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States and covering the eastern, western and southern approaches to North America. In the north, there will be a new and improved DEW Line—to be called the North Warning System. Most of the North Warning System will be located on Canadian territory. The new radars will permit Canadian forces interceptors—CF-18s—to identify and, if necessary, engage intruders on the perimeter. North Warning will enhance our sovereign ability to control access to Canadian airspace.

In concluding this agreement, we will be taking an important step forward in ensuring that Canada can carry out the responsibilities we share with the United States for the defence of North America. The agreement we have reached reflects the essence of the partnership between our two countries which share the continent—sovereign allies, independent neighbours and close friends. It is an agreement which serves both nations well. Under the new arrangements, Canada will, for the first time, fully exercise its national defence responsibilities on its own sovereign territory and within its own sovereign airspace.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: I want to emphasize the importance of fully exercising sovereignty in our north. The DEW Line has served Canada well, but Canadians do not control it. The DEW Line is operated by the United States Air Force. Canadian involvement has been limited to small detachments of Armed Forces personnel at three of the 21 DEW Line sites in Canada. The North Warning System will be a Canadian-controlled system—operated, maintained and manned by Canadians.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: Canadian sovereignty in our north will be strengthened and assured for the future. The agreement will present Canada with significant economic challenges and development opportunities. Canada will be assuming responsibility for over-all program management and systems integration of the North Warning project. Design, acquisition, installation and integration of all associated communications in addition to all construction in Canada will be undertaken by Canadians and by Canadian industry.

The industrial benefits from this project will, at the very least, equal national expenditures on it. More than 11,500 person-years of employment will be generated in the communications and construction industries during the eight-year modernization program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: I am confident that the project experience will help open world markets for Canadian industry, and for our highly skilled communications industry in particular.

I would like to make it clear that these radars are neither designed nor sited for the detection of ballistic missiles or of other events in space. This is an important distinction which many fail to make. The new long-range radars which will form part of the North Warning System will have essentially the

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

NORTH AMERICAN AIR DEFENCE CANADA-UNITED STATES AGREEMENT

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to inform the House that the Government has approved an agreement with the United States under which the two countries will take part in a joint program to modernize the North American Air Defence Surveillance and Warning System. Documents constituting the agreement will be signed in Québec City on March 18 by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) and myself. These documents will be tabled in the House of Commons following signature.

The agreement provides for the establishment of a warning system around the perimeter of the North American continent which will be capable of detecting aircraft and Cruise missiles penetrating North American airspace at high and low altitudes within the atmosphere. This modernized system will consist of over-the-horizon backscatter radars, located in the United

same range of surveillance as the existing radars of the DEW Line. The new long-range radars will differ in that they will incorporate the most modern technology, and they will provide information on the direction, height and speed of aircraft entering their coverage. This information will permit Canadian forces interceptor aircraft operating from northern airstrips to identify and control potential intruders.

The short-range radars in the North Warning System are designed specifically to provide detection of aircraft at low altitude, to close the serious gaps in the present system.

There is no responsible alternative to modernization. Major components of the existing system are technically obsolete and increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain. Most important, the present system is no longer adequate to meet the modern bomber and Cruise missile threat.

It was Canada which initiated discussions with the United States on the need for a joint approach to modernize the air defence warning system, which is continental in scope. The question of modernization has been under review and study between the two countries since 1976. The approach adopted in the agreement is the result of an independent study, jointly funded by Canada and the United States, which was completed in 1979, and is the result of close consultations between the defence authorities of both countries.

The cost of the over-all modernization project will be in the order of \$7 billion. The United States will be bearing some 88 per cent of this cost. The \$1.5 billion estimated cost of the North Warning System component of the over-all program is to be shared, with Canada paying 40 per cent and the United States 60 per cent. The cost of operating and maintaining the North Warning System is to be shared on the same basis. However, Canada will be completely responsible for the actual operation and maintenance of the system in Canada, a major change from the agreement in effect for the DEW line.

• (1510)

Most of the radar stations in southern Canada which are now part of the Cadin-Pine Tree Line will need to be closed. These stations are of little military value now and they are very expensive to maintain and operate.

We recognize the social obligation to those communities which have come to derive much of their livelihood from these old stations. As a result, we have reached an agreement with the United States to share the costs of closing the stations of the obsolete Cadin-Pine Tree line, Canada paying 45 per cent and the United States paying 55 per cent. Assistance, with the social and economic costs borne by these communities as a result of closure, will be taken into account in the cost-sharing arrangements. I will be working very closely with my Cabinet colleagues, with the provinces and, most important, with the communities concerned to help those people affected by the closures.

Throughout the negotiations, the Government has sought to re-invigorate the Canada-United States defence partnership while at the same time enhancing Canadian sovereignty. This agreement on North American air defence modernization is

Air Defence Modernization

tangible evidence of this Government's commitment to strengthen Canadian defence capacity and to ensure Canadian control of its defences.

Let there be no misunderstanding. By this agreement, Canadian sovereignty has been enhanced, including sovereignty over Canadian territory, sovereignty over Canadian defences, sovereignty over Canada's North and sovereignty over our own airspace.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: As Deputy Prime Minister, as Minister of National Defence and as the Member for Yukon, I am proud to make this announcement to the House and to the country today.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, we have just been advised by the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) of a major agreement concerning Canada's future defence needs. It is an agreement that will possibly change our international stature in the world and is to be signed in Quebec City on March 18, this weekend, with very little consultation with Members of the House of Commons.

It is rather ironic that one week ago today, I posed a question to the Minister of National Defence asking him if he would appear before the External Affairs and National Defence Committee. At that time, he said he would if he were to be invited to do so by the Steering Committee.

The Minister is not even listening to me. That shows the importance he is giving to this statement.

The Minister gave me a commitment that he would attend a meeting this week. He was invited to do so by the Steering Committee, which met at 3.30 one week ago today. Both he and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) have been present in this House every day this week, yet neither one of them will consent to attend a meeting of the committee. The names of both Ministers came up at the Steering Committee meeting.

I would like to make one thing very clear, Mr. Speaker. We in the Liberal Party agree that the North Warning System must go into effect for surveillance purposes. There is no question in my mind about that at all. However, there is one thing that I wish to point out very succinctly today, and that is, that the Minister of National Defence should send the previous Liberal Defence Minister a thank-you letter for all the homework he did on this agreement in order that the present Minister could announce it today.

I have what I consider to be a very valid question of privilege. I received this seven-page announcement as the bells were calling Members to the House this afternoon. That gave me no opportunity to discuss the matter with my Party colleagues and my Leader. I think that this was a great discourtesy and I feel that the Minister should certainly take that into consideration in the future.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Air Defence Modernization

Mr. Hopkins: I am hearing some comments from Members across the way regarding my remarks. However, we are discussing today a \$7-billion program. Surely a seven-page announcement deserves more than one-hour's notice since every Member of the House is responsible to the people of Canada.

As I mentioned, this agreement will be signed after only one short meeting of a House committee at which there was no opportunity to call witnesses. Moreover, the Minister of National Defence and the Secretary of State for External Affairs refused to attend meetings this week. We in this Party, like Canadians from coast to coast, are concerned that this modernization will lead directly or indirectly to an involvement in the star war initiative that has been mentioned on many occasions.

In the past, Canadians bought a limited defence package, which later turned out to be a monster containing the Bomarc missiles. That was done by a previous Conservative Government. Canada should not be put in such a position again. This Parliament and Canadians should not be forced to accept and endorse a secret agreement which could alter our lives forever.

In particular, I would like to point out that the Minister of National Defence mentioned surveillance of the North and our CF-18 fighter aircraft. As everyone in the House knows and as all Canadians know, these aircraft were purchased by the former Liberal government. That agreement was signed. Contrary to all statements in the press about cost overruns, it has now been found that the aircraft may well come in under cost.

There are some serious questions brought up by the Minister's statement. Have the aboriginal people been consulted on this agreement? What has been their involvement? Will they be consulted? Does this agreement contain a specific clause to protect Canada from becoming automatically involved in further advanced technology down the road without proper consultation and without a decision being made by a future Canadian Government? Can we knock out a Cruise missile with a CF-18 Sidewinder or a Sparrow missile? If we cannot do so, will we require nuclear warhead; to do so? If we did so, would we be breaching the Anti Ballistic Missile treaty? This would place Canada in the position of playing a leading role in destabilization.

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Will the Minister, even at this eleventh hour, agree to hold immediately an emergency meeting of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence to review in detail the proposed agreement with the aid of outside, independent experts? If he will not agree to an emergency meeting of the committee, will he agree to the immediate postponement of the signing of the accord until Canadians, including the Canadians in Parliament, have had an opportunity to review in detail the agreement before the appropriate parliamentary committee? Surely, that is not asking too much. We have heard a lot about open Government in Canada—

Mr. Malone: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopkins: The Hon. Member can clap, but we have a \$7 billion secret agreement which is being signed without consultation with the Parliament of Canada. That is open Government!

Will the Minister assure the House that there is a clause in the proposed agreement which will guarantee that in no way will the modernized system be used to support or complement the Strategic Defence Initiative? Canadians want a 100 per cent guarantee that there will be no linkage between the agreement and SDI. Will the Minister guarantee to the House that there will be a clause in the agreement which will ensure an automatic review of the agreement—it is very important and we had this with NORAD—at least every five years by the Parliament of Canada and that, if so desired, Parliament may revise any part of that agreement on one year's notice? That is not asking too much when we are talking about Canadian sovereignty.

There is one other item which I would like to mention, that is, the Cadin-Pine Tree stations which will be closed. I note in the agreement that the Government has given a commitment that it will liaison very closely with communities which are built around the Cadin-Pine Tree Line. We welcome that. We will watch carefully to make certain that that commitment to those small communities in Canada is entirely lived up to.

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Braat): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) for bringing back the old tradition in the House of ministerial statements on motions, to give members of the Opposition a chance to comment on major policy statements. However, I hope that the Minister will not limit his involvement with this side of the House simply to a seven-page document. I hope we can call on him at any time that is reasonable and feasible to come to a committee hearing so that we can spend several hours discussing this very, very vital and important policy.

The Government has stated that it is necessary to upgrade the old Dew Line because it is outdated. The Senate committee pointed out that gaps in radar could allow Soviet bombers to attack North America. Therefore, the Government believes that it must counter that threat to protect our sovereignty. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said that the previous Liberal Government had compromised that sovereignty by neglecting Canada's defences. He is only partly right. The Liberals did neglect our defences, there is no doubt about that. They are responsible for the threat which we must counter with a new North Warning System, but not for the reasons which the Prime Minister mentioned earlier.

The reason the Dew Line has to be updated is the new threat of Soviet bombers armed with Cruise missiles. Canada helped to usher in the era of the Cruise missile. The Government's Defence Industry Productivity Program gave Litton Systems the money to develop the guidance system for the Cruise missile. The defence production sharing agreement allowed that technology to be exported to the United States to build the Cruise missile. The umbrella testing agreement allowed the Cruise missile to be tested and perfected in Canada. Of course, now it has come back to haunt us.

Air Defence Modernization

Naturally, the Soviet Union matched the U.S. by developing its own Cruise missile system. So now Canada has to spend up to \$800 million to build a North Warning System to defend itself against a weapon that it helped to develop. That is the Government's idea of job creation? I think it is slightly mad!

Now I have mentioned it, let us examine MAD—Mutual-Assured Destruction. That is the nuclear deterrence which has kept peace for 40 years. But it cannot last forever. Now there is a chance that the Soviet Union may offer to cut its offensive weapons in return for U.S. cuts in star wars. But the U.S. insists on developing yet another new weapon system. No one knows where SDI will lead or how it will affect arms control, but we do know some of the potential dangers. SDI may split the Western Alliance if the U.S. turns down cuts in Soviet weapons because it wants to develop star wars. The U.S. may violate the ABM treaty if it goes ahead with the Talon Gold Test in 1987, and the Soviets may counter SDI by MIRVing their ICBMs and adding more Cruise missiles.

In Question Period this afternoon, the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam (Ms. Jewett) asked the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) if the clause which was taken out of the NORAD Agreement by the Liberals in 1981 would be returned this weekend in Quebec City. I would like to quote the Secretary of State for External Affairs word for word. He said, "This agreement will not involve in any way a Canadian commitment to participate in an active ballistic missile defence". That clause was taken out. I would ask the Minister of National Defence, will he insist this weekend that that clause be returned to any new NORAD Agreement? It is fundamental to the future development of star wars. Without that clause—and the Minister once again spoke about our sovereignty in our airspace—it is absolutely hollow. That clause must be put back into the NORAD Agreement. That is all there is to it. It is very simple.

It will affect Canada in many ways. The submarines and bombers armed with those Cruise missiles will threaten from the Arctic. Still, the Government insists on the following: One, that SDI is only research. Can anyone in their right mind sitting on the other side tell me that the United States will spend up to \$25 billion on blackboard and chalk, and that it will not develop the system and then deploy it? It is utter nonsense. How naive can the Government be? Two, the Government insists that the Dew Line update is only a warning system. Three, there is no connection between SDI and the North Warning System, and, four, there may be inadvertent consequences, but we can get out of them. This, too, is absolute nonsense.

Yesterday in the House I described how NORAD and the U.S. Air Force were already merging space and surface warning systems into a NORAD/Space Command. It is a combined command. The system will pick up a threat detected by either satellites or ground-based radars. It will then co-ordinate the defensive response. In other words, the two systems are already combined. In other words, the upgrading of the North Warning System is, in fact, already a part of star wars. A star wars

system could counter ICBMs, and fighter planes can counter bombers and Cruise missiles.

In that context we should ask, is it a coincidence that the North Warning System will upgrade northern bases for CF-18 fighters? Is it a coincidence that the Government is considering buying an additional 20 CF-18s? Is it a coincidence that the U.S. is developing a "look-down, shoot-down" radar so that fighters can knock down Cruise missiles? No. The Americans know that SDI will have to counter the air-breathing threat that can slip under space-based weapons. That is the inadvertent consequence of adopting a defence strategy.

The U.S. is adopting that strategy with the Strategic Defence Initiative. NORAD will have to be a part of that strategy. The North Warning System will be a necessary component of the defensive strategy. The Government should make it its business to know about these "inadvertent consequences". The Minister of National Defence and the Secretary of State for External Affairs should investigate them and report to the House or to the appropriate standing committee of this House.

• (1530)

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the Government has the right and the obligation to consult with the United States about future activities of our defence alliance. That obligation is set out explicitly in the current NORAD Agreement. The Government must take that obligation seriously if it intends to govern responsibly.

The scientific world is leading the military world which, in turn, is leading the political world down a dark path about which most of us know very little, and we should have the courage to admit it at this stage. We should make sure in this country that there are built-in safeguards so that we do not get sucked into the Strategic Defence Initiative, which I feel is more appropriately called star wars, because that is exactly what it is. It is space-based, space-launched warfare.

Believe me, Mr. Speaker, when American scientists are now talking in terms of not a few hours of response, not a few minutes, but in terms of a few seconds, where are we going? I hope the Minister will make it abundantly clear to President Reagan this weekend that we want that clause put back in NORAD and that we want control over the North. Yes, we are prepared to share early warning information with our allies, but we are not prepared to go along with the star wars holus-bolus without knowing where it is going to take us, because it is the most destabilizing defence offensive system which has ever been devised by man to date.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, I would like to pose a question to the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) on what is a very serious day in the life of this country. We are now taking a very radical departure and making a change in the whole foreign policy defence standing which Canada has adopted in the past 30 or 40 years. We regret deeply, as my colleague has already stated, that this major departure in our

Air Defence Modernization

position has been taken without effective consultation in this Parliament.

By the words the Minister has brought to this Parliament this afternoon, is he now saying that this Government agrees with the change in North American defence strategy as announced by the United States President and several defence officials that they will no longer rely upon the question of deterrence as a form of stability and security but will now be pursuing an active defence system for North America which will in a sense break the pattern over the past 30 or 40 years? Are we now committing ourselves to that defence policy, as already announced by the Americans and the U.S. Secretary of Defence in front of Congress to justify its participation in the North Warning System? Does the Minister not believe that that will now result in a major militarization of northern Canada, with the placement of a number of military facilities, communications systems and networks? Is this Government now saying that it is prepared to agree with that change in defence policy without ever having had it debated or discussed in this Parliament and without any opportunity being given to Canadians themselves to know the implications or consequences?

It is very important to know at this point in time—perhaps because we are denied the opportunity in committee to have this kind of debate—if the Minister is saying that this Government does agree with that fundamental change in defensive policy and agrees with the U.S. President and the Secretary of Defence that they are now pursuing an active defence system and are no longer relying upon the deterrent basis for security in North America?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, the point has been made by the Hon. Member for Cochrane-Superior (Mr. Penner), the Hon. Member for Brant (Mr. Blackburn) and now, surprisingly, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy), that there has been no opportunity to discuss this matter in Parliament. The last time I looked, the standing committees were still part of this Parliament and the matter has been before the House of Commons Standing Committee. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) told the committee that he was prepared to sit there for as long as Hon. Members had questions, but they ran out of questions.

The matter has also been considered by the Senate Committee. It is being considered now. There is no doubt in my mind that it will again be considered before the end of the supply period in this semester by the committee. It is not true what the Hon. Member for Cochrane-Superior says, that there has been no commitment to appear before that committee. I have given that commitment, and the Secretary of State for External Affairs has already been there. I do not know what arrangements he has made, but chances are that the Secretary of State for External Affairs has agreed to appear again.

With respect to the consultation process, I might point out that the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry was a member of the Government—not of the administration but of the Government—which commenced these negotiations in 1976. He was part of an administration which was active in

those negotiations. What the Hon. Member is saying now, that there should be a consultation and that he should be the recipient of further and better information on the North Warning System, rings a little hollow, to use, I believe, his phrase, unless it was that of the Hon. Member for Brant.

The Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry knows full well what the North Warning System is all about. I agree with the Hon. Member for Brant—and it seems to be evidenced by the intervention of the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry and the Hon. Member for Cochrane-Superior—that very few people know very much about what they are discussing. That is quite obvious after listening to the intervention of one who should know better, namely, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry, who, it appears, does not know his atmospherics from space. He does not know what is on top of the ionosphere and what is below it. NWAS has nothing whatsoever to do with—

Mr. Axworthy: Nonsense, you had better read what Weinberger had to say.

Mr. Nielsen: The Hon. Member says "nonsense". Fundamentally, the North Warning System replaces a system which was put in place under a Liberal Government, the DEW Line, and under a system put in place by the Liberal Government of the day, the Pine Tree Line.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): That's what they are telling you today, Erik.

Mr. Nielsen: With respect to sovereignty, I do not hear those Hon. Members now howling about sovereignty. My goodness, when I first came here under the Diefenbaker Government, Ministers of the Crown had to make an application to the United States management corporation even to visit those sites on our own Canadian territory. That is the Liberal idea of negotiating the security of Canada's sovereignty over our own lands and airspace. That is not the case here.

Mr. Speaker: Order. With great respect—

Mr. Axworthy: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: No, I am going to try to recognize everyone who has risen. My normal practice is to try to recognize everyone who has a question. If there is time, I will allow supplementary questions. I would encourage everyone to be brief so that those Hon. Members may get a chance to ask supplementary questions.

Ms. Jewett: Mr. Speaker, as you know we have had no hearings on this agreement, none whatsoever, and actually only one hour in committee with the Minister. This has put us all in the position of having to use whatever occasion there might be to get information from the Government.

The Minister has said previously, has said again today and keeps reiterating, that there is no connection between the modernization of the DEW Line, the so-called North Warning System, and the development of the star wars, the Strategic

Defence Initiative. Both the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) keep saying this. Has the Minister, or have his people, ever read the minutes of the Armed Services Committee of the U.S. Senate when defence estimates are before the committee? If he or his people have read those minutes, does the Minister not know that last year, in the discussion of defence estimates in the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, the Department of Defence said that "space defence and ballistic missile defence involve the Canadians"? Specifically, is the Minister aware that during the same hearing—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Jewett: —a modernized DEW Line—

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

An Hon. Member: Have more respect for the Chair.

Mr. Speaker: Can I encourage the Hon. Member to make this her last question? She has taken two and a half minutes now.

• (1540)

Ms. Jewett: I was coming to it. It is extremely important. Mr. Speaker, is the Minister also aware that in the same hearings it was stated that a modernized DEW Line as well as the space shuttle are "collateral benefits to the Strategic Defence Initiative"?

Mr. Nielsen: I do not know how many times it has to be reiterated in order to get through to Hon. Members opposite. It does not make any difference how many times it is done because they will still, to use the words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, abuse their position in the House by deliberately attempting to create a situation which does not exist. The Member herself does not know the difference between a radar system and the space system, obviously.

The complete answer to her question, quite apart from the answers which have been given by myself and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, is contained, as I put on the record before, in a press release issued on behalf of the United States Government by the United States Embassy here in Ottawa dated March 7. It refers to misleading reports deliberately enhanced by members of the Opposition for questionable motives. That release stipulates, and I am quoting it again:

With regard to the upgrading of the DEW Line and its replacement with the North Warning radars, the Department can state clearly and categorically that the North Warning System being planned by Canada and the United States is not part of the Strategic Defence Initiative Program.

Now I do not know what can be clearer than that, Mr. Speaker. It is not going to help to continue to repeat it because they are just going to continue to try to play Marrying Sam in trying to create the bride and groom of SDI and NWS, which is totally untrue. Again I wish they would stop abusing their position as Members to propagate that absolute tripe.

Air Defence Modernization

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, to set the *Hansard* record straight, my colleague who responded to the Minister's statement was the Hon. Member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke (Mr. Hopkins), not Cochrane-Superior.

What the Minister has announced today, Mr. Speaker, is nothing less than a mega-project for northern Canada. The impact is bound to be significant. There is no mention at all in the Minister's statement about an assessment of the impact on aboriginal peoples. Is he able now to detail for the House how this consultative process will work with aboriginal peoples? I notice there will be 11,500 person years of employment created in communications and construction. By what means will be aboriginal people have an opportunity to participate in these jobs?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for confusing the Hon. Member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke (Mr. Hopkins) with the Hon. Member for Cochrane-Superior (Mr. Penner). I certainly would not want to add to their joint confusion.

As I indicated in my statement, the broadest possible consultation is going to take place between the Ministries, including the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Crombie) and, very important, the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald). We are most conscious, myself particularly, of any impact the project will have on our aboriginal peoples.

I suppose the short answer is to assure the Hon. Member that I will insist during the progress of the whole project that not only the socio-economic impact on our native peoples is thoroughly taken into consideration, but also the job opportunities which might accrue to them, which are of a considerable magnitude.

Mr. Jardine: Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister appreciates the economic impact that the closure of the Canadian Pine Tree Line will have on the communities affected. Can he elaborate further on what assistance the Government will be giving to the communities and people so affected?

Mr. Nielsen: That will be of particular concern to the consultation process which I just described between the Department of National Defence and the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I have also had the suggestion that it would be useful to meet with some of the local officials in these communities. I think that was a worth-while suggestion. It should also, I think, be emphasized that while there was no obligation to do so, at our suggestion in the negotiations leading to this agreement, the United States has agreed to assist us financially in dealing with the minimal-socio-economic implications resulting from this project. I think that is a significant display of the determination of the two countries to address our mutual concerns in achieving the objective of modernizing this system.

Mr. MacLellan: Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on the question asked by the Hon. Member for Northumberland-Miramichi (Mr. Jardine) regarding closure of the Pine Tree

Air Defence Modernization

Line As the Minister knows, there is already severe unemployment in Atlantic Canada. I respect the Minister's wish to have consultations on these matters, but there is no way that consultations are going to make up for the loss of jobs and economic activity. These losses would be a very severe blow. There is a possibility that there will be new West Coast and East Coast defence systems. Has the Minister given any thought perhaps to turning existing installations on the Pine Tree Line into new defence systems?

Mr. Nielsen: Indeed, I thank the Hon. Member for raising that aspect of the project because it gives me the opportunity to tell him and Members generally that the present closure plans with respect to the Canadian Pine Tree Line would affect some 17 of the 24 stations and some 3,725 jobs. Of those jobs, 1,975 are military positions which can be redeployed to higher priority uses in the defence program. Another 1,027 positions are those of civilians directly employed by DND. The vast majority of these can be employed at other DND locations if the employees are willing to move and if the Department is in a position to retain the person year authorizations to redeploy them. This leaves 722 civilians living in the communities whose jobs depend on the stations. Of these, 275 are dependants of military personnel. There are DND programs to assist employees to relocate and I will be forming a committee with my colleagues, including the Minister of Employment and Immigration, to ensure that we make full use of the wide variety of adjustment, retraining, relocation, job search and income support programs available, both within the federal and the provincial Governments, for those in need of assistance. We will be working closely with the provinces and the communities affected in developing programs for each individual community.

Might I just add very quickly that those stations in the Atlantic areas are the least affected by the entire project.

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Mr. Skelly: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for a comment from the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen) on the process. Many Members of the House are pleased that we had the opportunity to peruse this agreement and discuss it on Statements by Ministers. We operate under a process by which a small group in the executive is entitled to sign international agreements with long-term effects which are not brought before Parliament for consideration, when in fact our partner with whom we are involved in many of these agreements does have an opportunity to present that material to elected legislators for their consideration.

Is the Government considering a process whereby documents such as this one and the interception agreement made on the West Coast would become subjects for discussion in Parliament to give legislators in this forum an opportunity to take a serious look at the implications which this and other agreements that the Government has already signed would have for Canada in the long term?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, that is the second time in as many days that a member of that Party has held up as an example the desirability of adopting the United States system of Government. That is not our system of government. If what he is suggesting were to come about, it would cause serious and broad changes to our system of government. It is certainly not within my responsibility, nor within that of the Government, to invoke any system other than that which has developed within our country since Confederation. The fact of the matter is that the Government is charged with the responsibility of making these decisions. There has been consultation as I have described. That is part of the parliamentary process. With that foregoing explanation, the simple answer to the Hon. Member's question is no.

[Translation]

Mr. Tremblay (Québec-Est): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question to the Minister of National Defence and Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), and make sure that both the question and the answer will be conveyed to the President of the United States (Mr. Reagan) who will be making a historic visit to Quebec City next weekend. Therefore, I will ask it in English.

[English]

What plans or arrangements are there to provide landing or dispersal facilities for U.S. aircraft in times of crisis or in wartime?

Mr. Nielsen: I am sorry, I did not get the entire question. I wonder if the Hon. Member would put it again quickly?

Mr. Tremblay (Québec-Est): My question is, what plans or arrangements are there to provide landing or dispersal facilities for U.S. aircraft in times of crisis or in wartime?

Mr. Nielsen: Under the existing arrangements between the two countries, there are arrangements for United States aircraft to use Canadian bases. That will be extended as the new air facilities, the ground facilities to accommodate the modernization of the system, are expanded in northern Canada. The same provisions of the existing arrangements would be expanded to accommodate those new purposes of NWS.

Mr. Akworthy: Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask a supplementary question because I did not receive an answer from the Hon. Minister of Defence (Mr. Nielsen) on the first question. He spent his time hashing over some old history. I simply want to know from him, because it goes to the very base of the announcement he made today, whether the Government is now signalling its clear agreement that the change in strategy, change in approach and change in defence thinking that was announced a year ago by President Reagan, and has since been endorsed by Secretary Weinberger, which says that we are now moving from deterrence to active defence and that the North Warning System is a part of that very fundamental change in military policy, is now the policy of the Government of Canada?

March 13, 1985

COMMONS DEBATES

2983

Air Defence Modernization

Mr. Nielsen: There he goes again distorting the actual facts. He knows that is a distortion because his Government initiated these discussions. All we are doing is bringing about the formal conclusion to an agreement which he and his Government brought to 99 per cent of completion.

Mr. Axworthy: That is a cop-out.

Mr. Skelly: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Deputy Prime Minister might focus on the key part of the question that I raised previously. Certainly it would not change the nature of government to lay the document before the House and allow Parliament to take a serious look at it. That is ultimately done in the United States. The Government would still have the opportunity and responsibility to make the decision. With regard to the Canada-U.S. salmon interception treaty, it was stated for the record by a Cabinet Minister that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) never read the document and that it went through Cabinet in 30 minutes. This process is unacceptable.

Has the Deputy Prime Minister, who when in opposition fought this abusive use of power, now changed his standards to the point that he would not provide information to Parliament and the people of Canada in advance of making his decision?

Mr. Nielsen: I can understand the frustrations of the Member, being as he is a member of the Opposition where he will likely remain for as long as he is here.

Mr. Skelly: You spent a long time here yourself.

Mr. Nielsen: The Hon. Member is suggesting a fundamental change in the system. It would be presumptuous of me or of the Government to make that kind of decision unilaterally. I am sure that he would be the first to howl. At the moment the Prime Minister has appointed a committee headed by the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), which includes a distinguished member of the Hon. Member's own Party and members of the Official Opposition, which is studying this very kind of question. I would suggest to the Hon. Member that he might make more effective and constructive suggestions regarding changes of the depth that he has in mind if he would attend and make his views known to that committee and assist in bringing constructive recommendations out of that committee back to the House.

Mr. Speaker: I am going to recognize Hon. Members from Cochrane-Superior (Mr. Penner) and Cape Breton-The Sydneys (Mr. MacLellan) on supplementary questions and the Member for Calgary East (Mr. Kindy), and then I am going to end the questions and comments period.

Mr. Penner: In his response, the Minister used the word "confusion". I think he is confused about his own statement. Nowhere in this statement is there any reference to the socio-economic impact regarding the modernization program to which he referred. There is reference to the closing of the Pine Tree Line sites. Where can Members of Parliament learn about the impact that this will have on northerners, and how

they will be enabled to respond adequately to that impact and take advantage of the opportunities that will be provided? Where are the detailed plans for that? If they are not ready now, how quickly will they be ready? How will Members of Parliament be able to study those plans in order to get this information into the hands of northerners, who are deeply concerned about it?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate and fully understand that concern, as the Hon. Member knows. However, that is the kind of question that he will have the opportunity to put to me in the Standing Committee. I would suggest that that would be the place to discuss the kind of detail which he anticipates in the question. I am sure that he will agree that in a statements and questions mode such as this there would simply not be the opportunity to answer the question he put in a fair way. If the House has the time, Mr. Speaker, I have 15 pages that I could read to the Hon. Member, but I do not think it does.

Mr. MacLellan: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) mentioned that 17 of the 24 Pine Tree Line stations would be closed. Could the Minister tell us which stations are going to be closed, or which ones are going to be left open, or perhaps both?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I think I can best answer that question by focusing on the ones that will remain open. Those will be five sites: Holberg in the west, and Gander, Goose Bay, Sydney and Barrington in the east. It will be necessary to maintain those stations in order to maintain surveillance on our coasts until newer radar coverage is proven. The two sites at Cold Lake and Mont Apica are essential to air training programs.

• (1600)

Mr. Kindy: Mr. Speaker, my question concerns the effect of that agreement on our independence. Will we remain an independent nation or will the Americans have all of the input into this agreement? Will this enhance our sovereignty or diminish it?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, in response to the Hon. Member for Calgary East (Mr. Kindy), I think perhaps the best way I could answer his question would be to say that under the agreement, Canada will be exercising its national responsibilities on its own national territory and in its own national airspace by controlling, operating and maintaining those parts of the North American air defence system located in Canada.

In keeping with the strengthening and maturing of our sovereignty and our responsibility, Canada will also be responsible for all of the system's construction and all of the communications in Canada. Canada will operate and maintain all the elements of the system on Canadian territory, which is a change from the previous arrangements under the DEW Line. I am sure the Hon. Member will recognize the significance of that distinction.



14 March 1985

Total Pages 15

To: Richard Nerysoo
Executive Council Members
Commissioner Parker
R.S. Pilot
David Hamilton

From: Claire Barnabe
Senior Advisor
GNWT
Ottawa, Ontario

U R G E N T U R G E N T U R G E N T U R G E N T

Press Release and Background Material from the office of the
Hon. Erik Neilsen.

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14 March 1985

TOTAL PAGES: 9

TO: ~~Mr. Richard Barnabe~~
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FROM: Claire M. Barnabe
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U R G E N T

U R G E N T

Attached is an excerpt from the House of Commons Debates of
March 13, 1985 re the Dew Line.