

Oral Questions

bargain with our cultural industries was to gain greater access to the U.S. market when, indeed, we already have full and open access to that market. The Canadian Publishing Association said that statement was full of nonsense.

What I want to know from the Deputy Prime Minister is the real purpose behind putting our cultural industries on the bargaining table. Is this the pre-condition that Mr. Shultz told the Secretary of State that the Americans will demand in order to go ahead with the talks? Is that the real reason we are sacrificing our cultural industries at the negotiating table?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I totally reject the twisted and distorted interpretation which the Hon. Member, not just on this occasion but on past occasions, has attempted to put on the words of the Prime Minister and other Ministers in addressing issues. The Prime Minister very clearly said yesterday, and I quote from page 8364 of *Hansard*:

What I did tell them was that—I repeated my statement of September 26—our political sovereignty, our system of social programs, our commitment to fight regional disparities, our unique cultural identity and our special linguistic character are the essence of Canada. They are not at issue in these negotiations.

Surely nothing could be clearer to any simple-minded person in this House of Commons.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg-Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I can think of no Minister who better exemplifies what it is to be simple-minded. What he simply demonstrates by that response is that there is a complete repudiation, in the statement of the Prime Minister, of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. That is what we want to know. Who is speaking for the Government? Is the Government prepared to have our cultural industries placed on the negotiating table with the Americans, or are we to listen to the general polemics of the Prime Minister? What is the Government intending to do in this vital area?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, what is so difficult to understand? What is so polemic about a statement which stipulates that our political sovereignty, our system of social programs, our commitment to fight regional disparities, our unique cultural identity and our special linguistic character are the essence of Canada? Is that too complicated for the Hon. Member to understand?

Some Hon. Members: Yes!

Mr. Nielsen: They are not at issue in these negotiations. Is that so difficult for the Hon. Member to understand?

FILM AND BOOK PUBLISHING INDUSTRIES

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg-Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I would simply turn the question back to the Deputy Prime Minister. Is it so difficult for him to understand that the

Secretary of State for External Affairs has clearly indicated that he intends to have as part of the negotiations our film and book publishing industries? Are they not part of our cultural integrity and sovereignty? Who is speaking for the Government? Obviously the Secretary of State is being repudiated by the Deputy Prime Minister. The Canadian people have a right to know, and it is up to the Government to stop keeping us in the dark.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, that is an utter crock of rhubarb, and the Hon. Member knows it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: The Secretary of State said no such thing and the Hon. Member should not try to distort to the extent that he does.

● (1420)

[*Translation*]

CANADIAN SOVEREIGNTY—TERRITORIAL WATERS—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yesterday, during oral question period, the Secretary of State for External Affairs referred several times to what happened in the North this summer. The Americans violated our territorial waters, and now the Government has decided to act.

Is this the Government's policy today? Can the Minister of National Defence give the House the assurance that next summer, if the Americans again sail into our territorial waters, the Government will act before our territory is violated instead of after the fact?

[*English*]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): The hon. gentleman and the Government of which he was a part had something in the order of 16 years to ponder that question, and did nothing. We have acted.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I will tell the Deputy Prime Minister that we passed the Act in 1970. We were never insulted by the American Government when we were in government as the present Government has been with regard to the Canadian north.

EFFECT OF NEGOTIATIONS ON ARTISTS AND AUTHORS

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Is the Government going to follow the same policy in the cultural field? Will the Government act after our publishing and film industries have disappeared and Canadian artists and authors have to beg for work in the United States, as it did in the case of the North last summer?