

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): I think it is safe to say—let me put it this way—I am very happy to make increasing use of this particular branch of the civil service, and I will give it every consideration.

The Prime Minister, I think, has mentioned the possibility of setting up a form of commission to study the government. And I would be very happy to have this commission study my department.

Mr. BROOME: Would the minister be equally happy to have outside management consultants make the study?

The CHAIRMAN: May we have a reply?

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): I have no objection to any group of people, be they outside consultants or be they from the civil service commission, or in the form of a commission which has been suggested by the Prime Minister making a study of my department, just as I am of course very happy to have this committee make a study of my department.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Is there anything further?

Mr. HALES: In the cost area?

The CHAIRMAN: Generally, yes.

Mr. HALES: I wish to ask two questions concerning travelling expenses; one in respect to the department of Indian and northern affairs, and also one in connection with civil defence. I just made a casual total of the department's travelling expenses, including those two I mentioned, and it comes to \$1,998,000—practically \$2 million.

Now the question is this: has the department given any thought to this very large expenditure, and secondly, who in the department authorizes travelling trips; and thirdly, who okays the payment of travelling expenses?

The CHAIRMAN: What was your first question?

Mr. HALES: Has the department made a survey of this very large expenditure of, roughly, \$2 million?

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): Yes. Each year when the estimates of the department are set up we begin to study them commencing in the early fall for the estimates for the ensuing year starting April 1. They are first prepared by the department. Miss Waters is not here today because she is ill but maybe Mr. Palmer could explain the details of the procedure. We start with the department heads, who have worked out their estimates for the year. Then the secretary's division assembles all this information and it is gone over with the treasury board. A very close study is made of the proposed expenditures, and the estimates are arrived at after a very close study. There may be divergencies of opinion between the treasury board and my departmental officials when the proposed expenditures come to me, at this stage. And, of course, I have to sign the final requisition for the department's estimates, and at that time I ask many questions. I want to be informed as to why there is a certain increase, and why there is not some reduction here or there, and why not whatever it may be.

But finally we possibly do come to a difference of opinion between the treasury board and ourselves, and then the treasury board sits with the officials of each division and questions us very closely on the various aspects of our expenditures, including travelling.

The CHAIRMAN: Might I interject? Your answer is indeed very useful, but I wonder if perhaps, for the benefit of the committee members, we might not deal specifically with the two items to which Mr. Hales referred.

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): Yes. I have two questions which Mr. Hales asked as to who authorizes these trips, and then who authorizes the payment