

cannot have a visible budget in advance. A budget is a list, a compilation of all the requests for authorization by Parliament to spend. Do you have all of these before you, as you suggest here? If you have them, then I say you have a visible science budget in advance of authorization.

Hon. Mr. Drury: Then the answer is that we have a visible science budget. In popular jargon, the budget of Canada is presented by the Minister of Finance, who makes no reference whatsoever to a thing known as the blue book. You say the budget is the blue book.

Senator Grosart: "Budget" is used in many senses; let us not get down to just one. I am asking if you have a visible compilation. Let us leave out the word "budget". Do you have a visible compilation of the requests for authorization by Parliament to spend this year \$1.4 billion or \$1.5 billion on science activities throughout the departments and elsewhere? Does MOSST have that before Treasury Board authorizes it?

Hon. Mr. Drury: The answer to that is yes.

Senator Grosart: Then why do you say that a science budget in the conventional sense—which you describe, you describe it exactly, and this is why I come back to the silly semantics—is a basis for resource allocation? What else can it be? If you are looking at it, you can only be looking at it as a basis for resource allocation in science. That must be the main reason you are looking at it. Therefore, you have a budget, according to your own description, in the conventional sense. Yet we still have these silly semantics. That is the point I am making.

When you say this committee suggested MOSST have a role for budgetary authorizations, I say we did not; we did not say that MOSST should "authorize" it. What we did say—and this is a minor point—was that there should be an intermediate body, a council of ministers. The reason we said that was to ease this situation in which a departmental minister might say, "I am not going to be told by one other minister what I should do in this particular area of expenditure."

We then suggested that there might be a council of ministers, just the same as you have a council of ministers in the Treasury Board and in planning, who would obviously be the main science spenders, who would then get together and say, "Yes, this makes sense. We will look at MOSST's suggestions about it. We will then carry it into Cabinet"—not to the Treasury Board Secretariat but to Treasury Board, and through Treasury Board to the Cabinet. That is what we suggested, but the suggestion all through your document is that you have rejected this, you have rejected a visible science budget. I am glad to say that, in my terms at least, you have not. I say "in my terms" in case anyone wants to quarrel with that.

Secondly, I say this statement just does not make sense, that "a science budget... cannot reasonably be accommodated in the existing structure". It has already been accommodated.

Hon. Mr. Drury: If you are suggesting that some group of ministers, not including the Minister of Agriculture...

Senator Grosart: No; I said the science spenders—and he is a big one.

Hon. Mr. Drury: —should say to the Minister of Agriculture, "You are spending too much or you are not spending enough on science and technology, in carrying out your mandate," and have the power to impose on him, more or less, I would disagree.

Senator Grosart: I would too, because I am not saying that at all.

Hon. Mr. Drury: Here we have a so-called science budget for the whole of the government, and a group of ministers will look at this and say whether or not it is proper, and where it is not proper, modify it, and then impose that?

The Chairman: What is Treasury Board doing?

Hon. Mr. Drury: What do you do with it?

Senator Grosart: You carry it to Cabinet and accept Cabinet's decision. So far as I know, no one imposes on Cabinet. The Prime Minister may, once in a while, I suppose, but ministers do not impose on each other; they give each other advice. The whole purpose of the suggestion is not to say, "You are spending too much", or, "You are not spending enough." It is to ask, "Are you spending it in the right places, in terms of the allocation of all our money for science activities? Are too many departments using the same university?" We asked the departments, "When you decide to fund X university with Y dollars do you know at that time what any other department is doing?", and the answer in every case was, "No." That is the kind of thing we are getting at. I will not argue whether there should be that council of ministers; that does not matter. If MOSST does the assessment and review and carries that into Cabinet, that is all we are asking.

Hon. Mr. Drury: The answer to that is basically yes; but rather than carry it into cabinet as a first step, we carry it to the minister concerned.

Senator Grosart: And to Treasury Board, which must make the overall decision on the proper or improper allocation of all our resources to all departments, and therefore to all activities of the government. That, surely is the job of Treasury Board and of Cabinet, to ensure that the allocation of public funds is to the right places. That is all we are suggesting, yet we keep getting these silly semantics.

The Chairman: On this unanimous vote, we will adjourn for the time being. I thank the minister for being with us this morning. I understand he can be available on two other occasions, if necessary, before the Christmas recess. I have not discussed this with my colleagues, but we will discuss it after we adjourn.

Senator Grosart: I hope the minister will come as often as he can.

The Chairman: I would certainly like to see him again.

The committee adjourned.