

Trusteeship

The Deputy Minister becomes a trustee to the Government of Canada in respect of personnel management and financial management policies in the same way that he is now a trustee for policy in his major field of substantive activity. There needed to be a totally different concept of relationships and responsibilities within departments and between departments and central agencies. The self-control mechanism within the Department would replace the external control system that had existed until now. The Treasury Board was now moving rapidly to delegation of authority to those departments which were willing and able to accept responsibility. It had been hampered by the fact that much of the legislation was written under the old regime and did not permit this kind of delegation. However, the hope is that the legislation will be changed as quickly as possible.

Policy Directives

The speaker said that policy manuals tend to get thicker and thicker to cover all situations. He said the problem was to devise policy directives that were not cluttered up with detail but that would provide a framework flexible enough to give meaningful opportunity for decision-making on a basis of reasonable alternatives.

Delegation of Authority

The speaker said that the Treasury Board wished to see the maximum degree of delegation of responsibility and decision-making within the framework of policy directives. This did not mean abandonment of control. It meant structuring of a new management system. Once the Treasury Board could succeed in creating in departments a management system with the staffs properly trained and supplied with needed facilities, then the Treasury Board would endeavour to ensure that there was maximum delegation to those departments. It needed, however, to develop new concepts of management within departments and also to formulate effective guidelines for them. There also needed to be sufficient personnel for financial management and personnel management, people who were attuned to the new concepts. He said that some departments were not ready or eager to take on the additional authority that could be delegated to them. They found it comfortable to be hemmed in by the existing restrictions.