

*Establishment of New Departments*

in effect, junior ministers to handle those operations and divisions of government that were not in the mainstreams of general policy.

I do not think there is any question that, with the tremendous increase in the involvement of government in running the country, the multitude of things that have to be handled by cabinet is much greater now than it was 10 years ago. Certainly it is much greater now than it was before the war. Therefore I am going to propose that in addition to the two cabinet levels—and to set this up would not require any legislation in the house because that could be set up as a matter of custom—there could also be a grouping of cabinet ministers.

I suggest that the cabinet could be grouped into four groups. The three main groups are, first, human resources; second, material resources; third, trade, finance and all those things dealing with the monetary and fiscal side of government, and, fourth, the grouping of those ministers who do not fit into those particular categories.

I do not think there is any question about it, and any of my colleagues on this side of the house who have served in cabinet, as well as the ministers on the other side, will agree that a natural grouping takes place between matters dealing with justice, Indian affairs, citizenship, labour matters and education. Those things always seem to have similar characteristics that naturally make the ministers in charge of these departments colleagues in similar groupings of cabinet.

Next I deal with material resources. Into that grouping come headings such as energy, resources in the form of mines—or any other form of energy utilizing land, air or water—agriculture, fisheries and forestry. All these ministers are interested not only in the development of the production of the items under these headings, but also in the movement forward of these items into the productive machinery. Of course there is a relationship between them because they are all competing for the some things, namely land, water and air.

The third grouping of trade and finance would naturally include the headings of national revenue, the Treasury Board, trade, and departments of industry, and naturally all those matters under the supervision of the Bank of Canada.

I have not tried to be all inclusive in these groupings. I am simply saying that if, once a month there were meetings of these groups, in the organization of cabinet work, where

[Mr. Hamilton.]

problems of particular departments were correlated, a great deal of the overlapping and a great deal of the clash that occurs in cabinet could be reduced.

In some of the provincial governments across Canada I know that the premiers of those provinces periodically call in their ministers and asks them to report to them what they are doing, what they have been doing and what they hope to do. The premier himself takes on the job of correlating the work going on in the different departments. This is possible in a provincial government because the work there has not yet multiplied to the degree of being beyond a single man. The premier can have a grasp of the general directions and operations of each department.

At the federal level it is almost impossible for a minister to have full knowledge of his own department. Many ministers make the mistake of spending so much time in trying to learn about it in detail that they cannot see the relationship between the department and the general good of the whole government, or of the country.

● (8:40 p.m.)

I would think that, without the necessity for additional legislation, one could add to this legislation the understanding that not only should cabinet be grouped into the senior ministers of each of these sections—and one or two others if you want to add them for the particular experience which they might have to help develop general matters of policy and direction—but you should have these meetings of groups of cabinet ministers to try to eliminate the situation which seems to go on in increasing measure—20 odd departments going in 20 different directions.

In many cases I think we can demonstrate the schizophrenia which has developed in our cabinet for, without any attempt on the part of particular ministers, we have ministers going in different directions without realizing it; we find Treasury Board making one decision when cabinet is making another and it takes months before it becomes apparent that there is schizophrenia in government.

I suggest this is a useful proposal to add to what the Leader of the Opposition had to say this afternoon. He suggested that two levels of cabinet had to come now, because cabinet had grown to such complexity. I have added an amplification to that idea, and suggested that there should be groupings of ministers and that the whole cabinet should not be required to discuss something which is of