

Glassco Commission Report

ment of government supplies and to carry out the duties suggested by the commission.

Report No. 8 on telecommunications poses complex problems concerning several ministers who are now reviewing these proposals. It is already clear, as the commissioners emphasized, that additional expert assistance is required in the co-ordination of government needs in the telecommunications field and the formulation of long range plans. We have accordingly decided to establish forthwith a central telecommunications planning unit in the Department of Transport for this purpose.

My colleagues and I see merit in the proposals in report No. 9 on printing and publishing. In particular we agree that outside printing firms should be given a better opportunity to compete on a fairer basis with the government printing bureau. I am given to understand one of the reports to be submitted in a few weeks time will have some bearing on the proposed role of the Queen's publisher, and we are therefore deferring action on the recommendation to establish such office until we see this further report.

As far as report No. 11 on legal services is concerned, I do not anticipate any difficulty in dealing promptly with the recommendations made.

As to report No. 10, on the make or buy problem, I may say that this raises issues of government policy as well as suggestions for a number of specific applications. In general I am in accord with the approach which underlies this report. It appears that there is much which can be done along the lines envisaged. As a first step the government has accepted the recommendation on page 330 that new facilities of the kind discussed be not established or old ones replaced without thorough consideration being given to the use of other government shops or outside suppliers. This has already been done in the case of the dominion lighthouse depot, to which the commission refers at page 328. Furthermore the government is asking all these departments and agencies to review the detailed proposals in this make or buy report and to submit their views and proposed actions on them.

Sir, this is, in general, a summary of the reports so far received, and is indicative of the action already taken and to be taken by the government. With leave of the house, as further progress is made statements can be made to the house, which I am sure is very interested in assuring the maximum of efficiency at all times in government administration, and also that degree of economy which, in no way restricting efficiency, can be achieved.

27507-3—135½

Mr. Walter L. Gordon (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, in rising to comment on the statement of the Prime Minister about the reports of the Glassco commission, I should first like to join him in thanking the commissioners for the work they have been doing. Perhaps I might be permitted to say a special word of thanks to the chairman, who was my partner in our profession for over 20 years and whose son happens to be the father of my grandson. When I say that he was my professional partner for over 20 years, I should not like anyone to think that he and I agreed on political questions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have some personal interest in the implementation of recommendations contained in the reports of royal commissions and in the long delays which frequently ensue before anything is done about them. I say this with some feeling, because it is now six years since the royal commission on Canada's economic prospects made certain recommendations that I noticed found their way into the speech from the throne at the beginning of this session. I hope it will not take as long a time as six years to do something effective about some of the recommendations of the Glassco commission. This does not mean that we on this side of the house endorse all of the recommendations of the Glassco commission; on the contrary, we have reservations about a number of the changes which are proposed. But we have been shocked, as I am sure the public has been shocked, by the evidence of waste, extravagance and inefficiency which has been reported by this commission.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Some hon. Members: When did they start?

Mr. Speaker: Order. One representative from each party is entitled to speak at this time, and I think we are quite prepared to hear him, uninterrupted.

Mr. Gordon: I think, Mr. Speaker, it would be quite unfair to interpret these reports as a reflection upon the public officials who comprise the Canadian civil service, which is one of the best in the world. It is a serious reflection, however, on those who have been responsible for directing the work and the organization of the civil service, and I would remind hon. members that this has been the responsibility of the present government for almost six years.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Winch: And the Liberals for 22 years.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I think it would be instructive to remember that remarks following statements made on motions are not opportunities for political speeches, but that