

*Supply*

Could the President of the Treasury Board address himself to that matter?

**Mr. Johnston:** Mr. Chairman, the office of the Comptroller General will be producing the departmental comptroller projects this year. There is no doubt that the office of the Comptroller General, which reports to me, and I, as President of the Treasury Board, are committed to proceeding with the implementation of this part of the program which is so necessary to establish proper financial controls in the various departments.

**Mr. Thomson:** Mr. Chairman, I do not believe the President of the Treasury Board understood my question. We need the departmental financial comptrollers in place before the program can be implemented. Are these men in place, or when will they be in place to implement the program?

**Mr. Johnston:** Mr. Chairman, I did understand the question. I think the issue is twofold. First, of course, is the question of finding proper and capable people to fill the role of departmental comptroller in these various departments. That in itself is a challenge. Second, of course, it is a matter of establishing and signing off action plans pursuant to all the various IMPAC studies, which are currently proceeding.

● (1750)

A departmental comptroller is a financial officer with a greater breadth of experience and discipline in certain areas than is readily available in many of the departments at the present time. The office of the Comptroller General is addressing itself to that problem, which is in part a manpower problem. We will probably be looking at it also through such programs as executive interchange and other techniques designed, hopefully, to be able to acquire some of the talent and professional disciplines needed from perhaps the private sector in order to move ahead with this very important aspect of the management control systems in departments, as the hon. member has indicated.

**Mr. Thomson:** Mr. Chairman, the point I am trying to get at here is that the Auditor General has stated in his report that the Comptroller General has completed his IMPAC studies and he is ready to move ahead on implementation and he does not have the manpower to do so.

The President of the Treasury Board is saying that the IMPAC studies are continuing to go on in tandem with looking for people. That is not the case as presented by the Auditor General. He is saying that the IMPAC studies are completed and now we need the people to get on with the program and to implement it, and we do not have the people. My question is: when are we going to have the people?

**Mr. Johnston:** Mr. Chairman, perhaps I should go back and review what the Auditor General has said. I would be surprised if he said that the IMPAC program was completed. In fact action plans have been signed off now with, I believe, seven departments and agencies. We hope we will be able to sign off approximately 25 by the end of the fiscal year.

But the point that should be borne in mind is that proceeding with many of the recommendations, new procedures and new management practices that will be called for under those action plans, can be carried forward without there being a departmental comptroller in place. Many of them do not require his presence. What I am saying to the hon. gentleman is that we are moving ahead rapidly, as rapidly as we can, with that other aspect as well. He can rest assured that I intend to give full support to the office of the Comptroller General in bringing that part of the over-all management control program to fruition.

**Mr. Thomson:** Mr. Chairman, perhaps the President of the Treasury Board should have a discussion with the Auditor General. In this document dated May 2, 1980, the Auditor General is talking about a discussion between himself and the Comptroller General. He said that "We discussed where his IMPAC program is now which he has had in motion for 18 months and they are ready now to go into implementation. However, they cannot implement the program because they do not have the departmental comptroller in place."

Those are the words of the Auditor General and I will be happy to supply the President of the Treasury Board with the source of the quotation. It is dated May 2, 1980.

**Mr. Johnston:** Mr. Chairman, the hon. member should bear in mind that that statement of the Auditor General may be somewhat dated in that progress has been made.

**Mr. Stevens:** It was May 2.

**Mr. Johnston:** The Auditor General's report that we are discussing here is the Auditor General's report for the year ended March 31, 1979. There are financial officers in all of these departments and good solid progress has been made. If the hon. gentleman wants any further information on it either here or in the Standing Committee on Public Accounts or the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates where I will be appearing, I will be glad to cover the matter in detail, or I am prepared to forward him a report. One is never satisfied with progress and improvement of management. All I can say is that we are doing, I believe, everything that reasonably can be done at this stage to satisfy the criticisms that the Auditor General has put forward.

**The Deputy Chairman:** The Minister of Transport is seeking the floor but time has expired.

**Mr. Pepin:** In the event that I am not able to be back after eight o'clock, I would like to answer a couple of questions, the first from my Siamese twin, the hon. member from Timmins-Chapleau. This is with respect to the Timmins airport. The government has recognized the need for this airport, and in the fiscal year 1979-80 \$20,000 was spent to purchase land. For 1980-81, this year, \$90,000 is assigned to the site preparation for the instrument landing system, and in 1981-82, \$1.7 million for the instrument landing system, plus \$229,000 for electronic equipment. The program should finish by 1982-83