

extending a further visit to the United States in an attempt to further good relationships between North America and this great union of European countries, headed by the distinguished member of the Bundestag, the Honourable Mr. Sieglerschmidt.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

LOCKHEED CONTRACT—POSSIBILITY OF CANADA GUARANTEEING BANK LOAN FOR COMPANY

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence. Lockheed, with the assistance of the Canadian government, is now engaged in seeking a large loan from Canadian banks to finance the first years of production of the LRPA. Will the minister state without equivocation that the Canadian government is not going to guarantee any loan by a Canadian banking consortium or by individual banks to Lockheed?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have said many times that the government of Canada will not be guaranteeing any loan.

Mr. McKenzie: Since the Minister of Supply and Services told this House yesterday that he had assessed Lockheed's financial position and found it such that he could consider signing a contract, what is the reason the government will not help Lockheed to get the money by guaranteeing the loan?

Mr. Richardson: Because it will not be necessary for the government to provide assistance. Lockheed is in the process of negotiating a major contract with the government of Canada, and that contract in itself will provide the basis for financing.

LOCKHEED CONTRACT—ALLEGED COLLAPSE OF NEGOTIATIONS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could ask the minister whether he has been advised, since his return from the west, of reports in the press indicating the near collapse of the negotiations with respect to the Orion, and does he agree with the present situation as expressed by the press? If so, is he or the Prime Minister now prepared to give a simple assurance to the Canadian military that in fact the aging and venerable Argus will be replaced, preferably with an Orion?

● (1430)

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to hear the support coming from the hon. member for the Orion. There is not any doubt in my mind that the aircraft we selected is more cost effective than any of the alternatives that were considered. There are many other factors which support

Oral Questions

the continuation of this contract. The negotiations which are taking place between the Lockheed Company and the banks are proceeding. To the best of my information, they are looking at it in a positive way and going ahead in a constructive way.

* * *

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

SUGGESTED REFERENCE OF GUN CONTROL MEASURE TO SUPREME COURT TO DETERMINE WHETHER JURISDICTION FEDERAL OR PROVINCIAL

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice. It is with regard to the Di Iorio and Gerard Fontaine case in which the Supreme Court of Canada held that the provincial government should have the right to conduct a criminal inquiry within the terms "administration of justice of the province." In light of that, and in light of the fact that Bill C-83 contains several pages of provisions relating to provincial inquiries, giving jurisdiction, and the court having ruled that way, will the minister refer the whole or part of Bill C-83 to the Supreme Court of Canada to determine whether the gun control administration legislation is within the provincial powers rather than the federal powers as defined by the British North America Act? I ask this in light of the fact the Supreme Court of Canada ruling on provincial inquiries makes this redundant in the bill.

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I do not really see what the Di Iorio case has to do with the gun control measure. Therefore, we have no intention of referring that to the Supreme Court of Canada. With regard to the decision of the court with relation to Bill C-83 and the provisions for crime inquiries, we are still examining the judgment very carefully. It is an extremely complex judgment. It is a matter I will want to discuss in committee when the bill is in committee after Easter.

Mr. Woolliams: Does the minister not consider that the sections dealing with the administration of gun control might well fall within provincial jurisdiction, in light of the decision on the other matter which is on all fours, and that the Supreme Court of Canada should have an opportunity to study and decide on this matter before we waste the time of parliament, the committee and the public? I ask this because the government has moved closure to gag the opposition in this debate.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, measures related to gun control have been in the Criminal Code for over 50 years. In my view, it is a valid exercise in the jurisdiction of the parliament of Canada. That seems to be a proper question to be asked in committee where I will be happy to examine it in detail. I certainly cannot accept the premise of the hon. member.