

employees held Public Service positions with annual salaries of \$15,000 or more.*

2. Of 28 persons of deputy minister rank in Public Service departments, one is a woman. Of an additional 21 persons of deputy minister rank in boards and agencies which are designated as departments by the Financial Administration Act, one is a woman.

3. As of March 31, 1976, the total number of indeterminate full time public servants was 252,167.* Of these: (a) 170,787 are male; (b) 78,147 are female; (c) 3,233 did not supply information concerning their sex.

* All departments and agencies as defined in Schedule I, Part I of the Public Service Staff Relations Act for which the Public Service Commission has sole authority for appointment, and also the Public Service Staff Relations Board.

RESEARCH PROJECT ON AMARANTH (RED NO. 2)

Question No. 1,123—Mr. Yewchuk:

What research projects is the Department of National Health and Welfare sponsoring or conducting on the effects of Amaranth (Red No.2) on human health?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): The Department of National Health and Welfare is fully aware of world research on the safety of amaranth and other food colours, and is in continuing close contact with scientists around the world who work in this area. In addition, the department has research projects underway to evaluate the safety of amaranth (Red No. 2). These studies involve an assessment of the purity and chemical composition of the dye in order to identify minor impurities. The toxicity of the impurities is being measured by short-term microbial tests to determine their mutagenic potential. Additionally, the metabolism and pharmacokinetic behaviour of amaranth is being investigated in a variety of animal species in an attempt to select the most appropriate species for chronic toxicity testing. No untoward effects have been noted in any of the tests conducted to date. A study of the teratogenicity of amaranth has recently been completed using cats as the test species. All food colours are being reviewed with a view to tightening specifications with respect to impurities.

RESEARCH PROJECTS ON CHLOROFORM

Question No. 1,128—Mr. Yewchuk:

What research projects is the Department of National Health and Welfare sponsoring or conducting on the effects on human health of chloroform added to toothpastes, cough medicines and cosmetics?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): No research projects are being conducted by the Department of National Health and Welfare on the effects on human health of chloroform added to toothpastes, cosmetics and cough medicines. The department is, however, fully aware of the results of studies on chloroform and human health

Order Paper Questions

conducted elsewhere. As a result of a thorough evaluation of world knowledge respecting chloroform and health, a proposal has been formulated to prohibit the sale of products containing chloroform by manufacturers and distributors of drugs and cosmetics with an effective date of September 1, 1977 and communicated to manufacturers on July 8, 1976 (see Information Letter No. 472 attached).

Information Letter

Health Protection Branch

July 8, 1976

I.L. No. 472

TO: All Manufacturers of Drugs or Cosmetics

SUBJECT: Proposed Restrictions on Use of Chloroform

New information from a recent study carried out by the National Cancer Institute in the United States suggests that chloroform may be carcinogenic in rats and mice when administered in high doses over prolonged periods. Although there is no direct evidence that chloroform as used in drugs and cosmetics, has caused injury to the health of humans, the new finding raises doubts about the long-term safety of this ingredient.

As a result of this new information the Health Protection Branch has reviewed the need for chloroform in products subject to the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act and Regulations. The Branch is aware that chloroform has a long history of use in drugs and cosmetics. Presently available information indicates that current usage of chloroform in drug products in Canada is for its antitussive and carminative properties in products taken orally, for its counter-irritant property in liniments, as a preservative, as a flavouring, and as a solvent during the manufacturing process. In cosmetics it is used as a flavouring agent. For each of these applications, it would appear that alternative ingredients are available which currently are not open to suspicion. Therefore, it seems reasonable to discontinue the use of chloroform as an ingredient in drugs and cosmetics so that there will be no possibility of a hazard to the health of Canadian consumers.

It is my intention to recommend the implementation of regulations respecting drugs and cosmetics for human use that will prohibit the sale, by manufacturers or distributors, of products containing chloroform as an ingredient. It will be recommended that these regulations take effect on September 1, 1977. It is considered that there is no immediate hazard from the drugs and cosmetics currently marketed in Canada. Therefore, manufacturers and distributors of these products would be permitted to continue sale of these products up to that date in order to provide for an orderly conversion to reformulated products.

Comments in regard to this proposal should be submitted within thirty days of the date of this Information Letter and directed to:

The Director, Bureau of Drugs, Place Vanier, Tower "B", 355 River Road, Vanier Ontario. K1A 1B8

A. B. Morrison, Ph.D. Assistant Deputy Minister