

rate of increase. The hon. member may be aware that the growth in the number of man-years—this has been called the most reliable unit for measuring the size of the public service—has been 6 per cent or more in each of the last two years, as measured from the published figures at the time of the tabling of the main estimates. The government hopes to keep growth between the fiscal years 1974-75 and 1975-76 noticeably below the level of 6 per cent. Its success in this regard will only become evident at the time of the tabling of the next main estimates which are now in the course of compilation.

Hon. members should not be left with the impression that a reduction in the rate of growth is all that easy to accomplish. They should be aware of a wide range of essential labour-intensive services which the federal government now provides. For example, more letters, more

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postmen, more travel, more air traffic controllers—one could give a long list of examples.

The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), acting on his assumption about a reduction in the size of the public service, has asked whether there had been consultation with representatives of staff associations. Since I have made it clear that the assumption was erroneous, he will be able to see there is no need to talk about staff associations in this connection. If there are more and more questions about the size of salaries and the number of people who are making their living in the civil service, it will do a disservice to and will discredit the civil service of Canada, which I submit, with respect, is the finest in the world.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.27 p.m.
