

Adjournment Debate

I believe the minister should have a closer look at the question I asked, advance the answer she gave me and simply address the observation of the Auditor General. Is the defence program management system ineffective or not? If it is not, tell us why. If it is, what immediate measures are being taken to correct these deficiencies?

[Translation]

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to answer a question that the hon. member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception asked the Minister of National Defence in this House on February 2.

Since the Auditor General took a representative sample of projects in February 1991, the Department of National Defence has made important changes which directly affect this management problem. For greater efficiency, the Canadian Forces have adopted capital programs which reflect the defence policy announced in September 1991 regarding present and future military roles.

The restructuring at national defence headquarters to support this initiative led to the setting up of a team responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the defence program management system. The streamlining of the project approval process and some needed changes should lead to greater efficiency and savings in the project management cycle.

Since the hon. member raised the issue of the EH-101 project, I would like to make the following comments. Several recommendations made by the Auditor General have already been implemented in that project. For example, no contractor was given responsibility for the whole project. Instead, this responsibility is shared by two main contractors who will work in their respective fields of competence.

One of the main contractors is from another country, while the other is Canadian. Also, procurements were made in the most sensible way by buying what we could in Canada, in the best interests of our economy.

I also want to point out that these two main contractors have the contractual obligation to provide for

regional economic benefits in Canada, which will be monitored and assessed by IST Canada. If these two contractors do not meet their obligations, they will incur appropriate penalties.

[English]

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Bill Vankoughnet (Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington): Mr. Speaker, further to my question to the Minister of Indian Affairs on February 24 I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak about native hunting and fishing rights in Ontario.

The Williams treaty was signed in 1923 and is the most recent Ontario treaty with the native peoples. This treaty involves seven Indian bands in south-central Ontario and included a very substantial financial compensation to the Indian bands in the amount of \$500,000 in return for their giving up any right to fish and hunt during closed seasons.

In 1993 dollars this compensation is equivalent to \$20 million. The courts have ruled that due to the treaty, members of the seven bands must obey the seasons and regulations.

• (1805)

In one particular case, Mr. George Howard was charged and convicted for fishing in the closed season. He has appealed through the courts up to and including the Ontario Court of Appeal. Each time his conviction and therefore the Williams treaty has been upheld.

The Ontario government is now seeking to ignore these facts and give licences in the form of interim agreements to the seven Williams treaty bands.

The legality of the Williams treaty has been upheld by the courts yet the provincial government pushes on. The area which will be affected includes approximately 1.5 million Ontario residents and cuts a huge swath through the heart of Ontario's tourism and recreational industry.

To arbitrarily tear up this treaty would not only do serious harm to these industries, but also damage the lasting good relations between Ontario's native peoples and non-natives, perhaps to the point where public safety could be threatened. Conservation in Ontario would also be put into peril by such actions.