

Finance. As a matter of fact, the chairman and the vice-chairman of the group, Mr. Lambert and Mr. De Grandpré, met with me on the very day the budget was being brought down and they were in the gallery on the night of the budget. I am not saying the report was not ready. It might have been in some other reaches of the civil service, but I did not see it until a few days before.

On the second part of the question, the government has not yet announced any decision on the recommendation. I must say that we have already considered it in cabinet and I hope we will be able to reach a decision very soon.

SUGGESTED LIMITATION OF PAY INCREASES FOR
EXECUTIVES TO \$2,400

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, with regard to my information about the four months, it came from the date of the report which is March 31 of this year, which would make it four months ago three days from now. In light of the guideline recommendations of the Minister of Finance in his concern about dealing with the problem of inflation, to the effect that no increases should exceed \$2,400, will the Prime Minister assure the House that any increases the government might eventually make in the executive category will not exceed this amount?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as to the date itself, I gave an explanation. I might add, for the benefit of the hon. member, that the increases we have traditionally made date from April 1 and, therefore, regardless of the date the report is brought down, if there are any increases they presumably would be retroactive to April 1.

As to the size of the increases, while I take note of the recommendation of the hon. member, I would point out that it might be slightly unfair to impose a range of levels in civil service guidelines which have not been generally accepted by the public. Of course, we, as members of parliament, have limited our own increase to 7 per cent, but I must point out to the hon. member that this is not an example which has generally been followed and, therefore, I would not want to give any undertaking of this nature until we have studied the report in more detail and made a decision.

REQUEST FOR REFERRAL OF REPORT ON EXECUTIVE
COMPENSATION TO COMMITTEE—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO
CURTAIL GROWTH AT EXECUTIVE LEVEL

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister will not stick to those guidelines I would ask whether he will follow the suggestion made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, that before action is taken he will bring the recommendations back to parliament? In relation to that, given the fact that the advisory committee said that "the rate of growth (in the public service executive category) has been excessive", being some 82 per cent since 1970 compared with a general growth rate in the public civil service of only 27 per cent, will the Prime Minister inform the House what steps the government is likely to take to curtail this significant growth at the executive level of the public service?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the critique of the Lambert commission is justified. I would point out with some pride that the President of the Treasury Board anticipated by many, many months the conclusions drawn by the Lambert commission, and sometime last fall the President of the Treasury Board announced guidelines as to the rate of growth in the civil service. The figure for the first quarter of 1975 would indicate, indeed, that the rate of growth, which we thought was excessive, has been brought down to a very low figure. I do not have the figure at my fingertips, but the President of the Treasury Board could make it known to the hon. member. This is a justifiable criticism and we have already dealt with it.

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[Translation]

COMMUNICATIONS

CABLEVISION—INQUIRY AS TO DISCUSSIONS WITH QUEBEC
OFFICIALS OR ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Communications.

Could the minister tell us whether since the last meeting of the provincial ministers of communications, he had some dealings with the Quebec premier concerning the federal-provincial dispute on telecommunications generally and more especially on cablevision?

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Minister of Communications): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Matte: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

Would the minister tell the House whether he has indeed received representations from the Quebec Junior Chamber of Commerce in particular, and even from the Quebec Young Liberals' Association, that are against the minister's position?

Mr. Pelletier: Mr. Speaker, I have received copies of messages sent to the Prime Minister of Canada and the premier of Quebec, but to the best of my recollection, no communication was addressed to me personally.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

HELSINKI CONFERENCE—POSSIBILITY OF DISCUSSING
CONSERVATION OF FISH STOCKS BEYOND THE 200-MILE LIMIT

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, my question relates to the series of questions asked the Prime Minister about his visit. Since he has indicated he plans to raise with the Soviet leader the question of the 200-mile limit, could he tell us whether he will be touching on such matters as the need to reach agreement on positive fishing conservation measures beyond the 200-mile limit or the continental shelf in the area known as the high seas particularly in respect of endangered species such as our salmon and also whales.