

1985-86 review. So that is where we stand now. The idea is a reasonable one, but there are some disadvantages to it also because, should you guarantee the international price of grain, obviously there would be a similar demand from producers of other goods for a guaranteed price also. A snowballing effect is one which we cannot accept lightly.

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NORTHERN AFFAIRS

STOKES POINT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. As he knows, the Gulf application concerning Stokes Point came in on March 11 and he has another 30 days to make a decision. I am sure he is also aware that the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee announced this morning that, if the Government goes ahead in approving the application, they will go before the Federal Court. My question to the Minister, as he leads the charge of the oil brigade to Stokes Point into lands which were withdrawn from exploration in 1978 following the very expensive and very lengthy Berger inquiry, the recommendations of which were supported by all Members of this House and by the National Energy Board—and those lands were withdrawn for three very specific reasons, those being the settlement of land claims—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Could the Hon. Member please ask his question? It is very close to the end of Question Period.

Mr. Fulton: Madam Speaker, would the Minister tell this House whether the 1978 withdrawal of those lands was public posturing, a bill of goods, or was it a serious Order in Council?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, despite the unnecessary and rather insulting preface to the Hon. Member's remarks, it is totally false. May I say it was a serious Order in Council.

USE OF PUBLIC LANDS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Madam Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the Prime Minister on one of his favourite topics, conflict of interest. I would like him to comment on a conflict of interest his colleague, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, finds himself in, in that the 1978 Order in Council was very specific. Those lands were for settling land claims, they were for a national park, and conservation purposes. Would he tell this House whether or not he believes that 1978 Order in Council was in fact bona fide? Was it in the interests of the people of Canada, or is his Minister in a conflict of interest in giving away the land to Gulf?

The Late J. J. Macdonell

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, there is no conflict of interest whatsoever.

Mr. Broadbent: There never is.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): The situation is that I am in possession of a legal opinion which would indicate that I have the authority to give a land use permit on a temporary basis—this is for exploration—to Gulf Oil Company. For exploration. It is quite true that if it were more than temporary, if it were for a permanent site for transportation of production of oil, an amendment to the Order in Council would be required. Since it is temporary, however, my legal advice is that it would not be necessary to get that Order in Council withdrawing these lands for park purposes, amended. I am advised that I do have the authority.

● (1500)

May I quiet the concerns of the Hon. Member by telling him that I have no intention at the moment of approving even any temporary land use permit for a site at Stokes Point, even for exploration purposes. I have not decided to do so, and I have not decided not to do so either; I simply have not decided this question at all. I am going to undertake, as I should, consultation with the native groups concerned. I am sure the Hon. Member would approve of that.

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[Translation]

PETITIONS

TABLING OF REPORTS OF CLERK OF PETITIONS

Madam Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petitions presented by the Hon. Members on Tuesday March 22, 1983, meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

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[English]

THE LATE JAMES J. MACDONELL

TRIBUTES TO FORMER AUDITOR GENERAL

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I seek the unanimous consent of all Members of the House to make a brief statement or comment with respect to our late Auditor General, James J. Macdonell, whose untimely death yesterday shocked all of us.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Johnston: Madam Speaker, yesterday we lost a great Canadian and a great friend of many Members of this Cham-