

tions of the all-Party Committee on Equality Rights, perhaps the Minister of Employment and Immigration is. I would like to address my supplementary question to that Minister.

The Minister knows that the proposed—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is now becoming a long preamble. Does the Hon. Member have a question immediately, please?

Ms. Copps: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister of Employment and Immigration announce to the House that she will follow the recommendations of the all-Party committee and not exempt the RCMP and the Canadian Armed Forces from employment equity legislation which is before the House, since that specific exemption is in violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I have been in this House now for almost 14 years.

I waited some 13 years sitting on the opposition benches for the Government of the day—in fact, pleading with it—to bring forward employment equity legislation. I am pleased and proud that this Government has finally brought employment equity legislation into being. I hope that Hon. Members opposite will see that it receives quick passage.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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PUBLIC SERVICE

NUMBER OF LAY-OFFS

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. It also concerns women workers and, in particular, women workers in the Public Service of Canada, clerks, messengers, and other support staff, who will be laid off by the Government by the thousands over the course of this year. The Minister will know that thousands of people were demonstrating across the country today for that very reason.

Is the Minister aware that the information collected by the union has led the Public Service Alliance to conclude that 3,500 federal employees will lose their jobs and be out of the Public Service by the end of this fiscal year? Will he explain how that can be reconciled with the figure of 700 which he gave last Friday?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I think I have already responded to that question. It is quite clear from our manpower planning exercise that we will reduce the number of person-years in the Public Service, as we said in the last Budget, by 5,000 over the next fiscal year. We expect that 3,200 will be relocated within their existing Departments, 1,100 will be placed in other Depart-

ments throughout the Public Service, and at a maximum 700 may be facing lay-offs. Those are the numbers.

Oral Questions

REDUCTION BY ATTRITION

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, is the Minister aware that his estimate amounts to only three-tenths of 1 per cent of the employees of the federal Public Service of Canada?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Are you aware?

Mr. Cassidy: Could he say why it would not be possible, if those cuts are to be achieved this year, to achieve them by attrition so that the Government can, in fact, guarantee federal public service employees, who do a fine job, the job security they seek?

[Translation]

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I repeat that we had lengthy discussions with the unions last spring, to formulate a policy for redeployment in the work place to minimize the impact of any employment cutbacks that might occur. Listen, this is a serious matter. I think that we must show every consideration for people who might be displaced. A policy was agreed on with the unions to try and minimize the impact. As I said before, this impact will affect a maximum of 700 employees, and we are still trying to reduce that impact, and we hope to be able to re-hire these people in some way—

● (1450)

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Minister may want to finish that answer under Statements. The Hon. Member for Western Arctic.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SOUTH YEMEN—SAFETY OF CANADIAN CITIZENS

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

In view of the turbulence in South Yemen, could the Minister advise the House respecting the safety of Canadian citizens in that country and of any arrangements which might have been made for their removal?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as of noon today there was one Canadian in Aden, an employee of the UNDP Organization, who had requested to be left there who has now requested to be assisted in leaving. We are assisting in that leaving. There are 10 other Canadians in the country in the oil fields, far from the battle and violence. They are judged to be safe. If our judgment of