

Public service staff reductions to cut the cost of government

A reduction of 60,000 federal employees by 1983 was announced by Treasury Board President Sinclair Stevens on August 15. Mr. Stevens said that the first goal was to reduce "the presence and cost" of the Government; and that a reduction in the number of federal public servants was "an incidental effect".

How it will be done

The minister outlined the method by which the 60,000-cut would be achieved:

- the selling of several Crown corporations to private industry during the next three years (20,000);
- requiring Crown corporations not under direct Treasury Board control to reduce staff from the present 30,000 to 25,000 (5,000);
- a 2 percent across-the-board reduction in person-years in the current fiscal year in departments and agencies where person-years are controlled by Treasury Board (5,000);
- selective and gradual reductions during each of the next three years in departments and agencies where person-years are controlled by Treasury Board (30,000).

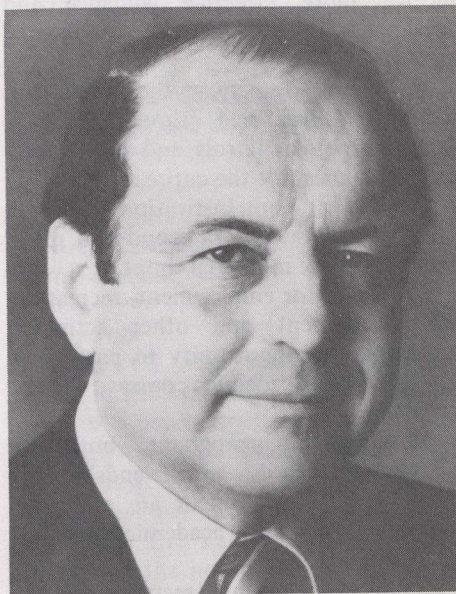
Mr. Stevens said the reduction would not affect essential services nor would it be achieved at the expense of individual employees.

"It is estimated that some 36,000 employees leave the Public Service each year. It is our assessment that we should still be able to hire up to two persons for every three that retire or otherwise choose to leave the Public Service over the period in question," he stated.

Program principles

"We believe it is important to emphasize again the principles by which the Government will be guided in developing and implementing our plans," said Mr. Stevens.

- "We will rely on attrition;
- essential services will be maintained at an adequate level;
- when hiring, departments and agencies will endeavour to maintain and improve the current proportions of women, francophones, handicapped and native people in the Public Service;
- we will continue special recruitment programs, where appropriate, in order to ensure an inflow of well-qualified candi-



Sinclair Stevens

dates for the future direction and operation of the Public Service;

- any adverse effect from the program will be minimized in areas of high unemployment;
- in areas most affected by the program, the Government will take steps to encourage private sector development to increase employment; and
- in cases where activities are transferred to the private sector the Government will undertake to ensure that any private sector employer chosen to assume a function currently performed by Public Service personnel is one whose personnel and labour relations practices are at, or above, the norm for the industry.

"I would like to elaborate briefly on two of these principles — the use of attrition and employment of special groups — so there is no misunderstanding of our policy. The Government will make full use of attrition in implementing reductions in the size of the Public Service. Where activities are 'privatized', contracted out or transferred to other levels of government, it is expected that most of the employees will go with their work to the organization which is continuing to perform the work.

"Where programs are being reduced, the timing and phasing of the reductions will take into account, along with other factors, the attrition likely to take place over the next few years and the capacity of the rest of the Public Service to absorb

employees from the programs being reduced. It should be possible to reassign the employees affected to other positions which are or which will become vacant elsewhere...."

Seminar on squid fishery

A federally-sponsored seminar on development of the Atlantic offshore squid fishery will be held in Nova Scotia in late September, Fisheries and Oceans Minister James McGrath has announced. The seminar is expected to involve fishermen, and government and industry representatives.

"The Canadian catch has increased steadily from 1975 to 1978, and is expected to increase further in 1979. Although scientists still cannot forecast year-to-year resource fluctuations, squid could become one of the most lucrative of Canada's Atlantic Coast fisheries," said the minister.

"Many areas must be considered in developing a long-range management plan for squid," he added. "In particular, we need to look at harvesting and processing technology, potential for near-shore fishery development, possible acquisition of Canadian freezer trawlers, and the question of continued access for foreign fishermen in exchange for commensurate benefits such as marketing arrangements."

Soil collected for "Canada Tree"

Soil from each of the ten provinces will be used to plant a "Canada Tree" on Parliament Hill in Ottawa next spring. The national tree planting is a fiftieth anniversary project of the Junior Forest Wardens Association, which has some 20,000 members across Canada between the ages of ten and 16.

The soil is being collected coast-to-coast by Viv Williams, national president of the association and Bill Myring, chief warden. Accompanied by tour director Sylvia Chu, the two British Columbians are on a country-wide tour of Canada to promote forestry youth programs.

"Canadians should be conscious of the woodlands and understand their needs. The forests are vital to the economy and livelihood of our nation," says Mr. Williams.