

**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.