

amendment to the convention with the Secretary of the Interior of the United States was to open up the possibility of finding a remedy for a grievance which has been felt since 1917, a limitation which confined Indian and Inuit hunting to the seasons applicable to all the others.

My colleague has opened up that situation now to allow negotiations with the provinces and the Indian people so that Indians and Inuit might hunt outside that season. So the move we made had the effect of expanding Indian rights, which I think was consistent with the treaty.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** No matter what the benevolent explanation may be, the Indians are being deprived of their rights and I want an assurance from the minister to protect the Indians' treaty rights, not the generalization he made at the inception of his remarks when dealing with my question. Are you going to give them their rights, or will you deprive them of these sacred rights to which they are unquestionably entitled?

**An hon. Member:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Faulkner:** I am not sure you know what a treaty right is all about.

Mr. Speaker, I tried to respond directly to the right hon. gentleman's question. It was he who raised the question of the Migratory Birds Convention and he pointed out that it restricted Indian rights. I agreed with him and said that a few weeks ago my colleague and I arranged with the other parties to the treaty to expand it. So what we have done, in fact, is to allow for the expansion of Indian hunting rights.

The right hon. member talks about a range of other rights. I would point out that there are presently discussions going on with the Indian people within the framework of amendments to the Indian Act which specifically deal with hunting, trapping and fishing rights. Furthermore, an agreement in principle has been concluded with the Inuvialuit of the Mackenzie delta which enshrines not only hunting, trapping and fishing rights but specialized rights, exclusive rights to harvesting. I do not want to be gratuitous, but I have to say that this government has probably done more than any previous government to ensure the rights of the Indian and Inuit people.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** It was my government which gave them the vote that Liberal party governments denied them all through the years.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Oral Questions

[Translation]

#### SHIPBUILDING

INQUIRY AS TO MEASURES GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO TAKE TO REBUILD SHIPBUILDING FACILITIES IN GASPÉ

**Mr. Alexandre Cyr (Gaspé):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Régional Economic Expansion. As the minister is surely aware, a fire has destroyed the Gaspé shipbuilding facilities, thereby depriving 60 people of work and causing losses of about \$4 million. Can the minister tell us if these people can count on his department's good offices so that these shipbuilding facilities can be rebuilt in the near future?

**Hon. Marcel Lessard (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Mr. Speaker, I have just been informed, when returning to Ottawa, of this terrible fire which destroyed the Gaspé shipbuilding facilities. We will ensure that department officials in Rimouski immediately contact the owners of the firm concerned to find out if it intends to rebuild these facilities, as we are given to believe. I want to give the hon. member my word that we will do all we can and as much as the existing programs will allow us to help the people involved.

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[English]

#### STATUS OF WOMEN

ALLEGED FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the minister responsible for the status of women. It refers to the latest report of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women having to do with women in the public service and entitled "Barriers to Equal Opportunity."

● (1440)

The report is a veritable indictment of the policies and programs of the federal government and concludes that the federal government has failed to provide equal opportunities to women in the public service and that it is lagging behind the private sector. In light of cabinet directive No. 44 issued in 1972, and the cabinet document on equal opportunities issued in November of 1975, can the minister explain why the government has totally ignored its responsibilities with respect to women employed in the public service?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, first I must say that the hon. member has given a very biased reading of that report. That report contains several other aspects which the hon. member seems to ignore. I would like to remind him that a series of measures have been taken by Treasury Board with the Public Service Commission to try and improve the situation in terms of equal opportunities for women in the public service.

As the hon. member knows, departments are now required to bring forward five-year plans and to be up to date every