

*Oral Questions***PUBLIC SERVICE****LAMBERT REPORT—POSSIBILITY OF ROYAL COMMISSION TO INQUIRE INTO SOME RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SERVANTS**

Mr. Walker Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, my question to the Prime Minister arises out of the Lambert report with respect to executive compensation in the public service, particularly from that part of the report which speaks of the advisory board wishing to emphasize the need for establishing principles of accountability which can be practically applicable for the measurement of executive performance on the one hand. On the other hand, that same report recommends the provision of better incentives for the efficient management of public funds, and that a system of rewards for such efforts should be established. These ideas have been around for some time, elaborated on and commented on in early reports produced by Mr. Lambert and his colleagues. In view of this repetition with respect to obviously necessary changes in terms of the performance of senior levels of the Public Service of Canada, will the Prime Minister do more than merely refer the report to his cabinet colleagues? Does he intend to appoint a royal commission to examine, in effect, a royal commission, or are we to see some progress on this matter, particularly with respect to incentives for maximizing the use of public funds by senior levels of the Public Service of Canada?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I point out to the hon. member that the government has taken action on the aspects recommended, in so far as we have assessments of performance in order to slot those in the executive branch of the civil service within certain ranges. Therefore, we have been doing exactly what the advisory board recommends. They are concerned with the area of the public service not falling under order in council appointments and, indeed, those observations are well taken. We are enjoining deputy ministers, within their jurisdiction as managers of departments, to show the same kind of exactness as cabinet has shown in classifying those order in council appointees within the ranges of their duties.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister spoke of performance ratings. Speaking of performance ratings, let me add that Mr. Lambert and his colleagues indicated that it was difficult to accept the results they found. In other words, there was a condemnation of what the Prime Minister says he introduced in the Public Service of Canada. Indeed, that condemnation of performance records in the public service has been felt by other levels in the public service—I have in mind the foreign service secretaries branch, a much lower level, and it indicates—

● (1430)

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the hon. member has a question, will he please put it?

[Mr. Abbott.]

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Would the Prime Minister re-examine his answer with respect to the first question that a system of performance ratings has been introduced, particularly with respect to its adequacy because this is important not just to senior public servants but to the morale of the whole of the public service?

Mr. Trudeau: I would prefer that the hon. gentleman re-examine my answer rather than I should do so. I can assure him that the public service compensation board is not criticizing the cabinet for the way in which it rates performance. We have done this in a way which meets their approval. Their criticism is directed to the level of those appointments which do not come under cabinet, those which are public service appointments. In this area, I agree with the hon. member that the deputy ministers will have to exercise a bit more vigilance to make sure that performance ratings are more close to a norm rather than having too many people bunched in the superior performance category. In this respect, I agree with the hon. member and I agree with the advisory board. More vigilance will have to be shown by the deputy ministers. But I cannot help repeating that as far as cabinet is concerned our order in council appointments have the type of performance ratings of which they approve.

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HEALTH**SACCHARIN—SUGGESTED USE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND WARNING LABEL**

Mr. F. A. Philbrook (Halton): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. It has to do with the proposed ban on certain consumer products containing saccharin due to the discovery of a research link with cancer. Is the minister considering a general public educational program covering all sweeteners, including sugar, as well as a requirement that a prominent warning label be placed on both saccharin tablets and permitted saccharin-containing products?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): There are various techniques by which this subject may be approached. I made public recently a report on cardiovascular diseases in which there was some advice with regard to diet. I think the point raised by the hon. member is an important one since it deals not only with sweeteners but with all aspects of nutrition. This is part of a general strategy we have developed in terms of informing the public about nutrition. Various techniques are used for this purpose, such as inserts with family allowance and old age pension cheques. We hope to develop other techniques to improve this type of public education program as funds become available.