

PUBLIC SERVICE

REPORT OF CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON
SALARY INCREASES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Erhart Regier (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Acting Secretary of State. Is it the intention of the government to table in parliament, or to otherwise make public, the recent report of the civil service commission containing reported recommendations for an increase in civil service salaries?

Hon. Ellen L. Fairclough (Acting Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, that question should be properly directed to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Regier: Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Minister of Finance. I notice that he has been very happy today to reveal information. Is the Minister of Finance able to tell us if it is the intention of the government to table in parliament, or to otherwise make public, the recent report of the civil service commission containing reported recommendations for an increase in civil service salaries?

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is the intention of the government in this regard to follow the practice that has always been observed and not to table a report that comes to the government under the provisions of the Civil Service Act as a privileged and confidential document.

Mr. Regier: As a supplementary question may I ask if it is the intention of the government to provide an opportunity for parliament to debate this issue at a very early date?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Well, Mr. Speaker, if there is an issue as to the tabling of this document I am sure the rules of the house will provide opportunities for determining it. I have not digested as thoroughly as I shall when there has been more time all the matters on the order paper, but I believe there is a resolution on the order paper somewhat to that effect.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): In the name of the hon. member for Ottawa West.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): It will be up to the hon. member for Ottawa West to bring it before the house as soon as the work of the house permits.

Mr. Regier: I asked the minister whether an opportunity would be provided to parliament to debate the issue of civil service wages.

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: In view of the fact that this is a matter not under the administrative control of the minister, and because the house has control of what it will debate in the ordinary course under the rules of the house, I would point out that we are waiting now to get on to a debate that will open the door to discussions of that subject.

REPORTED INTENTION TO APPOINT COMMISSION
OF INVESTIGATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. T. Richard (Ottawa East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister. How soon may the house expect an announcement as to the terms of reference and composition of the commission to investigate the operations of the civil service and crown agencies, as announced in the speech from the throne?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): I know of no announcement in the speech from the throne on any such matter.

Mr. Richard (Ottawa East): In the press, rather. Is it the intention of the Prime Minister to appoint such a commission during this session?

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the hon. member has more optimism than the member who previously asked the Prime Minister about a strictly policy matter.

Mr. Richard (Ottawa East): Mr. Speaker, this announcement has been made from time to time by those on the front benches opposite. We are entitled to an answer. There is nothing in the throne speech.

TRADE

REPORTED STATEMENT BY U.S. SECRETARY
OF COMMERCE

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Will the minister comment on the statement made by the United States commerce secretary that he favours a free trade area between Canada and the United States?

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I doubt very much, Mr. Speaker, whether I should comment with regard to statements made in the United States. If the hon. member wishes to raise this issue in the course of the debate on the speech from the throne we might deal with it then.