

Mr. MEIGHEN: The expenditure is certainly growing. That is the reason for more careful inquiry into it. If there was something definite, it would be different.

Mr. ROBB: My hon. friend must observe that there is a decrease in our total vote of \$77,000.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, and I think there should be a lot more. Has the minister no idea at all of what this is for?

Mr. ROBB: It is for unforeseen expenses, such as the entertainment of premiers or representatives of foreign countries who are visiting Canada, also for such an unforeseen event as a catastrophe, for instance.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Unemployment associations?

Mr. ROBB: I would not say that.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Because that is the truth.

Mr. GOOD: I do not know that I shall have another opportunity of saying what I wish to say about the department, so I take the opportunity now.

What has impressed me very much since I have been here is the conspicuous difference between the organization in the Department of Finance and the organization in some of the other departments. Take, for instance, the Department of Agriculture, where those in charge of the different branches are specialists in their respective fields. We admit the need of securing the services of experts in these several departments. But in the Department of Finance we have, so far as I can find out, no man who has any general knowledge of economics, who has given any special study to the questions that ought to be well known and thoroughly considered in that department. I am sorry to have to make any personal reflections, but the Deputy Minister of Finance, who, I understand, has been acting as secretary of the Treasury board, has been before the Banking and Commerce committee on two or three occasions, and I have also discussed matters with him privately. As I said, I am sorry to make any personal reflections, but I do consider that he is totally unqualified to advise in regard to the many matters which must come before that department, and the minister himself cannot be expected to have gone into a number of these technical matters such as must necessarily be considered by the department. I want to suggest most emphatically to the minister and to the House

that in the Department of Finance there ought to be at least one good economist, one good specialist who has had a thorough training, theoretical and practical, in this particular line, to act in an advisory capacity. I think it is positively shameful that there is nobody apart from the present deputy minister, whose excellent qualifications in other directions I am free to admit, but who has no qualifications in this particular direction; and I want earnestly to appeal to the minister to face the situation and apply the same common sense we have applied in our other departments, where we have the good sense to make use of the services of those who have given years of study to their respective specialties.

Take another department by way of comparison, the Department of the Interior—the Mines branch for instance. What folly would it be to appoint a book-keeper to look after our Mines branch! And yet we have nobody in the Department of Finance, as far as I can find out except those who have knowledge of technical routine, nobody who has the qualifications that are needed. Let me suggest to the minister and to the House the sort of man we need in the Department of Finance. We need a man of the qualifications of our Dominion statistician, and we need him very badly in the Department of Finance. Again I earnestly submit to the minister and to the House that unless there is some reorganization in that department, I foresee that we shall get no further ahead, but we shall still continue to follow in a lot of the foolish old ruts we have been travelling in the past. The hon. member for West York (Sir Henry Drayton) has already mentioned how difficult it is in governmental matters to get out of a rut. If we have got into ruts in any department, we have certainly got into ruts in that particular department. Let me give an example. The question arose in the Banking and Commerce committee last year as to whether or not the advisability of varying the interest rate on the advances under the Finance Act had ever been considered, and the deputy minister admitted it had not. I asked him if he had ever thought of it; he had not—had the matter ever been discussed or thought of by the Treasury board? No. Apparently this question, which is in my judgment a vital matter, had never received any consideration at all. Now, if we had a thoroughly competent economist attached to the department, the country might be saved thousands and