

Mr. HENDERSON: At first blush it would seem that if the recommendations in this report can be made effective that the Crown Assets Disposal Corporation can be set up or reset on a better basis than appears to be evident from this discussion, and that we might have the solution to the problem right there; however, I do agree that I should take into consideration the possibility of the other approach you suggest.

Mr. MORTON: They may not have had their minds directed to that alternative?

Mr. HENDERSON: I do not think that was part of the terms of reference handed to them.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I think I should point out at this stage that Crown Assets have done very useful work over the years. At one time they had 10,000 or more employees; now they are down to 115 or so. It is just the other side of the coin that we should keep in mind.

Mr. CHOWN: If I may make one other suggestion, Mr. Chairman, to the Auditor General. I wonder if this would be possible to execute, that the Price Waterhouse Company of management consultants should not be re-retained without your serious consideration, if it is found that in cooperation with the officials of the crown corporation concerned our own Auditor General can make the necessary adjustments in the present report to streamline the organization and get it functioning at maximum efficiency.

Mr. HENDERSON: I think, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Richard and I would want to bear that point in mind very definitely.

Mr. McGRATH: Further to Mr. Morton's comment, Mr. Chairman, that the terms of reference of the Crown Assets Disposal Corporation today places the president and the officials of that corporation under tremendous responsibility, we have every sympathy for you, I can assure you, Mr. Richard, and members of your staff. We appreciate that fully. This is just in support of Mr. Morton's contention that perhaps consideration be given to making the corporation an agency, under the direct control of the Department of Defence Production.

Mr. HENDERSON: I think that was contained in Mr. Morton's suggestion, if I understood it right, Mr. McGrath.

Mr. McGRATH: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there anything else, gentlemen? If not, will you leave the calling of the next meeting, which will probably be for the purposes of considering our report, to the chairman?

Agreed.

Mr. SPENCER: Mr. Chairman, may I just clear up one matter in my own mind. I hope it is not something that has been already dealt with. It follows along the explanation that is given in the report of Price Waterhouse as to the advantages of the private opening of these tenders. I think I should like to direct my question to the Auditor General.

No. 1 is: would not those reasons equally apply—and if not, to what extent do they not apply equally—to the opening of all tenders, including construction tenders and tenders that are called by all government departments?

Secondly, if on balance that is considered to be a preferable manner, then do you suggest that the same procedure should be followed in the calling of tenders by the departments for construction and otherwise?

Mr. HENDERSON: If I understood your question correctly, Mr. Spencer, I think it is that in view of the fact that tenders are opened in public in the Department of Transport, and the Department of Public Works, should they not likewise receive similar treatment in Crown Assets?