

# Oligarchs at Ottawa

*Austin F. Cross*

*'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.'*

*'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things.'*

*'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master—that's all.'*

*Through the Looking Glass.*

**A**FFAIRS of State in Canada today are far too important to be run by 'The Government'. We use Brain Trusters instead. Once upon a time we were a Dominion, ruled in theory by a Governor General, a Senate, and a Commons. In fact, we were ruled by the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, responsible, in theory at least, to a popularly elected Parliament. More and more today, we are confined, controlled and contained by a group of senior civil servants, far from lovingly dubbed 'Brain Trusters,' and responsible to none other than their several and collective consciences. Constitutionally we are no longer *The Dominion of Canada*, but *The Government of Canada*. Anyhow that is how it is listed in the Ottawa telephone directory. The change was hemmingly and hawingly confirmed subsequently by wobbly-syllabled politicians, both within and outside the House of Commons. But regardless of how we are described constitutionally, and no matter what new nomenclature has descended upon us, we are still run by Brain Trusters. These are our new masters, our latter day bosses, our Public Service Politburo.

If by some quirk or fancy, anyone cherishes the illusion that Canadians in the Year of Our Lord 1951, are run entirely

by the lop-sidedly Liberal St. Laurent Administration, perish the thought. Hardly a major decision is taken today in the Capital, scarcely any important task has been undertaken in the country in this last decade, without an OK from some Brain Truster. The Minister merely signs where the Brain Truster puts the dotted line.

This blunt assertion reflects not merely the casual observation of correspondents in the Parliamentary Press Gallery. It rests on far more authoritative sources. Dr. H. A. Innes, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Toronto, if the reader will forgive a learned reference remarked as long ago as 1941:

"The voice of the economist is heard throughout the land. In every investigation economists of quality and quantity have contributed substantially either by giving evidence or by stuffing the shirts of their betters, i.e., writing the final reports. The rise of economists has been an important practical trend of the post-war years. They have captured crucial positions in the civil service, especially with the Bank of Canada, and the discussion of the problems of Canadian recovery has taken on the air of rational calculation . . . A new religion has emerged."

The business of government has become so complex and intricate that parliamentarians tend more and more to rely on the advice of the "experts" of the public service not only for the carrying out but also for the making of policy. Whether this trend is good or bad we leave to others to judge. Such are, however the facts of public life in Canada today.

**T**O get down to cases—there is a growing tendency, especially in the Capital, to pooh-pooh the notion that Public Works Minister George Prudham, for example, can put down a hammer and saw in Edmonton, come to Ottawa, and in sixteen months, by virtue of the "Honourable" prefixed to his name, manage national affairs as well as any longtime deputy.

On Parliament Hill, even the more ardent admirers of able Bob Winters, Minister from Nova Scotia, are disposed to rank his experience and executive ability after that of a Clark, or a Pickersgill, or a Robertson. Much as one may admire the spirit and personality of House Leader Alphonse Fournier, it is easy to name a round dozen brain-trusting civil servants who have had more impact on the lives of everyone of us during the last decade than the amiable Alphonse.

True, there are such people as 'Trader' Howe and Finance Minister Abbott and External Affairs Minister Pearson. Yet even back of such strong-minded individualists as they, there lurks a Mackenzie, a Clark or a Heeney.

As for the private Members of Parliament, they have their day only just as every dog has his day. But merely that. You get a pyrotechnical Pouliot, a Jack-in-the-Box Knowles, a devastating Diefenbaker. In the past, R. B. Hanson, harangued us, and Walter Tucker trumpeted from his barrel chest. Yet in all those years, Donald Gordon, not elected by the people at all, had more power over any of us than the greatest of these. No, the Commons nowadays is just what the old French root-word means. A Parliament is a place where people *parler*, or talk. Chances are those who talk loudest in Commons may be absent when the vote is taken. A top-heavy government will

get the number of "Yeas" it wants, just as Hitler used to get his full quota of "Ja's". And back of the government bill just assented to, was the Brain Truster who dreamed it up for the Minister, way back six months ago. Ottawa's Brain Trusters never sleep.

**T**HEN there is the interlocking directorate. Ottawa's Oligarchs, like those new streamliners in the United States, where each single car is so softly and yet so closely bound together, that the whole streamliner slides along as if one were riding on a cloud rather than a coach, moves forward so intimately articulated that one hardly realizes how it runs, separate, yet a unit. Talk about the Super Chief. The St. Laurent Brain Trust Limited has it beaten all hollow!

This has ramifications. No Brain Truster functions in single capacity. Remember Poo Bah in Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta, *The Mikado*? There poor Koko, contemplating matrimony, approaches Poo Bah, who holds all the portfolios, and all the power. In one capacity Koko is advised "Don't stint yourself." But Poo Bah also urges Koko in another capacity that "due economy must be observed." Again Poo Bah in still another role suggests that Koko "chance it". Then the same Poo Bah in a different capacity diametrically opposes himself and tells Koko that he must see that "the law isn't violated." It would hardly be fair to carry the analogy as far as Poo Bah seems to do, where he tells Koko he might "cook the accounts" although as Archbishop of Titipu he would have to denounce himself for his knavery.

Write in the word Canada for Koko, and sometimes you have the Gilbert and Sullivan setting here, where a Brain Truster has to urge something in one capacity, but as the chairmen of another committee, he had to countermand himself.

### Canada's Shadow Cabinet

**H**ERE, then, is the Brain Trust, Ottawa's full-time Shadow Cabinet. It is Canada's nearest equivalent to the Soviet Politbureau, the Committee of top Bolsheviks which directs the affairs of the Soviet Union.

The parallel is not intended to be taken too literally, for the members of Mr. St. Laurent's full-time shadow cabinet have nothing like the absolute power enjoyed by their counterparts in the Kremlin. Their influence makes itself felt in more subtle and less sinister ways. Their scope of action is delimited in greater or less degree by the Opposition in Parliament and by public opinion. Where the parallel with the Politbureau begins to take substance is in the profound influence exercised by the Brain Trusters over individual members of the Cabinet in the realm of economic policy. The members of Mr. St. Laurent's full-time shadow cabinet would deeply and properly resent, in the ordinary sense of the term, being described as politicians. Yet, if politics, as has been said, is the art of the possible, it is hardly logical to deny that the architects of Government policy can escape the argument that they exercise substantial influence in the realm of public affairs.

In his recent study, *The Canadian Bureaucracy*, Dr. Taylor Cole of Duke University—and here we go again with a Lofry reference—has this to say regarding Ottawa's Brain Trusters:

"These men met together socially and kept in frequent official contact in Ottawa, where contacts are easy to maintain. Their relationships permitted of frank discussions and differences of opinion where departmental outlooks were ignored. Though there were frequent disagreements, some of them over basic matters, most of the members of this group might be classed as Keynesian in their economic views. They were consequently not averse to "planning" and to the extension of governmental controls when considered necessary. The over-all price ceiling, which was originally advocated by Towers, and the family allowance system, which was later initiated by Clark, illustrate vital public policies which emanated from his source."

There in essence lie the basic issues in the conflict which rages around the dominant personalities of the Brain Truster group, most of whom entered the public service during the dismal thirties, when they were confronted with the urgent necessity for devising policies designed to lift Canada out of the depth of depression.

Whatever their economic convictions may be—and that is something which it is virtually impossible to define—the fact remains that the Brain Truster, wise in the ways of Ottawa, gifted with that special timelessness peculiar to orientals and old governments, has already left an indelible impression upon the economic life of the nation and of its millions of individual citizens.

### Canada Under Clarkism

WITHOUT a doubt, the greatest Brain Truster of them all is William Clifford Clark, Deputy Minister of Finance. He is the Super Duper of the Species, the great grand-daddy of all Brain Trusters, the very apotheosis of cerebral controls. Indeed, as much of what we live under today is *Clarkism* as Canadianism. Much more of our latter day economy may be traced back to Clark than to the Fathers of Confederation.

The cherub-faced deputy with the China Doll eyes has left his mark on our times. He is one of the very few economists who ever got his theories into practice. One still talks of the Malthusian *Theory*. Deputy Minister Clark's administration of price and wage control during World War II were anything but theory. We were already far into *Clarkism* by November 1941, while even Karl Marx isn't doing so well yet, and his supporters are still groping in the nebula of his theory while Clark's principles are as provable as the workings of a Ford V8 motor. There is much prating of what Lord Keynes may or may not have believed, and equal verbiage pro and con as to its practicability. One hears of Beveridge and Ruml and their effects on our age. But these latter two, as in the case of many another textbook technician, are mainly economic swordsmen who merely "pinked" us. Clark has run us through, impaled us. We are skewered securely. To change the figure, Clark's onetime theories have long since jelled into fact. For the man who used to countersign our dollar bills, no mere textbook tenets. What Clark did was to knead his econo-

mies into the history of Canada. His planned policies are as much the law of the land as the Income Tax, or a Howe Order-in-Council. This, no fooling, is the Clark Era!

When Prime Minister R. B. Bennett got into power, he managed to fire 14 deputies in all. But Mackenzie King, returned to office in 1935, fired nobody. In no instance did this policy pay off better than in the case of W. C. Clark. King admired Clark and, with his instinct for spotting talent, saw to it that this deputy ran his own show.

So, when Germany invaded Poland, and Canada entered hostilities, King was able to send for Clark and say: "It's your war!"

Thus did the deputy Minister of Finance open his own war on the economic front. He looked ahead and saw many things. Among the things that Kewpie Doll face of his noted was that we were heading for shortages. He recalled the difficulties—not to say scandals—in World War I. He remembered the brief but impressive looting era of the so-called Pork Barrel Barons, and he wanted no part of that. So he began evolving a system of controls.

**I**T is easy to sit back in judgment now, as the end of 1951 looms large, and say that controls were no great discovery. *Cliche of cliches* is that hindsight is easier than foresight. But it is well to remember that when our whole system of controls, and their economic corollaries were being dreamed up in the summer of 1941, they were as new then as the atom bomb was in July, 1945. Clark's impact on the war and the epoch was more than just controls. For he gave Canadians not only controls, but also worked out the involved paraphernalia of economic, legal, financial and other gadgets, subsidies, quotas and priorities without which a controlled economy would be chaos worse confounded.

Clark made our system work so well that while we were knee-deep in steaks, the Americans, with a higher per capita consumption of meat, were jamming the bridges to Canada to buy our by-now unrationed supplies. Under his system of subsidies it was easier to get a glass of

fresh orange juice in Canada than in California. Under Clark's guiding hand, we quickly evolved a system of controls and controllers which, backed up by the moral suasion of patriotic appeals really worked, and kept the war running smoothly and efficiently on the economic front.

Then came VE day, and VJ day, and Canada was suddenly in the Post-War Era. But Clark could beat a sword into a plowshare with the best of them, and he went to his little smithy and quickly forged a weapon to win the peace. He de-controlled and devised, and he took Canada out of the extremities of war like a solicitous company takes a sand hog out of the compression chamber, so that he will not suddenly collapse with "the bends." Clark got us out of the high pressure of war into the postwar epoch with a minimum of aches and pains.

Since then he has survived the caprice of novice British politico-economists who seem more anxious to make socialism work than to run the country properly. He has endured the Cold War Economy inspired by the Iron Curtain, and withstood the selfishness of pressure groups across the line in Washington. In no small measure is it attributable to him that by September Canada had already piled up a surplus of more than \$400,000,000 over budgetary planning with only one-third of the fiscal year gone. If such surpluses are good—and it may seriously be questioned whether they are—then Finance Minister Abbott could conscientiously call Deputy Clark out from the wings for a long bow.

**I**T is sometimes said that our national economic and financial affairs are somehow settled at a long table, with W. C. Clark, Deputy Minister of Finance, at one end, and Graham Towers, Governor of the Bank of Canada, at the other. The fiscal pundits in Ottawa more or less tend to line up as Clark men and Towers men. Then there have been times when Mackenzie King (or now Louis St. Laurent) sided with Clark, and other times with Towers. The chances are, however, that these disputes in the Ivory Tower are mostly hyperbole, and that the two men co-operate like two paddlers in the

same canoe, each using his own stroke, but both going the same way, in the same boat.

If one were to analyse the contrast between the two, Towers would probably emerge as the pure banker, and Clark the pure economist. It is tempting to imagine the immaculate, austere, fastidious Towers settling an issue merely by asking, "Is it good banking?"

Economics-wise as Clark is, it is doubtful whether he would be too much concerned with so academic a question as "Is it good economics?" Rather, he would ask "Will it work?" For, behind the studied detachment of the economist, those who know Clifford Clark can detect human qualities in full measure.

Clark, were he a vain man, had he a self-consciousness about his own achievements, would never need to worry about mnemonics. Remember how it was with Sir Christopher Wren, architect of St. Paul's, when people asked where Wren's memorial was? "Look about you", was the terse answer.

If of Wren it was said: "Look about you", then of Clark let it be said: "Listen about you."

Today people are clamoring more than ever for controls. Like the Prisoner of Chillon who came to love his own chains, so have the Canadian taxpayers come to worship the economic fetters W. C. Clark forged about them in wartime, little realizing that such remedies as were applied to the nation's body economic in the forties might, in 1951 boomerang like a bottle of Scotch in a gathering of alcoholics anonymous.

Lest it be thought that Dr. Clark has been accorded more attention than his colleagues of the Public Service Politbureau, suffice it to repeat that Canadians today live under *Clarkism*. Of all the galaxy of Brain Trusters, he ranks *primus inter pares*.

### The P. M.'s. Private Brain Truster

**J**ACK PICKERSGILL is Prime Minister St. Laurent's own private Brain Truster. Survivor of the Augustan Era of Mackenzie King, as indispensable to the new incumbent as the old, here is a man

who shuns the limelight and loves anonymity. He combines to an incredible degree, an exaltedly encyclopedic knowledge of political theory with a crackerbarrel cuteness about how to put it across. He sits at once on Olympus and around the cuspidor with the Boys in the Back Room, and yet all at the same time in the Prime Minister's *svelte* offices.

Walk down a hundred 'main streets' from Sydney to Skeena, and in not one town would more than half a dozen people have heard of Jack Pickersgill. Yet, that is the way the Prime Minister's personal secretary wants it. He revels in anonymity. It suits him fine, that, after more than a decade in public life, Canada has never heard of him.

Jack Pickersgill is another one of the late Mr. King's 'Bright Young Men.' In a somewhat spectacular secretariat, Jack was more than able to hold his own. But while the other young worthies waited patiently for Mr. King to pass them a plum in the form of a career on a platter for life, to Pickersgill his affair with King was something like a marriage vow, "till death do us part." A job in the Prime Minister's office, to Jack Pickersgill, was not just a ride on the Gravy Boat.

So this particular brain truster found a niche for himself. He was Mr. King's 'Joe-Boy'; no drudgery too drear, never a job too long but what Jack tackled it willingly. Almost lovingly. By now it is pretty well known that those who worked with Mr. King had no set hours. More than one wife, indeed, contemplated suing her husband for divorce naming Mr. King co-respondent. It is impossible to exaggerate the Simon-Legree-ish way Mr. King treated his slave labour on Sundays, holidays and Holy days.

On this rugged regime Jack Pickersgill thrived. It goes without saying that as he worked these long and exhausting hours he came to know a great deal about Canada. He also got to know a great deal about people. In fact he got to know a great deal about everything.

**I**T is not the purpose of this article to attempt to assess Jack Pickersgill's intelligence in relation to the science of govern-

ment. Suffice it to say that he knows *this government* and *this country* as few do. He's a walking encyclopaedia of political intelligence. He's the kind of fellow who reads the fine print and finds the lurking booby traps among the 'whereases'. Where Pickersgill really coruscates, however, is in 'cracker barrel' political science. Take the riding of Durham, for instance, Pickersgill probably knows not only who won it in the last Federal election but the time before and the time before that again. It is a better-than-even bet that he can tell you how Durham voted every election this century. Some would say that this is idle knowledge. Yet it is such "idle knowledge" which keeps political parties in power. Pickersgill would be able to forewarn Prime Minister St. Laurent, for instance, that when he got to St. Joseph in Huron county he could expect to speak a few words of French. This is not to say that Pickersgill *did* tip off Mr. St. Laurent that he might expect to find this French Language pocket in the heart of English Protestantism. But it is exactly the kind of knowledge Jack Pickersgill would have.

In a Canada of 262 different ridings that have to be won, with a Prime Minister responsible to his party for winning as many as he can, Pickersgill cracker barrel knowledge is invaluable.

Nor must this man be assessed solely on his knowledge of ridings. He has a profound appreciation of regional as well as provincial problems, and this intelligence is for the exclusive and private ear of the Prime Minister. It was precisely this knowledge which made him indispensable to Mr. St. Laurent when he took office. There was a lot for the new Leader to learn. If the truth were known, Mr. St. Laurent, it is certain, would confess that he was a bewildered man when he first started to survey his job from the standpoint of winning the next election. Yet he must have felt within a very few days that this strange kind of James Farley at his elbow was good for many a political win.

### Keeper of the Public Conscience

**T**OLL gate keeper for the Cabinet, *Fidus Achates* of the Public Weal, Norman Alexander Robertson is Clerk

of the Privy Council for Canada. An old hand at brain trusting, he was a power in External Affairs as far back as 10 years ago. After brain trusting 'in absentia' while serving as Canadian High Commissioner in London, now he's back in the old East Block on a new job. But still brain trusting.

Mr. Robertson, as so many able young men at Ottawa do, rose to the top very early and very quickly. The late Oscar Douglas Skelton, snatched by Mr. King from a happy Deanship at Queen's University for a harassing career (which ultimately killed him!) as Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, early discerned the real brains in Mr. Robertson. They were concealed behind a rapidly balding dome, a slovenly dressed chassis and an eternally buttoned lip. This facade didn't fool Dr. Skelton and later on was easily penetrated by Mr. King, who saw in Norman Robertson, what he really was, a powerful brain in bureaucratic harness.

When he was Under Secretary of State, Norman Robertson was a hard customer to do business with so far as the Press Gallery was concerned. He simply wouldn't talk. Not only would he refuse to get between quotes but he was equally adamant when asked if he would "fill in" for background. As well expect a good story from the stone lips of the statue of Queen Victoria on Parliament Hill as from Norman Robertson. However, he didn't lick this silence off the grass. His chief, Mr. King, never tired of preaching and preaching again and again that no man can ever be sorry for something he didn't say.

The clam-like Robertson however, was a powerful personality. During the war he was often in effect Canada's Minister of External Affairs. It was he who, more often than not, devised foreign policy, leaving only space and a dotted line for his minister, Mr. King, to supply the signature. Robertson, was deputy in External Affairs during strenuous days. He saw us slowly slide into a war with Japan. He had more than his share in the epoch between the time we had no relations whatever with Russia and the time when we lovingly effected an exchange of am-

bassadors with the Kremlin. He was around till long after VE and VJ days, and right here in Ottawa till the former enemies started coming back, in good standing again. Then, tired perhaps almost exhausted, he was appointed Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom on September 4, 1946.

Whether in his sloppy old office in the East Block or as plenipotentiary at London's Canada House or back again as Clerk of the Privy Council, no one can deny Norman Robertson played a great part behind the scenes in foreign policy. Few would believe that now, in a different sphere as Secretary of the Cabinet, he has ceased to be a potent actor in Canada's external relations.

**C**ONCERNING himself mainly with domestic matters, Norman Robertson is still a great and mysterious power in the land. Consider for a moment what the job he holds means. First of all, anything that comes before the Cabinet has to go through Norman Robertson's hands. It has been suggested that he is, in a sense, the Cabinet's toll gate. Extend the idea by saying that tribute of some kind must be exacted before Robertson says "enter." That payment is in ideas. If the idea in Norman Robertson's judgment is not good enough, then the matter does not get before the Cabinet. Without bothering about further imagery, just picture the position the Clerk of the Privy Council holds. He could at least stave off things he did not like for a long time. Items agreeable to him would obviously move to council table with accelerated despatch. Rather than growls of protest from Cabinet Ministers at things kept out of Privy Council, the chances are that this harassed body would voice grateful phrases of approbation. The Cabinet would get through their shorter agenda that much faster.

Not for one moment is it suggested that Norman Robertson leads the Cabinet around by the nose, through his own whimsical drafting of the agenda paper. The ultimate value of Norman Robertson is not so much the vital power he wields, however obliquely, at Cabinet. Rather,

his strength lies in his own undoubted intellectual talents and his rock-ribbed integrity. A veteran of the public service for at least a quarter century, wise in foreign affairs as he is rounded on domestic issues, here indeed is a mind upon which Cabinet Ministers lean and whose wisdom they trust. This is the voice of experience, even if never audible to the world outside the East Block. Almost unique in that his long years with external affairs integrates so well with his not so short years with internal affairs, Norman Robertson offers balance with brains.

### Wizard of Oz

**L**OUIS (THE BRAINS) RASMINSKY, is about as smart a man as we have in Ottawa. Alternate Chairman of the Foreign Exchange Control Board, executive assistant to the Governors of the Bank of Canada, all that in itself has a sonorous sound to it. Actually, Rasminsky is to be assessed for himself rather than his labels. He is not only able, but he has one glorious attribute—a sense of humor.

He likes too, the hard slugging of a high level fiscal dispute. Some time back, Commons saw fit to have a monetary committee, and such things always provide a field day for the Social Creditors. The Socreds put up their best man, Victor Queleh, MP for Acadia (Alberta). The two money solons took off their gloves and went at each other, and it was all good clean fun. To most of the rest of us listening, the talk was strictly gobbledygook. But each adversary understood the other perfectly, and this battle on Olympus they enjoyed. Rasminsky relished the chance to meet an intellectual equal from the other side of the fiscal fence.

But without in the least being patronizing, he'll discuss finance with you till gradually you have waded out over your depth, when he will smile tolerantly, spell it out for you like a patient kindergarten teacher, then you go on from there. Naturally, he does not spend all his time trying to get a few simple facts through the heads of newspaper correspondents, but he does appreciate, as some of his

Ivory Tower inmates fail to do, that it is important that the Press pass on to the people of Canada "what is happening" financially.

Rasminsky served nine years with the economic and financial section of the old League of Nations. One of his most picturesque assignments was when he was despatched to Bolivia to give President Busch a leg-up on finance. Rasminsky made a thorough and a learned report, and it was immediately pigeon-holed forever. (Oddly enough, another fellow Ottawan, former Deputy Minister Hugh Keenleyside, was despatched on the same assignment by the League's successor, the U. N. Dr. Keenleyside also surveyed the financial status of Bolivia, also made a report. Probably also nothing will come of it!).

Since reaching Ottawa, Rasminsky has made 'the Grand Tour' just like any top tier civil servant is supposed to do. He was at San Francisco to hear Molotov's endless "Nyets" and earlier he was at Bretton Woods where under the influence of the late Maynard Keynes they worked on a fiscal idyll which later emerged as the twin financial partners of UN, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. He attended the First General Assembly of the UN in London during '47 and has been in his time one of the Hotel Biltmore commandos handling Canada's interests at the New York headquarters of the United Nations. Louis Rasminsky has been around.

Rasminsky is a good-looking man with a tailor many might envy, a sprightly carriage, and a willingness to talk rarely found in bankers. As such he is naturally one of the Press Gallery's Pin-up Boys. Most observers in Ottawa like the way he operates, and admire the way he goes about his job. Ottawa has not given him as good a deal as he had a right to expect, but even here in the Capital we have politics.

### Ace Negotiator

**J**OHAN DEUTSCH is our ace negotiator. The now minion of Finance was for a long time a Trusty in External Affairs,

before he burst his bonds and became a fugitive from the Striped Pants Brigade. Then or now, John Deutsch, the boy from the prairie, and *quondam* Winnipeg journalist, seems to have just the right qualities to get the best possible deal for his country.

A lot has been made, from time to time, of the integration and inter-working of one department with another. Much of this is carried on the elegant and erudite shoulders of our Brain Trusters. No one better can do this better than John Deutsch. Was it Teufeldruekh who put on one hat, and was one person, put on another and was another? No matter; the idea is the same. John Deutsch could talk to the Ruritanians or Upper Slobovians around an international council table in one breath as a Finance man; then in the next syllable could double as an External Affairs man. What is true internationally is also true locally. For the interlocking directorates of big industry have nothing on the integration of cerebral cells here in Ottawa. And in no place is this articulation more smoothly accomplished than when John Deutsch is around.

Stroll into Murray's Queen Street Restaurant in Ottawa, and the chances are you will see a thick set, dark haired chap with a rather ruddy complexion, talking earnestly over the *table d'hote*. That will be John Deutsch. It is hard to realize when you see him there that he has been gone for weeks, sometimes months, on such far-off operations as the Torquay talks, or that he has been week-ending, perhaps in Washington. But in between times, there he will be. Murray's seems to offer suitable background for Brain Trusters, and thus is dispelled the canard that these people need a rarefied atmosphere for their lofty thoughts. Louis Rasminsky of the Bank of Canada; or Supreme Court judges like Taschereau and Kerwin hobnob as often in the hubbub of this civil service noon rush as in some whispering club. It is characteristic of Deutsch to be there. For, despite all the alluring assignments a grateful government has given him, the man is so natural, so real, so earthy, that a popular restaurant



seems as logical a background for him as the protective covering of underbrush does for a partridge.

**T**HE conference expert came originally to Ottawa in 1936, and was highly regarded in External Affairs. Like almost everybody who ever worked on a daily newspaper, Deutsch not infrequently lets his sentiment get the better of him, looks back on his journalistic days with wistfulness and nostalgia. To go back to the city room and try to recapture the good old days is to try and be 21 again. But if his absence from Ottawa pointed that up, it also served to remind a hitherto heedless government that they had let a good man go. Thus, after a breather again in journalism, John Deutsch turned back to Ottawa, like Dick Whittington did to London. He's been here ever since; is likely to stay, now.

"John Deutsch", said a fellow Brain Truster, appraising him, "is a chap who is wonderful on the international side of finance." It is thus that he is used. He speaks for Canada when it comes to a money deal with another sovereign power. He understands credits and loans; he knows tariffs inside out. He can negotiate trade treaties about as easily as he can order a meal. That is why he was so valuable at Torquay. Equally so why he was useful much earlier, when we were trying to do our brave best at Bretton Woods way back in 1944. It was this quality which impelled the St. Laurent regime to rush Deutsch to London to help line up the Colombo Plan.

In wartime he played an important part in helping to organize the selective service. This was one time when he was seconded to the Department of Labour. This labour

phase shows the handyman characteristics of the prairie boy.

A modest man, a rounded official, a good diplomatic representative, possessing mental resilience and the proven capacity to take on anything as it turns up, John Deutsch is a formidable asset in Ottawa's intellectual arsenal.

### Bureaucrats Anonymous

**I**F there is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon and another of the stars, and if as Biblically indicated each differeth from another in glory, so it is with Brain Trusters.

Chance, therefore, rather than design, governs the fact that the foregoing paragraphs touch upon a Clark, a Robertson, a Pickersgill, and a Deutsch, and leave to a later article the no less redoubtable personalities of an Eaton, a MacNamara, a Bryce, a Towers, a MacKenzie, a Heeney and a dozen others whose place in the firmament of the Brain Trust is firmly set.

Lest the reader conclude that those men are demi-gods, let it be recalled that the universe in which they move is the relatively prescribed area of Ottawa and in the rarefied atmosphere of international conference rooms in London, Paris, Washington and Colombo. In the wider galaxy of industry and finance, of labour and agriculture—in that vast expanse of human endeavour still happily untouched by the hand of government, it might be that laurels which, in the eyes of Ottawa, fall naturally about the brows of the Brain Trust, would look out of place, or might even be withheld. It is in order that their impact on the lives of ordinary folk in Halifax, or Saskatoon or Victoria may be understood and assessed that this series is written.

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"Oligarchs at Ottawa" is the first of a series of articles on the senior officials of the Public Service, by Austin F. Cross. The second of Mr. Cross' articles will appear in the Winter '52 issue.