

Seas or in Canadian waters, the Department of Transport, the Department of the Environment and even the companies concerned developed techniques to try to go around this difficulty, and technological studies are now being made on the possibility of extracting oil in the Beaufort Sea for example, where new techniques are contemplated to cope with this threat which can really destroy the environment. So we continue to seek means to prevent disasters of this kind.

[English]

**Mr. Holmes:** Would the minister now tell us whether or not he supports his department's contention that the off-shore oil drilling planned for the summer by Dome Petroleum should not take place?

**Mr. Marchand (Langelier):** No decision has been reached on that subject.

**Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West):** I should like to ask the minister when we might expect a decision on this very delicate issue in view of the fact that our supplies of petroleum and natural gas are so limited?

**Mr. Marchand (Langelier):** The hon. member will recall that a few years ago we accepted that drilling should take place in the Beaufort Sea. In that context, bearing in mind the new technology which is being developed in order to protect the environment, I expect we shall find it necessary to reach a decision very shortly, probably during March.

\* \* \*

#### NORTHERN CANADA POWER COMMISSION

POSTPONEMENT OF RATE INCREASE IN YUKON—REASON FOR FAILURE TO TAKE SIMILAR ACTION IN NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**Mr. Doug Neil (Moose Jaw):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. On January 26 the hon. gentleman's department put out a news release or communiqué with respect to investigations into NCPC. In that news release there is an indication that the minister had requested the NCPC to postpone the increase in rates in the Yukon until May 1. Has the NCPC, in fact, frozen the rates to domestic users until May 1 in the Yukon?

● (1450)

**Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that that has been done.

**Mr. Neil:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that domestic rates in the Northwest Territories have not been frozen and residents of Inuvik have been informed that the rates have been increased as at February 11, will the minister take some steps in the Northwest Territories to ensure the residents there that the freeze will be put on their rates until May 1?

**Mr. Buchanan:** Mr. Speaker, I would have to check on that. There was to be an increase in the Northwest Territo-

#### Oral Questions

ries at the end of February but that was withdrawn, to the best of my knowledge, until next November. Perhaps this domestic increase to which the hon. member is referring flows from the increase last October, but I will have to look into that.

\* \* \*

#### HEALTH

REASON FOR RESIGNATION OF DR. WIGGINS FROM RESEARCH BRANCH—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT

**Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare that is supplementary to questions asked earlier by the hon. member for Athabasca. Will the minister make a statement on motions in the House explaining what factors led to the resignation of Dr. Wiggins in particular relating to the national health and research development program grants selection process?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, the answer is no because, if we had to begin making statements in the House each time a civil servant resigns, we would be forever making statements.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### PUBLIC SERVICE

SMALL NUMBER OF INFORMATION CANADA EMPLOYEES FINDING EMPLOYMENT—GOVERNMENT ACTION

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board having to do with the closing down of Information Canada and the fact that 383 staff members were asked to look elsewhere for employment. In view of the minister's assurance that most of these would be found alternative employment within the Public Service of Canada, and in view of the fact that only about one-third of them have been found employment up to this point and their termination date is March 31, 1976, can the minister assure the House that every effort is being made to relocate these people within the public service?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, my answer is yes.

[English]

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the statistics I have given, and the minister can no doubt check them, will the minister personally undertake to review this placement procedure which has led the minister to give the assurance he gave in view of the fact that up to this point the record is not nearly as good as it ought to appear?

[Translation]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I will check to see if the statistics mentioned by the hon. member are correct. I can assure him that every effort will be made to try to accom-