

*Air Defence Modernization*

Line. As the Minister knows, there is already severe unemployment in Atlantic Canada. I respect the Minister's wish to have consultations on these matters, but there is no way that consultations are going to make up for the loss of jobs and economic activity. These losses would be a very severe blow. There is a possibility that there will be new West Coast and East Coast defence systems. Has the Minister given any thought perhaps to turning existing installations on the Pine Tree Line into new defence systems?

**Mr. Nielsen:** Indeed, I thank the Hon. Member for raising that aspect of the project because it gives me the opportunity to tell him and Members generally that the present closure plans with respect to the Cadin Pine Tree Line would affect some 17 of the 24 stations and some 3,725 jobs. Of those jobs, 1,975 are military positions which can be redeployed to higher priority uses in the defence program. Another 1,027 positions are those of civilians directly employed by DND. The vast majority of these can be employed at other DND locations if the employees are willing to move and if the Department is in a position to retain the person year authorizations to redeploy them. This leaves 722 civilians living in the communities whose jobs depend on the stations. Of these, 275 are dependants of military personnel. There are DND programs to assist employees to relocate and I will be forming a committee with my colleagues, including the Minister of Employment and Immigration, to ensure that we make full use of the wide variety of adjustment, retraining, relocation, job search and income support programs available, both within the federal and the provincial Governments, for those in need of assistance. We will be working closely with the provinces and the communities affected in developing programs for each individual community.

Might I just add very quickly that those stations in the Atlantic areas are the least affected by the entire project.

● (1550)

**Mr. Skelly:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for a comment from the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen) on the process. Many Members of the House are pleased that we had the opportunity to peruse this agreement and discuss it on Statements by Ministers. We operate under a process by which a small group in the executive is entitled to sign international agreements with long-term effects which are not brought before Parliament for consideration, when in fact our partner with whom we are involved in many of these agreements does have an opportunity to present that material to elected legislators for their consideration.

Is the Government considering a process whereby documents such as this one and the interception agreement made on the West Coast would become subjects for discussion in Parliament to give legislators in this forum an opportunity to take a serious look at the implications which this and other agreements that the Government has already signed would have for Canada in the long term?

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, that is the second time in as many days that a member of that Party has held up as an example the desirability of adopting the United States system of Government. That is not our system of government. If what he is suggesting were to come about, it would cause serious and broad changes to our system of government. It is certainly not within my responsibility, nor within that of the Government, to invoke any system other than that which has developed within our country since Confederation. The fact of the matter is that the Government is charged with the responsibility of making these decisions. There has been consultation as I have described. That is part of the parliamentary process. With that foregoing explanation, the simple answer to the Hon. Member's question is no.

[Translation]

**Mr. Tremblay (Québec-Est):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question to the Minister of National Defence and Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), and make sure that both the question and the answer will be conveyed to the President of the United States (Mr. Reagan) who will be making a historic visit to Quebec City next weekend. Therefore, I will ask it in English.

[English]

What plans or arrangements are there to provide landing or dispersal facilities for U.S. aircraft in times of crisis or in wartime?

**Mr. Nielsen:** I am sorry, I did not get the entire question. I wonder if the Hon. Member would put it again quickly?

**Mr. Tremblay (Québec-Est):** My question is, what plans or arrangements are there to provide landing or dispersal facilities for U.S. aircraft in times of crisis or in wartime?

**Mr. Nielsen:** Under the existing arrangements between the two countries, there are arrangements for United States aircraft to use Canadian bases. That will be extended as the new air facilities, the ground facilities to accommodate the modernization of the system, are expanded in northern Canada. The same provisions of the existing arrangements would be expanded to accommodate those new purposes of NWS.

**Mr. Axworthy:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask a supplementary question because I did not receive an answer from the Hon. Minister of Defence (Mr. Nielsen) on the first question. He spent his time hashing over some old history. I simply want to know from him, because it goes to the very base of the announcement he made today, whether the Government is now signalling its clear agreement that the change in strategy, change in approach and change in defence thinking that was announced a year ago by President Reagan, and has since been endorsed by Secretary Weinberger, which says that we are now moving from deterrence to active defence and that the North Warning System is a part of that very fundamental change in military policy, is now the policy of the Government of Canada?