

Oral Questions

In view of the discrepancy between the Deputy Prime Minister's remarks to the House and those of the Solicitor General on leaving the House, will he get his act together and tell us whether the RCMP report has been considered and reviewed by Cabinet, or not? I would ask him to please give us a clear answer. I will assure him that it will not endanger the national security of the country.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I very much doubt that the right hon. gentleman is in any position to advise me to get my act together. In any event, the answers I gave him yesterday still stand. It is the view of the Government that it is not in the interests of discharging the Government's responsibilities for the protection of embassies to be entering into this kind of exchange on the floor of the House of Commons.

With respect to the briefing which he dismissed yesterday, and in which he did not want to participate because it would somehow compromise his ability and that of the Leader of the New Democratic Party to ask questions in the House of Commons, that is precisely why there are traditional areas in which the Leader of the Opposition is taken into the confidence of the Government. It is so that he, as an officer of the House, can be made fully cognizant of the problems, and hopefully—

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): You should set this one to music.

Mr. Nielsen: He says that I should set it to music. It is far more serious than that kind of frivolity. Once again, the matter is now under intensive review. We hope to arrive at an early solution. The Government would welcome the Right Hon. Leader's input and that of the Leader of the New Democratic Party in arriving at those solutions which would provide the kind of security measures for our embassies which the country expects, and which we have a responsibility to provide.

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NORTH AMERICAN AIR DEFENCE**NORTH WARNING SYSTEM—CANADA-UNITED STATES AGREEMENT**

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence and Deputy Prime Minister. Last week in committee when we were preparing the agenda for the study of the Estimates, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister said that the Minister was not well enough briefed to come before the committee to explain the North Warning System agreement and its relation to star wars. Now that the Minister has signed it, I would hope that he has been briefed. Why does he not come to the committee this afternoon to debate the issue about which *The Globe and Mail* has said, "start debate before it is too late"? The Canadian people want to know why the Government refuses to explain to the House of Commons this \$7-billion

agreement that might change the future of our policies for the protection of our territory and our sovereignty.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the Hon. Member would ask that particular kind of question. He was a member of the Government throughout the negotiations which have taken place from 1976 onward, and which have culminated in us reaching an agreement on this very system. For over nine years the Hon. Member was privy to all—

Mr. Chrétien: I didn't sign it.

Mr. Nielsen: He certainly did not sign it. That progress will be made on March 18 when the agreement will be signed. With respect to exposure, it has been before the Senate committee and the committee of the House of Commons at which the Secretary of State for External Affairs was prepared to answer all the questions of Members. However, Members ran out of questions. With respect to my going before the committee, I will go at the earliest possible opportunity.

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, I am quite surprised by the reply the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence has made. Last week, his Parliamentary Secretary indicated that the Minister was not sufficiently informed. This agreement will be signed this coming Sunday. We are told on the one hand that airports will be built in Northern Canada, and on the other hand that the North Warning System is only a radar line to watch over the Canadian North. Well, Canadians are asking a number of important questions, including this one: Could the Minister attend today our committee meeting, scheduled for 3:30 p.m. to provide some answers, in order to satisfy Canadians that we are not irrevocably jeopardizing Canada's future and allowing it to be locked into the Star War program which the Parliament of Canada firmly rejected as recently as last spring.

[English]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Yes, Sir.

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TERRORISM**SEIZURE OF TURKISH EMBASSY IN OTTAWA—TURKISH GOVERNMENT WARNING**

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Did the Turkish Government notify the Minister or any officials of his Ministry with regard to its concerns for the safety of the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa prior to the recent terrorist attack?