

Oral Questions

[Translation]

PARLIAMENT HILL

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Yesterday, the minister tried to implicate the opposition in its unacceptable ruling with respect to public order on Parliament Hill. However, he admitted himself that no one had ever shown either the ruling or its contents to the opposition.

My question is as follows: Why did the government violate its own official policy of giving sixty days notice before any ruling takes effect? What justification was there in this case for not applying that policy?

[English]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly provided in the Statutory Instruments Act that for internal matters the 60-day period does not apply. But in this particular instance I was certainly informed, and I saw on television two weeks before the implementation, that the regulations had been promulgated and that there had been discussions in the Board of Internal Economy earlier as to their nature. There was all-party agreement.

There was no reason to suspect that the hon. member was not kept informed by his House leader. How am I supposed to know that happens?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I will direct my supplementary question to the Minister of Public Works because it was that minister who made the submission to cabinet that resulted in that order coming forward.

The minister said in paragraph 10 of his submission to cabinet that this regulation will only be enforced in situations of undue noise or disturbance immediately next to the Parliament Buildings.

What undue noise and disturbance was there in a 70-year old priest, Father Van Hee, whose protest was in the form of a silent vigil?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, my colleague should know that it is the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who, in their discretion, enforce these regulations. I know that he would not

expect me or any other minister to direct the RCMP as to how they should carry out their business.

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PUBLIC SERVICE

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear from the Canadian Ethnocultural Council study released today that the federal government has failed visible minorities including women, aboriginals and the disabled.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Prime Minister of Canada how he can justify a rate of 2.9 per cent representation for visible minorities in the Public Service when there is an availability rate of 6.4 per cent in the labour market. This is clearly a failing grade for the government and totally unacceptable. How can he justify this?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to my hon. colleague that when we took office the rate of visible minority participation in the Public Service was 1.7 per cent. We have increased it in five short years to 3 per cent and the target for 1991 is 3.8 per cent. That is an awful lot more than that government ever did when it was in office.

Ms. Blondin: Mr. Speaker, I do not think the minister is going to go straight to heaven for his accomplishments if he dies today.

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Prime Minister. Why do the Prime Minister or the minister not simply admit that the representation of these groups in the Public Service is dismal, particularly in the management category?

Will the Prime Minister commit today to include all federal departments and institutions in a strengthened Employment Equity Act so that the visible minorities can take their rightful place in the Public Service, instead of being so absolutely ridiculous in his comments?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, to reach the goals that we have set for ourselves in this respect we have appointed an advisory committee. We have put in place a visible minority employment program in the Public Service. This is a program to actively recruit and promote visible minorities. We have allocated this program \$15 million and we have provided this program 400 person years to