

## NORTHERN AFFAIRS

## SETTLEMENT OF NATIVE LAND CLAIMS—GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, before I begin my question I should like to make an announcement to the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Murphy:** My question is to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In view of the fact that in the last two years his department has not completed one successful negotiation with any group across this country in order to settle land claims or land entitlements, could the minister explain to the House what his policy will be and what presentation he will make to cabinet to settle this very important issue?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I answer the hon. member for Churchill by indicating to him that this has been the situation for some time and not only for the last two years. The matter of land claims is one facing the people of Canada and also the government which cannot just be put aside flippantly by saying that there have been no negotiations or settlements in two years.

I want to indicate to the hon. member what is happening. In fact, negotiations are going on: for example, they are going on with the Council of Yukon Indians. Also, in terms of the COPE agreement, after our meeting of last week we agreed to meet within the next ten days to look at the areas which are outstanding and are creating difficulty. In terms of presentation to cabinet, cabinet will have to address the entire question of most specific and comprehensive land claims. When cabinet has made a decision, it will be available to the hon. member.

**Mr. Murphy:** Mr. Speaker, I recognize the fact that negotiations are taking place, but what kind of negotiations can take place when cabinet does not have a position? In view of the fact that in 1976 the federal government agreed to the Saskatchewan formula to settle land claims in that province, and in view of the fact that last night the minister indicated that formula was too rich, will the minister indicate to this House that his government still stands behind that formula in respect of Saskatchewan Indian claims?

● (1425)

**Mr. Epp:** Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member refers to the so-called land entitlement or treaty entitlement on the prairies, I should indicate that I had a meeting yesterday in Winnipeg with my counterparts from the four western provinces and Ontario, at which time we discussed various land entitlements as well as other outstanding treaties that have not been completed.

I would indicate that at that time we did discuss the so-called Saskatchewan formula, that being that entitlement be taken as at December 31, 1976. Saskatchewan is ready to use that formula, but it is not acceptable to some of the other

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provinces. As a result, we had discussions on what formula might be acceptable, and we have not reached a conclusion on a formula that we might present.

**Mr. Murphy:** Mr. Speaker, I am still wondering whether the minister is willing to live up to that agreement. Is he still willing to live up to that formula in the province of Saskatchewan? Why does he think it is too rich? Those people have been waiting for the land for 100 years, and it is about time something was done.

**Mr. Epp:** Mr. Speaker, I really do not know where the hon. member got the quotation that I feel it is too rich. What I want is a formula that is equitable. The Saskatchewan formula in some cases would be fair and equitable, but there are other reserves in respect of which it would not be fair and equitable. Before a final formula is agreed upon, obviously the principles of fairness and equitability have to be in place.

I would say to the hon. member that we are ready and, in fact, we have been meeting with the 15 entitlement chiefs in Saskatchewan. However, I say to him quite frankly that this is part of the negotiation and we will do it at the table rather than here.

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## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## SITUATION IN IRAN—NEED FOR INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES TO MAKE COMMON DECLARATION OF CONDEMNATION

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Cape Breton Highlands-Canso):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I continue to be disturbed at what I regard as lack of solidarity, indeed, a possible cop-out on the part of leaders of free democratic nations in the face of an atrocious assault on human rights and the breakdown of international order as evidenced in Iran.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister, after we had pressed him to take the initiative in seeking from summit leaders a common declaration, a common front, said that all the summit nations have made their position unmistakably clear. If they have, their position has been totally unnoticed. I ask the minister, in the interests of advancing our information, to tell us where these summit nations have made their position clear—to whom, and by whom? Was their position made clear by the head of the government, or by some third secretary buried down in the foreign office so deep that his comments would be unnoticed?

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I would advise the hon. member that the leaders of four summit nations have, through their individual Parliaments, through the European Parliament and through the European Community, made their positions known in that way to the United States, indicating their common front with the United States in this deplorable situation. Japan has, as well, made its views and comments known