

dians and prior to the release of the environmental impact on public health of low level flights contained in the impact study of such activities in Labrador?

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is not accurate in his statement. That is not unusual.

The release was not made to the United States. The request for low level flying and the necessary training was made by the Binational Command of NORAD, the North American Air Defence, which the Hon. Member knows has a responsibility for the defence of North America. That request was made in 1985.

Environmental impact studies have been concluded since that time. There were 53 recommendations made by a private company from Vancouver, Environmental Sciences. Out of those studies, we were able to comply with 53 of the 54 recommendations. We have consulted with communities in both the Northwest Territories, Alberta, and British Columbia.

Therefore the time to make the announcement is now so that flights can take place, which will be four times a year. This is consistent with flights that already take place in Quebec, New Brunswick, and northern Ontario.

#### CONSULTATION WITH WESTERN CANADIANS—MINISTER'S POSITION

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same Minister. It is interesting that most jurisdictions in the United States will not allow or will not agree to these low level flights.

The mass low level bomber runs pose a risk to birds, wildlife, pilots, and the public. Three U.S. B-1Bs crashed in the 14 months between September 1987 and November 1988, including one to a bird strike on a low level flight, killing three officers on board. The B.C. route is overhead 19 Indian bands who have not been consulted. Some of the aircraft will be armed, as was confirmed to me by the former Minister of National Defence.

Does the Minister not believe that Canadians in western Canada have a right to know in advance, have a right to be consulted, and a right to say no to these offensive low level flights?

• (1440)

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, I find it very strange that members of the

#### Oral Questions

New Democratic Party first of all say that we should remove our troops from Europe, that we should get out of NATO in support of that alliance, and now suggest that we should not share the burden of the defence of the North American continent.

The consultations that took place as well as the environmental impact study have been done since 1985. We are talking about the air space in Canada and the training of Canadian pilots to defend Canada and North America.

The discussions that took place over the last four years show that we have charted a route through consultation and meetings held in at least the Northwest Territories, Alberta, and British Columbia regarding routes 910 and 920.

Those routes can be altered if it is shown that there may be jeopardy. These routes are flown four days in a 365-day period. The routes are not harmful to any environment, including the human environment.

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#### THE BUDGET

##### EXAMINATION OF LEAK—ROLE OF PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. Yesterday, we had a clear contradiction between the statement of the Mounties and the statement of the Minister of Justice about the role of the Minister's officials in dealing with the examination of the budget leak.

The Mounties said quite clearly yesterday morning that these officials are their lawyers and that federal officials gave them direct advice about whether or not to lay charges, so much so that they cloaked the advice in solicitor-client privilege.

The Minister, on the other hand, claims that his officials were brought in only at the request of provincial officials at Queen's Park and only for normal consultations with the provincial officials. Which version is correct?

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, all of this was laid out in an *aide-mémoire* which was given to the Leader of the New Democratic Party some 10 days ago. In that *aide-mémoire* it states very clearly: "Law officers of the Department of Justice became involved in this matter in the normal course as legal advisers to the Government and the RCMP".