

Speaker, in the hope of being helpful we have extended this remission order each year pending the finding of a solution that is more equitable, in other words a solution that will assist those northerners who do not have benefits that are non-taxable. Many who do not have collective agreements do not have benefits. The remission order does not help them one iota because they do not receive any benefits. That is obviously inequitable and unfair.

While we are considering submissions from those such as the CLC, the mining companies and others, for the extension of the remission order or some other policy that will help those employees who receive benefits, we are also under an obligation, as a government, to try to help all those northerners who are not even fortunate enough to receive any benefits. That takes some time. We are trying to find an equitable means to do that. May I say that some of those people who receive no benefits do not have the benefit of any organization whatsoever to speak for them. It is a complex matter. I fully realize more notice or as much notice as possible is required for collective agreements. We will try to have a solution as soon as possible.

PRESS CONFERENCE CALLED TO ANNOUNCE MEASURES
AFFECTING NORTH

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question with respect to the taxation policies of the government in northern Canada. An announcement has been made that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development will be holding a joint press conference this afternoon at 3.30 for the purpose of announcing what they term new energy initiatives in the two northern territories and in other northern parts of Canada. I assume part of that announcement will include the extension of the subsidization program put in place by the previous administration. What other new initiatives are going to be announced at that conference by either the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources or the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development? I would hope the minister would take Parliament into his confidence and tell us prior to 3.30 this afternoon.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, I would advise the hon. member for Yukon that part of the reason for the timing with respect to these announcements is to accommodate the media with respect to disseminating the information—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blenkarn: Parliament does not count any more.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):—with respect to accommodating the media as it serves northerners. If the hon. member wishes to be consistent, I think he will be the first to agree that news of this kind, which has such a tremendous impact on the north, should be communicated first to northerners rather than hear it in the south—

Oral Questions

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):—again putting northerners in the position where they are the last to hear about policies which affect them. That is something we would like to avoid. I am sure the hon. member for Yukon would agree.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER MAKE POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT IN
PARLIAMENT

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, there is a northern member here from Yukon, one from Western Arctic, and one from Nunatsiag. The media in the north are up. It is now almost 12 noon in Yukon. It is one o'clock in the Northwest Territories; in the eastern Arctic it is two o'clock. I wonder if the minister could answer my question and inform not only the pure northern members but those members on all sides of the House who represent northern ridings in the provinces throughout this country. Will he take the House into his confidence and tell us what he is going to do?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, I strongly suspect that the hon. member for Yukon may very well know what is in the package, mainly from the point of view that this government has involved itself in a policy where we brought into our confidence the members of the Yukon government and the territorial government in a task force to study the whole energy question. The policies we are announcing now reflect that type of input.

Mr. Nielsen: What about the northern portions of the provinces?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): The last I heard, it was a Conservative government in the Yukon. In terms of avoiding unnecessarily offending any of the members of this House, I am sure my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, would agree we would be more than happy to get the press kits with all the details over to hon. members as quickly as possible before the press conference. I reiterate that I think they are well aware of what is in the press kits.

REASON FOR NOT MAKING ANNOUNCEMENT IN PARLIAMENT

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is to the acting Prime Minister who, I assume, takes responsibility for this determination to hide from Parliament information—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark:—hide from Parliament information which will be made available to the press outside Parliament, denying the opportunity for questions later this day. A question has been put regarding a policy that has already been set and published. The only question is whether it will be made available to the elected representatives of the people of Canada here in the