

Oral Questions

improved the nearly 4,000 miners in his own constituency around Labrador City and Wabush who face tax increases on average of \$600 in 1982, more than \$2,000 in 1983 and nearly \$3,000 in 1984. Does he believe these constituents of his are helped by this budget, which will increase their tax bills by those amounts?

Hon. William Rompkey (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, the miners in Labrador City and Wabush and other miners north of sixty know exactly what this budget has done for them. The budget continues the remission order which remits taxes on northern benefits. The north is the only part of Canada for which this was done. It was done particularly for the north because this government recognizes the special needs of people who live and work in the north. This is what this budget did for people who live in the north.

Let me put a few other facts on the record for the right hon. member. I told him before that there are about 250,000 people in Newfoundland who will benefit, and that is accurate. There is a total of 19,000 families of four.

Some hon. Members: Order, order.

Mr. Rompkey: Of these families, 12,000 will save—

Some hon. Members: Order, order.

Mr. Rompkey: Hon. members opposite do not want to hear the figures. They do not want to hear the truth. Twelve thousand families will save \$2 million, or \$164 each. Of those families earning \$15,000, 4,600 will not have to pay any tax at all. That is the effect of this budget in Newfoundland.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PROJECTION OF TAX PAYMENTS

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, hidden away behind all that obfuscation is the fact the minister well knows that his colleague, the Minister of Finance, has described the remission order dealing with northern employees, and I quote the budget papers, "hard to justify", and has indicated that he will be ending that remission order by January of next year. I will ask the minister specific questions having to do with figures provided by two major employers employing some 4,000 miners in Labrador City and Wabush in his constituency. Does he accept that the net impact on an average tax-paying miner in Labrador City or Wabush in 1982 with the remission order will be a \$603 increase? Does he accept that after the remission order is removed in 1983, there will be a tax increase of \$2,043 for each miner there?

Some hon. Members: Order, order.

Mr. Clark: Does he agree and does he accept that it will cost in the neighbourhood of \$2,991 per employee in Wabush and in Labrador City after the government carries through its intention to end this remission order and after it brings

through its budget? If he does not believe that, perhaps he will speak to the brother of his colleague, the hon. member for Manicouagan, who is the public relations director for one of the companies whose figures we are quoting here, and perhaps he will report to his constituents and then come back to the House of Commons and tell us just how badly his constituents will be hurt by the budget which he is bringing down.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. William Rompkey (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, I hope the right hon. member is not getting his figures from another candidate for the leadership of the Conservative Party, because I can tell the right hon. member that that particular man, who is a very major employer in Labrador City, feels very good about this remission order and, indeed, lobbied for it very strongly. The fact is that the remission order is in place. This government has kept faith with people in the north, and that cannot be denied.

As far as obfuscation is concerned, I do not accept the figures cited by the right hon. member today any more than I accepted the way he put forward his figures last week. He told us that there are 200,000 taxpayers in Newfoundland, and that is true. What he neglected to tell the people was the difference between taxpayers and tax filers. The fact is there are more tax filers than there are taxpayers.

● (1420)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: You are making our point.

Mr. Rompkey: The majority of people will benefit. These are the facts, Madam Speaker, and the obfuscation is on that side.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST THAT TAX REMISSION ORDER BE CONTINUED

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, may I thank the Minister of National Revenue.

Mr. Chénier: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark: I am coming to Timmins next. Because the Liberal member elected for Timmins refuses to speak for the people of Timmins—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chénier: You don't speak for anybody!

Mr. Clark: The minister has confirmed—

Mr. Chénier: Stay with it, Joe.

Mr. Clark:—that the statement made by the Minister of Finance in the House proposing to cut taxes by adding to the number of taxpayers some six million Canadians who do not now pay tax, was a misleading statement.