

Senator MOLSON: Do you not think, Mr. Chairman, that the presentation of departmental programs in the estimates almost provides the kind of effect that Senator Power was asking about? If the estimates emerge in the form of a program there will be so much money voted for that purpose. Within that program presumably the department will be able to change money from that purpose which was originally proposed—

Senator LAMBERT: It will be able to switch it.

Senator MOLSON: Yes, switch it to something else within that department, but in the end the cost of the program cannot exceed the amount that is placed in the estimates for it.

The CHAIRMAN: That is right.

Senator MOLSON: So if the program becomes more efficient it should save money. If it becomes—as I am sure a lot of programs in the Government become—completely redundant, under present day conditions, it should disappear. At the moment it is just a list of personnel and requirements. There is no way of seeing whether the people listed are needed for a useful purpose or are just there because there is that number of positions in the establishment.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that is a good analysis of it. This would also point up more clearly the cases where programs which might have been started originally with desirable objects, may have outlived their purpose in whole or in part. They would be more clearly identified both to the department itself and to the Treasury Board.

This particular aspect has not yet been fully accepted. Dr. Bryce said that in principle it seems to be sound but it does raise practical problems. It is in that connection that these four outside management concerns have been placed in four different departments of Government to see how this new conception could fit into the existing mode of operation. Until they have finished their studies and further study has been given by the Treasury Board itself, I do not think it is clear to anyone just how this will function in practice.

Senator LAMBERT: At the risk of being platitudinous in connection with this report—an attitude which I would abhor—should not a word be included rather to emphasize, in the final analysis, the importance of a more painstaking scrutiny of the estimates and expenditures of Government or of Parliament, so that these suggestions might be weighed in their real value? I think that is the essence of the problem. If you decentralize these things and say the Glassco Commission has recommended that deputies be given more authority and that departments are to be trusted and do not have to be policed, there is a certain relaxing effect on all members of Parliament, so that they may say “We are drifting into the final paradise of senior control”.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope there is no suggestion that Parliament will relax any of its control.

Senator LAMBERT: I think this will require still greater scrutiny than before, because there is a certain suggestion of relief from what we have always been taught to think were the final responsibilities of Government ministers and of members of Parliament.

Senator CRERAR: It appears to me that this recommendation which we are discussing now is one of the most important things in the report. I imagine that what the Glassco Commission had in mind here, what they were recommending really, is a substantial measure of decentralization.

What is meant by decentralization is to give more authority to people who are actually doing the work. I can illustrate that by reference to the National Parks, of which we have a large number. Several of them have golf clubs, some are large in area, some let out grazing privileges, some give permits to cut hay or wood or lumber. The practice has been, and I am sure still is, that if the superintendent of a park sold a permit under the regulations