

*Establishment of New Departments*

were designed to be junior ministers but they have been reduced to a status which is both equivocal and frustrating. I believe parliamentary secretaries should be raised to the status of junior ministers, given tenure during pleasure such as ministers enjoy, and be invited to sit in cabinet when matters relating to the department to which they are assigned are under consideration in cabinet.

Third, the dangers of appointing so-called specialists or experts to portfolios are, I would submit, very great. This is the real evil of tailoring portfolios to men. The Norman Ward revision of Dawson's, "The Government of Canada", deals in detail with this at page 211, and after outlining the dangers of appointing third or fourth class experts to cabinet portfolios concludes with this statement:

But even a specialist who is first-class is likely to make a poor minister. Practice has given this an unequivocal double confirmation. Not only has the use of the amateur minister been vindicated by long experience; the expert minister—the one who has presumably a profound technical knowledge of his department's work—has proved time and again to be a failure. The exception that proves the rule in Canadian history—

I am glad to be able to read this.

—is Mr. Pearson's undoubted success as Secretary of State for External Affairs from 1948 to 1957, after 20 years service within the department as an expert.

May I put it in this way, that I believe in the supremacy of political acumen and intelligence in ministerial choice, particularly in opposition to expertise.

Finally in this phase of my remarks I should like to say that a major rationalization of departmental structure is urgently needed. Much of the present structure has only historical justification. Branches are included with others without semblance of reason except historical aberration. There are some departments and certainly some branches of departments which could operate more effectively and with greater viability as crown corporations. Rather than this piecemeal approach, this ad hoc mending which the Prime Minister is attempting in this resolution this afternoon, I submit he should be proposing a joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons to study and review the whole structure and fabric of departmental organization with a view to simplification and systemization.

Now, sir, may I state certain specific objections to the haphazard and retrograde proposals now before us. The first is that the emasculation of the Department of Justice and its division into three separate ministries

[Mr. Bell (Carleton).]

will defeat rather than advance the administration of justice. If there were problems of lack of co-ordination in the old department—and I think we all know that there were—they will be intensified now at least threefold under the new proposals. Nothing the Prime Minister said this afternoon has altered my firm view that one ministry of justice, presided over by a competent, knowledgeable counsel, can administer justice in Canada more expeditiously, more efficiently, than the proposed three departments which have no base of uniformity among them. I say that rather than elevate the role of Solicitor General it should be abandoned as a ministerial portfolio and should only be filled as a non-ministerial role when there is in this house a counsel of outstanding talent who might plead crown causes in the courts, as is done in the United Kingdom and some other countries.

The creation of the new portfolio of registrar general is, in my respectful submission, wholly unnecessary. Its evident purpose is to create a portfolio suitable for one man, who happens to be a member that I like very much personally, but that is not sufficient excuse to upset the established balance of the Department of Justice and the Department of the Secretary of State. I predict that we will have a compartmentalized, nook-and-cranny brand of administration of justice, with the public interest suffering.

I want to put this test sincerely and without any malice or guile whatever. Is there a member of this committee who believes that this proposal to divide the Department of Justice into three would ever have been proposed if my hon. friend from Papineau had not encountered what I shall describe in a kindly way—and I mean to be kindly—as misfortunes. Surely everyone knows that to be the truth. Had he not had these misfortunes there would be no proposal for the division of the Department of Justice. Then why are we now engaged in wrecking that department?

I suggest that this is just an unfortunate by-product of the Dorion inquiry. Even at this late date I urge the Prime Minister to turn back, to re-examine the proposal, for I fear that the abridgement and, yes, the truncation of the status and authority of the senior law officer of the Crown, will have a most undesirable aftermath. I submit to the Prime Minister that with one ministry, one minister and an experienced, able counsel in that role such as the hon. member for