

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