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EDITORIAL

The recent re-shuffling of the New Zealand Cabinet makes you reflect on the differences between the Swiss system of government and that of New Zealand. Whilst in Switzerland we have 7 Federal Councillors or Ministers who each has control over one department, New Zealand has 24 Ministers, of whom, strangely enough, 4 are not even part of the Cabinet. These 24 Ministers control a staggering 75 different ministries, give or take a few. The 7 departments in the Swiss system are clear cut and straight forward: Economy, Justice and Police, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Transport and Power, Finance and finally Defence). In the New Zealand system, some of the ministries admittedly make good sense, just as in Switzerland: Foreign Affairs and Trade, Finance, Justice, Defence, Police, Transport, Internal Affairs. Others such as Health, Energy, Agriculture, Education, Tourism, Commerce, Industry, Customs and Cultural Affairs can still find some justification. But then you find a whole group of ministries which are doubling-up with the main bunch. If you have a Minister of Finance, why do you need a Minister of Revenue as well? (probably to ensure that no one escapes the double-taxation through direct and indirect taxes). Since we already have a Minister for Foreign

Affairs and Trade, why do we need also a Minister of Pacific Islands and a Minister for Trade Negotiations? There is a Minister of Transport, but there is also a Minister of Railways. Maybe even New Zealanders no longer consider the Railways as a mode of transport but something that keeps running off the tracks. Perhaps someone should suggest to the Prime Minister to create a ministry of Derailment. With so many trains leaving the tracks, that ministry might well become the busiest of the lot! In Switzerland we have a department called Justice and Police since these two functions go hand in hand. But not so in New Zealand. Here we have not only 2 separate ministries, but on top of this we also have a different Minister again in charge of the Serious Fraud Office and a fourth Minister for Courts. Four ministers to run what should be only one department and all pulling in different directions, no wonder our pampered assassins, robbers, rapists, muggers, burglars and assorted white collar criminals get away with murder. We have a formidable and somewhat intimidating Minister of Health. So what is the function of the Minister of Crown Health Enterprises? To keep an eye on the other minister? But is this not supposed to be the role of the Opposition? Would it not be better to have no ministers of Health at all rather than two who cancel one another

out? The Minister of Internal Affairs has a whole range of colleagues biting into his apple. The poor guy has to cope with 12811 different ministers: Labour, Environment, Employment, Local Government, Housing, Social Welfare, Consumer Affairs, State, Immigration and State Services (which is apparently different from the ministry of State). We have a perfectly capable Minister of Broadcasting. So what on earth is the Minister Responsible for Radio New Zealand Ltd. there for? And then there is the Minister for Sport, Fitness and Leisure (We all know that ministers do not work very hard, but a Minister for Leisure is really advertising this fact a bit too bluntly!) And how about the Minister of Fisheries and the silliest title of them all, the Minister for Racing. Should Switzerland follow New Zealand's lead and create a Minister for Jassen or Kegeln or have a Federal Councillor for Hornussen? This is lunacy. But the Kiwis are quite serious about their ministry for Racing. Do not be surprised if in the next Cabinet there might be a Minister for Casinos and perhaps even one for Lotto. Anything is possible when it comes to dishing out at taxpayers expense some cosy and well paid government jobs. Further down the line there are these particular ministries which seem to have no clear purpose whatsoever: ministry of Corrections (what on earth is that), ministry for Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Insurance (quite a mouthful), ministry for State Owned Enterprises, ministry of Research, Science and Technology fighting against the ministry for Crown Research Institutes, the ministry of Survey and Land Information which seems to have nothing to do with the

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