

Oral Questions

[English]

PUBLIC SERVICE

OFFER OF CASH BONUS TO MANAGERS

Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General has commended the Government for the introduction of cash bonuses to be paid to some 4,000 managers in the Public Service this year if they cut their budgets. My question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Is it not wasteful to offer these managers a cash bonus in order to reduce their budgets, when keeping costs down is a major part of their jobs in the first place?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, we have announced and will obviously implement a productivity bonus to encourage more efficient use of public resources in the Public Service. I do not see how the Hon. Member can possibly be aware of the details of it as they are still under study since it is a complex issue which deals with an institution as complex as the federal Government.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, since the elimination of person-years or the termination of jobs is one of the management initiatives that would qualify for a cash bonus as outlined by the President of the Treasury Board on February 27, I ask the President of the Treasury Board, alias "The Terminator", is there not a danger of creating a hierarchy of hit-men, a bunch of bureaucratic bounty hunters, each one in a hurry to knock off the other?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, the Opposition is reaching new heights in trying to confuse issues.

Some Hon. Members: Heights?

Mr. de Cotret: Confusion has become the mainstay of their arguments. I stand by the statement that we will be introducing a bonus for productivity. We have never talked about the nature of the bonus. We have never linked the bonus to reducing the labour force. We have talked about it in terms of making available better value for the money of Canadian taxpayers.

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FINANCE

PREPAYMENT OF CHILD TAX CREDIT

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Finance my question is directed to the Minister of State for Finance. Since parents who need the child tax credit do not seem to be able to get any information about this, how does the Government intend to inform

Canadians if they are eligible for the advance on the child tax credit and how they may apply for it?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, that piece of legislation was passed just a few days ago. We are looking at an insert in the first mailing to ensure that appropriate questions are answered. I would welcome suggestions for what should be in that insert from any Member of the House.

Ms. Mitchell: There is considerable confusion in the community about this matter.

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister about a certain discrimination which I believe still exists against those applying for this advance. Does the Minister agree that a low-income woman with a new baby or an unemployed parent whose income has decreased from the previous year, will not be eligible for this child care advance? If he agrees with that, what will he do about this injustice?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, first we should remind ourselves that 700,000 low-income Canadian families will benefit from this prepayment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hockin: The year after next, the low income registered will be the basis upon which the prepayment will be sent, and that is how that problem will be taken care of.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

LONG PLAINS BAND'S LAND CLAIM

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. I have here a government document indicating that on September 3 the Treasury Board Lands Management Advisory Committee approved the transfer of the *Beauséjour* forces base land to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for the Long Plains Indian settlement. Does the Minister deny the existence of this decision?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, the Opposition is getting a little closer this time. Yesterday the Hon. Member's colleague said that on September 3 the Treasury Board had advised this. The Hon. Member is referring to an internal recommendation from within the Department of Indian Affairs regarding the purchase of the Beauséjour site.