

*Oral Questions*

If the hon. member is going to talk about plant closures, then I think it is important to talk about those that have closed in recent months. If he strings off a list of plant closures over the last three or four years, that is not fair in terms of this economic problem.

We acknowledge we have a problem and we are going to try to resolve it.

**An hon. member:** We'll be happy to.

\* \* \*

**LAND CLAIMS**

**Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister in the absence of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Yesterday the minister of Indian and northern affairs announced that the 20-year old massive Dene-Métis comprehensive land claim is dead. Under the new cabinet endorsed regional land claim strategy, some of the western Arctic Dene and Métis are in, and some are out.

We applaud those that are in, however, the balance of the Dene-Métis population who are alienated, essentially sidelined, and casualties of a regressive, divisive outdated land claims policy and brutal negotiating tactics of the federal government want to know what noble and honourable plans this government has in store to deal with their land claims.

**Hon. Shirley Martin (Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, it is indeed unfortunate the agreement that was initialled and signed could not be completed for all members of the Dene-Métis nation.

I do not think that the member with all her concern for the people in the north would want us to step back and not continue with settling land claims. We are moving ahead with the groups that do want to continue in that area. We will also continue to move with all other groups who want to sit down and talk about land claims.

**Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

In a speech on September 25, the Prime Minister referred to the success of recent case law in recognizing aboriginal rights. Now that the government has walked away from and replaced the Dene-Métis comprehensive land claims, I would like to know if the Prime Minister will let the courts decide whether the rights of the aboriginal people in Western Arctic are legitimate, or is he afraid he will be faced with a judgment like the decision with Sparrow and Sioui?

**Hon. Shirley Martin (Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, we did not walk away from the agreement with the Dene-Métis.

The Prime Minister made a commitment in this House that we would continue to work on land claims. We are doing that. There are groups that are meeting. There are groups that are having discussions with the native community. We have brought them into the discussion. They will stay in the discussion, and we will act on the outcome.

\* \* \*

**INDIAN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, since Parliament was recalled in September, we have been asking the government to tell us what really happened during this summer's Mohawk crisis on the grounds that a smart country can learn from its mistakes.

The RCMP has just investigated themselves over one incident on one night. Claude Ryan is investigating his own Quebec police forces, and the Conservatives on the aboriginal affairs committee of this House are trying to shut down the parliamentary inquiry.

My question is directed to the Minister of Justice. Does she agree with me that nothing is really being investigated in a comprehensive and an independent way? Will she, on behalf of the government, announce a full, public, independent, comprehensive inquiry into the Oka crisis?

**Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, that is an extraordinary question, and it raises a whole lot of issues that have to do with a whole lot of different departments of this government, including the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Department of National Defence.