

present bill the functions are divided, the Comptroller of the Treasury taking on the job of auditing and passing on the authority, and so forth, before payment is made on an account. The Auditor General's function is then limited to auditing payments, and he is thus relieved of the responsibility of doing a prepayment audit, which he must do under the present law.

Another change authorizes the Governor in Council to delegate more of the powers and duties of the Cabinet to the Treasury Board. Here I would refer honourable senators to section 5, at page 3 of the bill, which outlines the duties of the Treasury Board. It provides that the Treasury Board shall act as a committee of the King's Privy Council for Canada in an advisory capacity. The Treasury Board now acts in that capacity in relation to certain matters, but additional items brought under its advisory purview by subsections (1) and (2) of section 5, include such things as estimates, financial commitments, establishments, the terms and conditions of employment of persons in the public service, and general administrative policy in the public service. The idea behind this amendment is to take some of the load off the Governor in Council—in other words, the Cabinet—so far as the accumulation of routine work is concerned, and to pass this work to the Treasury Board, which is really a committee of the Cabinet. The Treasury Board is to review the matter and then make recommendations to the general body of the cabinet, which will then deal with it. Honourable senators will also observe that under subsection (2) of section 5 the Governor in Council may authorize the Treasury Board to exercise all or any of the powers, other than the powers of appointment, of the Governor in Council under the Civil Service Act, the Civil Service Superannuation Act, the Defence Services Pension Act, and parts II to VI of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act. These are administrative functions. For instance, the parts referred to in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act have to do with provisions dealing with pensions for constables and officers, and matters of that kind. It would appear to be a move in the right direction to relieve the Cabinet as a whole from dealing with the full load of routine responsibilities in the first phase at any rate.

Section 7 of the bill increases the power of the Treasury Board to make regulations. I would illustrate this by referring to just one item—paragraph (b) of section 7—where it is provided that the Treasury Board may make regulations respecting the keeping of records of property of His Majesty. Heretofore the various departments have been maintaining

records independently, and this provision will enable the Treasury Board to set up a uniform system of recording, which will mean that the records will be more accessible and easier to understand, because they will be correlated according to common practice.

Section 17 of the bill provides that the Minister of Finance may acquire securities. This conforms to the present practice, and naturally the authority to invest is limited to securities of the Government of Canada.

Part V of the bill, which is new, provides for the machinery for setting up a central stores account. From time to time we have been dealing with the question of revolving funds. Some of these have been provided for under special Acts of parliament, and in this case provision is made for the mechanism to handle the central accounting of stores. The authority to set up a revolving fund, as a result of which stores may be accumulated, will still have to be provided by parliament under certain Acts before the provisions in Part V can start operating.

Another point I wish to mention seemed to engage the attention of the committee of the other place for some time, and led to some of the amendments incorporated in the bill now before us. It has to do with the authority to delete uncollectable items from the Public Accounts. As the bill was originally drafted, the limit was set at \$100, and the uncollectable items were extinguished as well as deleted. Under the legislation now before the house, the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Treasury Board has power to delete from the public accounts items up to \$500 which have remained uncollectable for over five years, and those accounts up to \$1,000 which have remained uncollectable for over ten years.

**Hon. Mr. Crerar:** Are they to be noted by the Auditor General?

**Hon. Mr. Hayden:** At the present time they must be reported in the Public Accounts, but if this bill is enacted they may be deleted.

**Hon. Mr. Crerar:** With no reporting of them at all?

**Hon. Mr. Hayden:** No, but the debits are not extinguished, whereas the bill as originally drafted provided for their extinguishment.

Section 27 of the bill has to do with the payment of guarantees. Where a guarantee has been given under the authority of parliament by or on behalf of His Majesty for the payment of any debt, the amount required by the terms of the guarantee may, subject to the act authorizing the guarantee, be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.