

Oral Questions

House of Commons of Canada, or whether Parliament will again be avoided. Will the acting Prime Minister tell us why this government insists on avoiding the House of Commons on this question?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, the government obviously does not avoid the House of Commons. It is on deck every day dealing with questions raised by members of the House. We do it day after day, week after week, and the opposition takes full advantage of that opportunity. A question has been put by an hon. member to the minister, and he has answered fully in accordance with the practice and the rules of the House.

● (1450)

REQUEST FOR DETAILS OF PROPOSED ANNOUNCEMENT

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources the detail of what he is going to be announcing to the press and what his colleague refused to announce to Parliament? Will he tell the House of Commons now what he proposes to tell the press at 3.30 p.m.?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, indeed I would be very happy to announce what my colleague, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, will announce. It is very significant, a major program for help to remote communities and particularly northern communities. That program involves the expenditure of some \$24 million for energy studies and demonstration programs in remote communities. Out of this there will be at least \$10 million for the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Madam Speaker, you see, that was not difficult, was it?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF MR. PIERRE JUNEAU AS PRESIDENT

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, let me put another question respecting Parliament to the President of the Privy Council. The President of the Privy Council has spoken about his interest in parliamentary reform and his determination to have this institution play a more prominent role in public business in the country. I wonder if he would agree to take a step in that direction by referring to the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture the proposed appointment of Mr. Pierre Juneau as President of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, in order that Parliament

can, in this instance, begin the practice of confirmation hearings on important public appointments.

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): There are many steps, Madam Speaker, that we are prepared to take, but we would like to take them in the right direction. I can assure the right hon. member that all suggestions relating to improving the functioning of Parliament will be considered very seriously. He knows we are now having discussions at the level of House leader, on the substance of changes that could be brought to parliamentary procedure. It that does not work, we will see what we can do in due time. In the meanwhile, if he has steps to suggest, we will consider whether they are in the right or in the wrong direction. I would hope that he has better suggestions to make than the one he has made now.

PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSION OF APPOINTMENT

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, will the President of the Privy Council explain why the House of Commons, why members of this Parliament, should not be allowed to discuss the appointment of the president of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, before that appointment is made?

[Translation]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has been asking me questions about parliamentary reform and he is now asking a supplementary regarding an appointment by order in council. That is the prerogative of the Prime Minister, who, I am sure, can provide every justification for the appointment of Mr. Pierre Juneau, a person who enjoys considerable respect throughout Canada, and we are in fact delighted with his appointment as President of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. As for the procedure to be followed with appointments by order in council, that is the responsibility of the Prime Minister, and it is a matter of government organization, not a parliamentary matter.

* * *

[English]

NUCLEAR ENERGY

CANADIAN TECHNICIANS IN ARGENTINA

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Government of Canada has applied economic sanctions, for example halting credit for exports, against Argentina during the Falkland Islands crisis. Atomic Energy of Canada has 71 Canadian specialists who now are finishing the Candu reactor in Argentina. Has the government recalled these experts?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Non, madame le Président.

An hon. Member: Why not?