

*Oral Questions*

tics Canada before a committee of the House, and he said he would also be willing to have Dr. Kirkham come forward and answer all questions. Aside from the question of the appropriateness of that forum, which is another matter, since Dr. Kirkham was not the chief statistician during the time these alleged questionable practices took place—and perhaps his testimony alone might not be sufficient—would the minister undertake that if the committee requests it, he would use his good offices to ensure that the committee could have the attendance of Dr. Sylvia Ostry, who was in fact the chief statistician at the time these alleged matters took place?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** Mr. Speaker, I think that Dr. Kirkham will be able to satisfy the committee's curiosity, because the record is quite clear, and also that hon. members will be satisfied with his answers. Should Dr. Kirkham be unable to make his points clearly enough, we might then examine the suggestion made by the hon. member; in view of the circumstances, however, I feel that it is the person in charge who should answer for the department.

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[English]

**ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE****REDUCTION IN PENSION OF CONSTABLE HALE—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO RECTIFY**

**Mrs. Simma Holt (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. Is the minister aware of the matter of ex-RCMP constable Eugene Hale, whose disability pension was cut back from 100 per cent to 20 per cent because he was taken from hospital to his home to live out the final days of his life, and if so, will he now intervene to correct this cruel cutback and also move to change the Canadian Pension Commission regulations so that this situation will never again arise?

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, I will take very careful note of the comments and recommendations of the hon. member and have my department look immediately into rectifying any injustice or error which may have occurred. I should like an opportunity to check the facts fully before making a final decision.

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● (1430)

**ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM****ALLEGATION BELL CANADA RETAINING AS PROFIT PART OF FUNDS ALLOWED FOR LABOUR COSTS—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

**Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. In view of the fact that members of the Communications Workers Union of Canada have been attempting to negotiate a new contract with the Bell

[Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton).]

Telephone Company for over a year now, and in view of the fact that this company, Canada's richest and largest communications corporation, received a rate increase last fall, approved by cabinet, which included provisions for a labour cost increase of \$80 million, what personal intervention is the minister prepared to take to prevent Bell Canada from keeping as a windfall profit, up to \$52 million of the \$80 million which was approved for increased labour costs, by hiding behind the anti-inflation guidelines?

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think it would be advisable for the Minister of Finance to become involved in the negotiations in that labour contract and it would not be my intention to do so. It is, of course, a matter for the parties involved to negotiate their collective agreement. We have heard a lot of discussion about free collective bargaining in recent months. The hon. member seems to be saying the Minister of Finance should take it over; I do not propose to do that.

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**COMMUNICATIONS****LENGTH OF TIME NECESSARY TO APPROVE RATE INCREASE FOR BELL CANADA**

**Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Communications. In view of the fact that it took Bell Canada only two months to negotiate and get approval from the CTC and cabinet for their last rate increase of \$102 million, can the minister assure the House that the CRTC and cabinet will take as long to negotiate Bell Canada's present rate increase application as it has taken the company to negotiate a new contract with the Communications Workers Union?

**Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, the CRTC has to look into demands for increases in rates by Bell Canada and that demand has been deposited with the CRTC which, according to its new procedure, is asking Bell Canada to come forward with the detail that will allow the commission, as well as other people who are interested in intervening, to look into all the facts. Then the CRTC, I hope, will be able to come to its final decision. The CRTC follows the guidelines of the Anti-Inflation Board and will make allowance for any new expenses or any new expansion which Bell Canada has. As a regulatory body, the CRTC looks into those questions very rigorously.

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**ENERGY****REQUEST FOR REPORT ON PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH URANIUM REFINERY IN SASKATCHEWAN**

**Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the very severe rebuke given to the