

Privilege—Mr. Blenkarn

300 residents of Ontario, most of them constituents in the riding of Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe. The purpose of the petition is to indicate to the House of Commons the opposition of these residents to the pace of the federal government's metrication policy. The petitioners hope the federal government will reconsider its policy and slow down its forced march to metric.

MR. NIELSEN—RATE INCREASES FOR ELECTRICITY IN THE NORTH

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I have the duty to present a petition on behalf of my constituents. The purpose of this petition, signed by 4,313 Yukon workers, is to indicate to the government that unreasonable rate increases for electricity have been inflicted upon them.

The nature of the petition is to demand that these unreasonable rate increases for electricity in the north be alleviated. These rate increases are caused solely by the flumming, bumblng and gross mismanagement of the Ottawa-controlled NCPC. These rate increases could be alleviated by concurring in the report of the subcommittee on the NCPC of the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The petitioners hope, Madam Speaker, that in your examination of their petition you will find the petition to be in order, sense the urgency and desperation of their plea and that you might use the discretionary powers vested in your office to allow discussion and referral to committee at the earliest possible moment.

MR. DARLING—OPPOSITION TO GUN CONTROL LEGISLATION

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Madam Speaker, I have the duty to present the following petition:

The PETITION of the undersigned of the Town of Bracebridge in the Province of Ontario who now avail themselves of their ancient and undoubted right thus to present a grievance common to your Petitioners in the certain assurance that your honourable House will therefor provide a remedy.

HUMBLY SHEWETH

THAT the Private Member's Bill, C-451, regarding gun control legislation which deals with the number of firearms in circulation in this country and to control the number of firearms in Canada,

WHEREFORE the undersigned, your Petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to oppose this legislation and deal directly with the present gun laws which are cumbersome, expensive to administer, and ineffective except to harass law abiding people.

AND as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. BLENKARN—SCOPE OF QUESTIONS PUT TO MR. JOYAL IN HIS CAPACITY AS MINISTER

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Madam Speaker I rise on a question of privilege. The question arises out of the question period. I do not raise this question of privilege to

interfere in any way with the ruling Your Honour made during the question period but to seek some clarification.

Your Honour will recall that in the question period I put the question to the Minister of State (Mr. Joyal), who represents the riding of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, about public hearings the minister is apparently conducting in the Montreal area of the province of Quebec. We have no indication as to what exactly are the duties of this minister, but presumably his duties relate to the province of Quebec and matters of government concern in that province and, indeed, in the whole country. If the minister is conducting public hearings—according to the information we have the Minister of State is involved in those hearings—presumably he has been directed by the government to hold those hearings. My question to the minister was about what seems to be his responsibility.

Your Honour will appreciate that we have no House order or any direction as to what the minister really is doing, and my concern is about what we can ask the minister. He is conducting hearings. Presumably they are Crown hearings because the minister is a minister of the Crown, and my question was to inquire as to the nature of the hearings the government—

Madam Speaker: Order. I must quote to the hon. member Beauchesne's Citation 361:

A question may not be asked of a Minister in another capacity, such as being responsible for a province, or part of a province, or as spokesman for a racial or religious group.

The hon. member does not have the basis of a question of privilege. He received answers to his questions from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). I do not know whether those answers satisfied him, but that is not for me to judge. I was only applying the practices of this House in not allowing the question to be addressed to that particular minister. I allowed it to be directed to another minister, in this case the Prime Minister, and I think that should satisfy the hon. member entirely.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: On a point of order, Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: No. That is the ruling. That is it.

Mr. Blenkarn: On a question of clarification, Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: No. I am sorry. That is it. I am sure I am applying the practices of this House exactly. In answer to the hon. member's question of privilege, that is my decision.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I just want to make absolutely certain I understand the nature of your ruling.

Mr. Pinard: Order.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I think it is fair, Madam Speaker, and I am not being argumentative, but I think it is important for the House to know the exact nature of the ruling.