable friend upon the sentiment not only entertained but expressed by him, with reference to the necessity for retrenchment at this particular time. My honourable friend is only one in a Cabinet of many, and, so far as I am able to observe, is the only one who entertains such sentiments as those to which he has given expression.

I hesitate to voice my protest against the expenditures which are being made and the extravagances upon which we have entered, for the simple reason that it is but a voice crying in the wilderness. It is futile to raise any protest against the policy of lavish expenditure upon which Canada has entered, and in which it seems to be indulging with the greatest enthusiasm. There seems to be an utter absence of all sense of responsibility on the part of the Government so far as economy and retrenchment are concerned. We find that all our Allies with whom we were associated in the war have entered upon a very strict policy of cutting down their expenditures. The British Government has reduced its expenditures to a degree that one can scarcely realize; the United States has