

Oral Questions

• (1455)

Yesterday the Auditor General's report pointed out that the five year \$1 billion Canadian aboriginal economic development program aimed at addressing the economic disparities between aboriginal people and other Canadians had at least three major flaws. It lacked leadership and accountability, it was void of overall implementation plans and it showed examples of poor co-ordination. The throne speech also indicated that more new programs would be introduced by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Will the minister assure this House that he will investigate previous program failures and take steps to correct them before spending yet more of Canadian taxpayers' money with the same results?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry): Mr. Speaker, the aboriginal economic development program falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Industry. I would like to advise the hon. member that we do tend to very carefully observe the application of funds from that program.

The member should know that an independent study by the consulting firm of Goss Gilroy indicated that the aboriginal economic development program was a very successful program. With the views of the Auditor General now known to us it of course gives us the opportunity to review his comments and see to it that these programs are effective.

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, I would like to go back to the question again. Will the minister assure the House that he will investigate previous program failures before implementing new programs that were announced in the throne speech?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry): Mr. Speaker, yes we will.

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PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Prime Minister if he will reassure the Canadian people that the rationalization programs and policies of the former government which resulted in the loss of thousands of public service jobs will be re-examined. Wherever possible, will they be modified or eliminated entirely in order to diminish the deterioration of quality public service as well as the anguish and suffering by those directly affected?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be able to say that we have already moved on the question of reorganization.

We have changed some of the decisions that were reached by the previous government in order to improve relationships with the public service and in order to improve the quality of life of public servants. We are continuing to do that.

In particular, the abolition of chiefs of staff, the decrease in our ministerial offices and the argument of the Prime Minister that no ministers can succeed without having a proper relationship with their civil servants have all improved the relationship and are helping us at present to give better government.

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[Translation]

PAY EQUITY

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board.

The most recent statistics on average income in Canada were published by Statistics Canada this week. The difference between the average yearly income of men and that of women in 1992 is striking. Men earn \$39,468 on average, as compared to \$28,350 for women. The difference is \$11,000.

My question is this: Does the Minister have concrete proposals to put forward to correct this serious injustice affecting women in every sector of the economy that falls under his jurisdiction?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. One of the programs this government is most committed to is the matter of pay equity as indeed is employment equity to give the opportunity for all peoples of our country to be able to advance in the public service of the federal government.

The same statistics that the hon. member cites also show that progress in fact is being made. I must say that while we have gone some distance, we have some distance to go. We remain committed to carrying out those programs.

• (1500)

[Translation]

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec): Mr. Speaker, am I mistaken or did the Minister say he was committed to implementing pay equity programs for his own Public Service employees to set a good example?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure): Mr. Speaker, yes.