

Belgian Ministerial Cabinets : spoils in a spoiled merit-system

by Hugo VAN HASSEL*

★

1. The ministerial cabinet.

Ministerial Cabinets are political decision-making units. Although they were at their very origin the personal secretariat of the minister and advisory staff, they developed towards real decision-making on behalf of the minister, interfering with the administrative line to a certain extent.

The cabinet however has no formal authority as such to make decisions. Talking about ministerial cabinets in Belgium, one does not intent to deal with the hard core of ministers constituting government. One has to look very closely to the context and often, but not always, one speaks about Cabinet tout-court in this last case. To be clear, it would be better to call it governmental cabinet here.

There is however between the governmental on the one hand and the ministerial cabinet on the other, a historical analogy in their origin. One finds back the embryo of the governmental cabinet in Great Britain when Charles II (1660-1685) established « a special committee of confidential servants to whom the secrets of his policy were confined and who superseded in effect the rest of the Privy Council » (1).

They were the close and intimate collaborators of the monarch for his policy-making. In its spirit, close to the anglo-saxon model, the governmental cabinet in Belgium went out the same way as the British did. To the extend that the function of the prime minister (2) developed, governmental cabinet went looser drifting from the King away.

* Lecturer, Faculty of Social Sciences, Katolieke Universiteit Leuven (K.U.L.) in charge of Management Training for High Civil Servants ; Secretary-general of Dutch Section of Belgian Political Science Institute.

(1) WALEFFE B., *Some constitutional Aspects of Recent Cabinet Development in Great Britain and in Belgium*, Brussels, Bruylant, 1968, 210 pp., p. 11 ; also WEBER M., *Staatssociologie*, Berlin, Duncker und Humbolt, 1966, 140 pp., p. 43.

(2) Until 1918 the prime-minister was called « chef de cabinet ».

In Belgium also, to the extent that the ministerial function got more autonomy vis-à-vis the king and becomes more a party-oriented function, linked up with a parliamentary majority and depending on it, getting somehow politised, each minister builds for his own sake « a special committee of confidential servants to whom the secrets of his policy are confined », just the same way the kings did before.

This evolution is perceptible in looking over the history of ministerial cabinets.

The ministerial cabinet is indeed an extension, a limb of the minister himself and only exists by the minister.

Since the minister is the temporary head of a given public service, members of his cabinet, as an emanation of the minister, also will intervene in the life of this service, this will give rise to a certain amount of conflicts with public servants.

Therefore the ministerial cabinet is permanently debated by public servants wanting to rule out those interferences in their field.

Latent to this lies often also a contempt and opposition towards political criteria for decision, as they are perceived to be deviant to the universal principles of rationality of their own, aiming to the common wealth.

Their confrontation with the political aspects in decision-making is perceived as to be harmful to their own rationality.

Political factors are irrational in their views and the minister is only a « temporary » chief as compared to the fact that they are permanent themselves. Ministers generally do not agree with those statements and spirit of mind, but they do not argue the problem of the relationship between politics and administration being separated or not.

They only plead indulgence because of a certain amount of political dysfunctions within the public service. One of them is politisation of public servants which disturbs a faithful relationship between ministers and public servants. This situation urges the minister to find and hire collaborators whom he trusts politically and who allow him to develop his own policy, aiming precise political objectives.

In fact this problem emerges at the moment that the minister is not able any more to deal with his complex and still growing task as an individual person. By this time he needs help and he is supposed to delegate to collaborators of his choice (3).

The one who has in Belgium the privilege to become minister will be happy to have in his cabinet the carefully selected people he needs for realising something.

(3) His choice of course, but his party or some groups might do it for him.

His motives will not be idealistic neither would he hire somebody for the sake of a friend.

He perfectly knows that he is in power only for a limited amount of time (4).

2. Ministerial Cabinets elsewhere.

Also other countries do have ministerial cabinets. Italy for instance has them.

The Belgian ministerial cabinets are often confused with their French homonyms, even in Belgium.

Relevant observations and comments on French cabinets are generalised to the Belgian cabinets by the vulgarising literature.

Structure, composition and environment of both are different although common points exist.

In France for instance, ministerial cabinets are more structured in a political and administrative-technical subunit. The first is managed by the *chef de cabinet* the latter by the *cabinet-director*.

In France the great majority (90 %) of the members of the ministerial cabinets is till now public servant (5). In Belgium this proportion is 57 % in 1959, 54 % in 1961 and still decreasing.

The more, top civil servants in France are *à la discrétion du pouvoir* and the minister can remove them from key positions and replace them. So he has the possibility to designate key personnel of his choice in power positions within bureaucracy.

This is not the case in Belgium, for public service positions are somewhat for a lifetime and top civil servants can only be removed in a limited number of cases.

It is not the purpose here to deepen these comparisons for this would lead to an extensive comparative political-system-study. It could however be a relevant question whether the new trends with ministerial bureaus in the German Federal Republic are not prefiguration of cabinet-like units (6).

There is also a growing need for a unit, at the disposal of the ministers in Great Britain, « like continental-style cabinets (...), a sort

(4) PERIN F., *La démocratie enrayée, Essai sur le régime parlementaire belge de 1918 à 1968*. Bruxelles, Librairie Encyclopédique, 1960, 280 pp., p. 110.

(5) SIWEK-POUYDESSBAU J., *Les Cabinets Ministériels*, in *Les superstructures des administrations centrales*. Paris, Cujas, 1973, 367 pp., p. 33 et 249.

(6) WAGENER F., JOHNSON N. *et al.*, *Current Problems of Organization of Government Departments*. Speyer, Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften, 1971, 116 pp., p. 8.

of politically appointed braintrust (...). The best solution in British conditions would probably be to create a new class of advisers distinct from the main Civil Service. Their job would be both political and technical. They would be selected in accordance with the personal preferences of ministers and move freely in or out from the academic world, industry, the professions, and elsewhere » (7).

The Fulton Report, discussing this matter does not follow this idea, but agrees however on the « practice whereby Ministers make a small number of temporary appointments (...), to make an essential contribution to policymaking » (8).

3. The political environment.

After secession in 1830 from the other Low Countries with which it constituted the reunified Kingdom of the Netherlands, Belgium achieved herewith in 1831 the aimed « liberal » constitutional monarchy.

The brandnew state was born with germs of contradiction. As a monarchy for necessity, urged to it by the great powers of that time it was the prototype of a « republican monarchy » (9) in which the ministers fast moved to a position in which they were responsible to parliament and thus to parties, as soon as those emerged. The role of the King in this system is to be a symbolic unifier of the Nation (10). He has no formal power to act except with countersign of one of the ministers. The nation is exclusive and supreme source of all power and separation of powers aims to bring in this context a pragmatic equilibrium with reciprocal controls and checks between the legislative, the executive and the judicial.

Second germ of contradiction is a never lasting flux and reflux between centralisation and centripetal moves of somewhat 2,300, quite autonomous townships. There are also nine intermediate provinces. Not to forget that people tend also to solidarise, and in fact are socialised on the basis of non-institutionalised or newly institutionalised economic and geographical regions.

(7) BRITTAN S., *The Treasury under the Tories, 1951-1964*. Harmondsworth, Secker and Warburg and Penguin, 1964, 375 pp., pp. 308-311.

(8) FULTON Lord, edit., *The Civil Service. Vol. 1, Report of the Committee, 1966-1968*. London, H.M. Stationers Office (1968), 1970, 206 pp., p. 94.

(9) LORWIN V.R., Belgium : Religion, Class and Language in National Politics, in DAHL R.A., edit., *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, New Haven, Yale UP, 1966, 458 pp., p. 150.

(10) DE MEYER J., De monarchie in de moderne staat, in *Res Publica*, vol. IX, 1967 (2), pp. 181-188 ; for remaining influence of the king see also BOEYNAEMS M., Cabinet-formation, in *Res Publica*, vol. IX, 1967 (3), pp. 471-506.

This complex system makes in fact the attempt possible to satisfy the most diversified needs in a satisfying way. In this system the going experiments with p.p.b.s. are clearly a must but also a challenge because of the amount of pressures coming from organised needs.

A third set of contradictions on the socio-cultural level are giving rise to permanent conflict and compromise. They are socio-economic, language-cultural and religious-ideological cleavages which are overlapping each other in a multitude of conflictual poles. In all of them one can indeed distinguish cross-cutting cleavages of class and economic interests, regional or cultural pressures and progressive vs. conservative oppositions (11).

Since groups are urged to satisfy the same material needs and for not much space for alternatives is left nor for big mobilising crusades, former philosophical cleavages are surviving because organisations based on them, in a reflex of bureaucratic self-defense are keeping those contradictions alive in the reanimation room for purposes of organisational survival.

There is also a tendency towards federalisation which also has its influence within the traditional political parties.

The two biggest: the christian democrats (CVP-PSC) (30.05 %) and the socialists (social democrats) (BSP-PSB) (27.24 %), having together in 1971 for the House of Representatives 57.29 % of votes and share with the (Liberal) Party for Freedom and Progress (PVV-PLP) (16.81 %) the longest alternating governmental experience during history. The Communist Party, who once participated in Government, only got 3.11 % of votes in 1971 but both Flemish and Walloon Nationalist parties got their 11 % each.

During their long governmental experience the three first « traditional » parties, were able to gain respectable influence in public bureaucracies, although a merit-system prevails, but only since 1937.

Two national Trade Unions, one of them of christian, the other of socialist obedience, each of approximately equal strength, represent the majority of belgian white and blue collar public servants. Small « shop » unions of specific administrations have a whip-role. A Liberal union tries to unify those. Although not formally linked to the two main parties, each of them do have narrow links with the party of their obedience.

(11) VAN DEN BRANDE A., Elements for a Sociological Analysis of the Impact of the Main Conflicts on Belgian Political Life, in *Res Publica*, vol. IX, 1967 (3), pp. 437-470, p. 444.

They have also informal agreements on the dividing up of power positions within bureaucracy.

Those power politics between parties and unions within public bureaucracy, are growing along with the shifting of power from parliament towards the executive, as a technical instrument for the growing role of the State in socio-economic life.

For a « partisan » and temporary minister, the cabinet is the ultimate decision-making-unit, committed to his political views as compared to a bureaucracy where the average of all cleavages and tendencies of society are present notwithstanding it operates following neutrality devise and merit-system prevails (12).

4. The Growth of Ministerial Cabinets.

It started the innocent way since the very beginning of Belgium. First one or three persons to help the minister with his personal secretariat. Not all of the King's minister had one.

Up to 1857 it stayed that way. This date marks the time when governments of National Union (Unionists), mostly shaped by the King, shifted to party-governments linked to a parliamentary majority.

Since then, party-conflicts are emerging around educational philosophy (school struggle) the rise of the workers movement and the social and flemish emancipation struggle connected to the rehabilitation of Dutch as an official language (13).

Since 1857 party-governments are succeeding each other. Already in 1857 the number of members of the ministerial cabinets doubled as compared to the previous Unionist government.

By the end of this period in 1913 there were six times more members in the ministerial cabinets and only twice more ministers, with a mean of 4 members per minister. Ninety-two percent of them were public servants at that time. There is also interchange of personnel between public bureaucracy and ministerial cabinets. Nearly each department has its own rules with regard to his cabinet. In essence the competence of the cabinet consists in those days of the following elements :

(12) See also on this matter : VAN HASSEL H., Politics and Civil Servants in Belgium, in *Res Publica*, vol. IX, 1967 (3), pp. 535-552.

(13) Cf population in 1970, 56,06 % are living in the Dutch-speaking area, 11,05 % in Dutch-French bilingual area (Brussels), 32,25 % in the French-speaking area and 0,64 % in the German-speaking area (source : Census).

- dispatching and opening of the mail ;
- to take care of the ministerial personal mail ;
- to take care of agenda of ministerial audiences ;
- to deal with confidential matters ;
- to take care of matters which the minister decides to treat himself ;
- doing research to facilitate the ministerial tasks.

With regard to salaries and the rank of cabinet members, permanent references are made to the public service.

But at the end of the century the ministers can bring any matter under the authority of his cabinet and at the same time their chief of the cabinet ranks at the same level as the secretary-general of the department and the director-generals, who are the functional managers. In that period of time are situated the origins of ministerial attachees and regulations are made to make cabinet salaries uniform. There is however no quantitative limitation on cabinet personnel and the minister was perfectly allowed to employ anybody he wanted.

According to the type of the departments where they were standing for, cabinets are shaped differently. Also there arises functional differentiation in cabinets according to the ministerial department one person holds.

When in 1912 the Minister of War became in fact also Prime Minister, although he was still called chief of the governmental cabinet, he created his second ministerial cabinet to deal with his civil affairs (14). Witnesses of that time are speaking of cabinets taking over the job of civil service. They are also speaking of politisation of civil servants, since parties deal with government, acting in function of the ever coming next election (15).

Although by the turn of the century some departments had pre-entry examinations, patronage was the normal way to be nominated or promoted (16) and at that time the minister could fire a civil servant as easy as a member of his ministerial cabinet (17). And in fact ministers did so (18).

(14) URBAIN, *La fonction et les services du Premier Ministre en Belgique*. Bruxelles, Librairie Encyclopédique, 1968, 257 pp., pp. 56-57.

(15) GREYSON E., *L'administration, ses faits et gestes*. Bruxelles, Rozez, 251 pp., pp. 15-24, 95-96, 111.

(16) WODON L., *Mémoire sur la réforme administrative*. Brussels, roneo, 1915, 42 pp., pp. 4-5 ; 17-18.

(17) DUCPETIAUX E., *Mission de l'Etat, ses règles, ses limites*. Bruxelles, Muquardt, 1871, 183 pp., pp. 116, 184.

(18) LUYCKX Th., *Politieke geschiedenis van België, van 1789 tot heden*. Brussel-Amsterdam, Elsevier, 1964, 559 pp., p. 184.

At the one hand the minister hired his cabinet-people amongst political friends or « clientele », who expected promotion or nomination as a public servant after accomplished mission in the cabinet. At the other hand political « families » tended to politicise public service, since « Pour arriver, il faut donc appartenir à un parti » (to succeed, one has to be committed to a party) as Pirenne stated in his « La Belgique et la guerre mondiale ».

It seemed to be very natural indeed then, that parties in power exploit it and appoint only political friends as public servants (19).

On the whole there was an identification at that time of civil servants with the ruling elite of that moment (20).

The selfregulating mechanism of those practices between alternating homogenous Liberal or Catholic governments was not to go too far, because of danger for possible future revenge of the other party.

Although politicised, the civil service was not allowed to involve in electoral struggle as such.

When socialist (Belgian Workers Party) ministers after World War I took governmental responsibilities they discovered themselves at the head of bureaucracies, somewhat in the same condition as Lipset identified in his research on the relationship between a socialist government and a conservative administration in Saskatchewan (21).

Patronage of Catholic and Liberal former governments influenced the shape of civil service. As a reflex one had to rely upon his cabinet.

At the same time there was an attempt in 1918 to neutralise and give objectivity to the cabinet function, creating the governmental advisers with each ministers. They were specialists and mostly university professors.

Their existence passed fast away for financial reasons. There was also the argument that the minister perfectly could hire any consultant he wanted and that hence there was no need for institutionalised advisers.

Another reason to rely upon the cabinets is the fact that after the war administration was desorganised and could not easily deal with reconstruction. Still then there was no uniform rule for the organisation of cabinets and to regulate the competences of the cabinet.

(19) HÖJER C.-H., *Le régime parlementaire belge de 1918 à 1940*, Uppsala-Stockholm, Almqvist and Wiksells, 1946, 373 pp., p. 56.

(20) MOLITOR A., *L'administration dans la société belge*, in GREGOIRE M. (edit.), *Aspects de la société belge*. Bruxelles, Librairie Encyclopédique, 1958, 327 pp., p. 122.

(21) LIPSET S.M., *Agrarian socialism*. Berkeley-L.A., University of California Press, 1967, 315 pp., pp. 255-275.

All facilities are made to civil servants, to spend some years in ministerial cabinets, since they keep their promotion rights and can go back to their former administrative function, with a departure-premium.

In 1936 for the first time a limitation of cabinet-members is decided by the ministers themselves : 4 persons of the management level per minister.

The Camu-report at least decided a reform program for the civil service (22) based on pre-entry-examinations a uniform personnel-statute, promotion based on merit-system, a classification and the limitation of the number of positions.

There remained only one breach : the minister is free to make his final choice for promotion amongst the ten best classified civil servants on the merit-rating sheet.

Also in 1939 general rules came out with regard to cabinets.

The cabinet was recognised as a personal instrument of the minister. As a private council of the minister for governmental affairs it should not interfere with administrative matters. Their members should have managerial capacities and they always should respect the formal administrative communication lines in their relations with public bureaucracies.

They have to examine and study the matters of importance to the minister and manage its secretariat. They prepare a press-review for him. They submit to the minister the dossiers coming from administration.

Except if the Governmental Cabinet decides otherwise, the ministerial cabinet is limited to 4 persons of the managerial level. There is however no limitation of administrative personnel. If the member of the ministerial cabinet is a public servant he is temporary not allowed to perform his duties in his service, but can come back in his former position and still keep his normal rights for promotion. In many cases however he will be nominated into higher semi-public offices after having performed his cabinet function.

Since World War I the absolute cabinet-index (23) rises up to 1,000 with a peak of 1,114 in 1939. The mean of the number of members per cabinet amounts 5, as compared to 1.16 in 1856. The total number of cabinet-members in higher since the increase of the number of ministers. Since 1870 every minister, without exception, got his cabinet. In this period between the two wars only 60.25 % of

(22) See DEPPE R., in this issue.

(23) Reference year : total number of cabinet-members in 1856 is reference-number 100.

cabinet members were public servants as compared to the 89 % of the previous period. One could formulate the following hypothesis that the more the ministerial function politicises and is party-oriented, the more the political character of the ministerial cabinet is stressed and the more outsiders are brought in.

It would however be too fast concluding that those outsiders are exclusively political personnel.

This period between two wars is indeed also characterised by economic crises. There was an urgent need for university graduated specialists to elaborate a sound economic policy. In this period was also born the idea of the application of economic planning at the State level.

These specialists were not available in the public service and the only emergency solution was to inject them in the proces through the cabinets. Many of them got key positions after World War II in the public service or became political leaders. Besides their professional specialisation they all kept their political engagement.

In this « entre deux-guerres » period a real need for rationalising the proliferation of the administrative machinery was felt. The more the public service could not deal with its new tasks because of lacking adequate university-graduated specialists, needed for the reconstruction and the turning of the tide of economic crises (24).

Most of these tasks were handled by consultative commissions and the ministerial cabinets. They were obliged to interfere with pure administrative affairs in order to get their managerial job done and reach their objectives.

At the same moment there is a tendency to limit the influence of the ministerial cabinet by creating research-units within bureaucracy and to make a clear distinction and stress incompatibility between mere administrative execution of laws and rules and the policy oriented action as it is performed by the ministerial cabinet.

The opinion was at that time that for the first set of tasks, recruitment should be on a merit basis, for the latter the minister should be completely free to choose people as temporal employed as he is, to get this political-oriented task done (25).

Besides policy-making the political task of the cabinet is still widening however, since the growing need for *bargaining* at the top in coalition

(24) See also CRABBE V., Cabinets ministériels et organisation administrative, in *Revue de l'Institut de Sociologie*, 33^e année, 1960 (3), pp. 532-555, p. 534.

(25) GERARD M.L., CATTOIR F., HENIN Z., *Etudes sur la réforme des services administratifs de l'Etat*. Bruxelles, Edit. du Comité Central Industriel de Belgique, 1935, 279 pp. p. 42.

governments which happened to get frequent after the war. The cabinet got to prepare and discuss those negotiations on behalf of the minister.

Cabinet members are getting at the same time so specific, that there are some of them becoming « professional » cabinet-members, since they stay over with new ministers, generally if they belong to the same party.

It is quite clear that in this order of thinking the ministerial cabinet is driven back to its outspoken political function, conform to the separation of powers philosophy.

In the same frame of reference the reform program in the late thirties is an attempt to rationalise personnel policy and eliminate completely patronage out of public bureaucracy. This happened at the very moment when new elites were penetrating it, through the old patronage-mechanisms of course.

Also ministerial cabinets are regulated in order to avoid their evolution towards overcovering administrations and they are compelled to their essential political role. But the fact that the minister is deciding what has to be considered as a matter of political importance, opens the whole set of administrative actions to the cabinet again.

There still is another function of the cabinet arising at this time. Power lies in fact with parties and agreements are made directly between them to get together into a coalition government. Crises only generate if they do not agree any more and Parliament is limited to its role as a forum (26).

Ministers are controlled by their own parties and some cabinet-members, especially those « professionals » do have this role of checking their minister on behalf of their party and to *control* whether the agreed compromise is observed. In fact, after the second world war the reform program did not give the expected results. Too many vacant positions had to be filled up after the war. Fast provisional recruitments were made without the prescribed procedures. Political influence played in that case and these nominations were regularised later on. Those provisional recruitments becoming permanent, are still common. For high positions there was also a breach left with the possibility to recruit highly competent people from outside, if those competences did not exist within the service. This type of recruitment also was made without following the prescribed examination-system. Together with delusion of merit-rating and the minister still deciding which one of the best clas-

(26) PERIN F., *op. cit.*, pp. 28-31.

sified public servants is to be promoted, doors for politisation of bureaucracy were kept open (27).

As a reflex, also the limitation of the ministerial cabinet went out of control. Referring again to 1856 (index 100), index 1,000 was attained in 1937 but 3,857 in 1968 and in 1968 also a mean of 9 persons of official cabinet-members per cabinet was reached. The proportion of civil servants in the cabinets went down to 54 % in 1961.

The formal limitation of managerial cabinet-members is brought to 5 persons, but the prime-minister can decide otherwise. It is worthwhile to remember that also hidden collaborators participate in cabinet activities.

Referring to some comparisons (28) between 1968 and 1885 (index 100), population-index was 163, index of public servants : 419, index of number of ministers : 428, index of executive level cabinet-members : 1,421, but the index of the mean per cabinet : 332, which means that according to the increase of ministers, the increase of cabinet-members is lower than the growth of civil servants. In this last case however lower levels are included, comparable top level figures not being available.

And again dysfunctions of ministerial cabinets are denounced by the civil servants (29) :

- cabinets usurping administrative tasks ;
- hiding the minister away from his services and creating distrust between those two ;
- breaking down unity of command and jurisdiction ;
- pressuring public servants ;
- favoring concentration of power ;
- frustrating and demotivating civil servants coupled with decrease of productivity.

On the one hand some advocate abolition of the cabinets reintegrating the political function in a polyvalent neutral bureaucracy and to

(27) With regard to politization of Belgian administration, see : MOULIN L., La politisation de l'administration, in *Revue générale*, jan. 1970, pp. 1-16. BERNARD S. et al., La politisation de l'Administration, in *Res Publica*, vol. XIII, 1971 (2), pp. 161-242 ; VAN HASSEL H., *op. cit.* ; NORRENBURG D., La politisation de l'Administration, in *Socialisme*, 1972 (112), pp. 349-354.

(28) SENELLE R. et al., *Politieke, economische en sociale structuur van België, Teksten en Dokumenten*. Brussel, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1970, 258 pp., p. 13, for the population and civil servants indices. See also DEPPE R., in this issue.

(29) PLISSART E. et al., Cabinets ministériels et efficacité des Services Publics, in *Service Public*, 1965 (5), pp. 2-11.

give up and despise the spoils of the cabinet as a drug against politicised bureaucracy (30).

The other opinion is that the public service is politicised, that a minister wishing to have his own-policy worked out, has to have a staff to help him imposing it upon the administration. Workers as a social class are underrepresented in the public service anyway. The possibility of being neutral in political and in administrative matter is denied. Finally the cabinet enables the minister to get people involved who are not taken by routine and inertia (31).

There are also some latent functions of the cabinet :

- bringing new value patterns into the decision making proces ;
- bringing in new technologies and experts into the proces ;
- controlling of the minister by his party pressure groups and political clubs representative for the cleavages ;
- a training devise for young coming politicians ;
- a waiting shunt for unlucky politicians ploughed in the elections ;
- hidden financing of party-bureaucrats ;
- getting openings toward public bureaucracy through public servants who are cabinet-members.

5. Out of all this, following temptative conclusions can be drawn. They will be examined more closely in a forthcoming publication.

There is in the first place a relationship between the growth of ministerial cabinets and the specific evolution of the political system in Belgium and the growing role of the state in socio-economic life. It is a response mechanism to fast changing needs. There is a relationship between cabinet development and the shifting of power toward political parties and groups and hence ministers as representatives or agents of those.

There also is a relationship between the shaping of ministerial cabinets and the specific characteristics of the administrations they are working with, the degree to which these administrations develop their own bureaucratic or technical values or the degree to which they are politicised.

The ultimate function of the Belgian ministerial cabinet is to integrate the political and administrative rationality in a flexible, changing policy-making body composed of politically engaged experts.

(30) SNOY J.Ch., Faut-il des cabinets ministériels, in *La Revue Générale Belge*, 1962 (10), pp. 1-14.

(31) X., Moeten de ministeriële kabinetten worden afgeschaft, in *Socialistische Standpunten*, 1962, pp. 369-372.

