

*Government Organization*

Purchase of materiel is not in itself the totality of the picture. The Glassco commission recognized this and made recommendations which we are also implementing and for which this legislation provides, including materiel management. In other words, instead of merely buying the various things needed by the government and turning them over to individual departments it is the intention—and again a portion of this activity is already under way—that we will store this materiel in central warehouses in various parts of the country. Without going into all the details as to how this function is going to be carried out, I am sure hon. members will recognize the wisdom of ensuring that all these supplies are held at central points and that we can then distribute them to departments and agencies as they are needed.

Hon. members may be interested to know that in the Ottawa region, where we have already begun this effort, there is very substantial evidence that savings of the order of perhaps 20 per cent can be made through various efficiencies, through the capacity to buy in large quantities, and through the benefit of central purchasing. We are proceeding from this test establishment here in Ottawa to the point at which we shall have five or six central management houses across the country.

● (3:10 p.m.)

I touched on the fact that we have assumed responsibility—in fact we have had responsibility for some time—for the Bureau of Public Printing and Stationery. I was in the house a few days ago when questions were asked about the status of the Queen's Printer and it might be appropriate for me to explain what is planned in this connection. There is provision in this legislation for the retention of the Queen's Printer, and this is our intention. The difference is that he will now be a part of the over-all department rather than an offshoot of the department. The general heading will be the Bureau of Public Printing and Stationery but there will be a Queen's Printer, and an official of the department will be so named when the legislation we are considering has been passed by the house.

The nucleus of the service side of the department is the former office of the Comptroller of the Treasury. Those who have a considerable amount of experience in the house and in public affairs will know that the Comptroller is the official who at one time was called, I believe, the bookkeeper for the government. That was many years ago. His is

[Mr. Jamieson.]

primarily an accounting function, a cheque-issuing function. One of his most important responsibilities is the preparation and presentation of the public accounts. This work will now be performed on the service side of the new department in the same way it was done previously except, of course, that the title is being changed. Incidentally, I have been most impressed by the manner in which the Comptroller of the Treasury side has functioned. It is faced with an enormous task, one which is extremely complicated, but it is performed by many responsible members of the public service in a manner to which I should like to pay tribute today because, generally speaking, these people are not often in the limelight. The whole process of issuing pay cheques, family allowance cheques, old age pensions and a variety of other payments which go out from the government is within the responsibility of the Comptroller of the Treasury.

In addition to these services, which might be described as statutory or obligatory, there are a number of other services which are to be brought into this department and made available on an optional basis. Those I have outlined are provided for by law and we must perform them on behalf of the various departments of government. But again, in line with the Glassco concept of reorganization, and very much in line with my own belief in the necessity for the maximum degree of efficiency in the public service, we shall bring beneath the umbrella of the service side the Central Data Processing Bureau. This is becoming an increasingly important tool in good management and by making this central facility available to all departments we have already demonstrated, I think, that substantial savings can be achieved, in addition to providing other departments with a vital tool.

We also intend to assume responsibility—and I should note again that many of these functions have in fact already been transferred—for the bureau of management consulting services. It is perhaps not generally known that there is within the government service, and has been for some time, a group of talented and able people who perform for government departments the same kind of consultative services with regard to management as are carried out for private industry by consulting firms. This group is functioning and will continue to function on the operational basis to which I have referred. It is not obligatory that a department should use the services of this agency but I am happy to say