

*Oral Questions*

country, will underwrite some of the losses incurred on these commuter runs, especially in metropolitan Montreal and metropolitan Toronto?

**Mr. Lang:** I think it is quite clear that quite apart from whatever financial assistance may be offered over the time in relation to what is essentially a provincial program, it remains a provincial and municipal program, which is what I said when I said it is their prime responsibility. I also indicated that in connection with the commuter programs we announced a year ago we would make \$100 million available over five years for the assistance of developed programs in the commuter field, so in that regard we did move to make some money available along the lines which had been indicated at the time of the 1974 election. What we have also faced, however, is a severe restriction upon financial resources within the total federal field, and therefore we have had to reflect carefully upon what other things we can do.

\* \* \*

● (1420)

**URBAN AFFAIRS****PROPOSED ELIMINATION OF COMMUTER SERVICES IN MONTREAL AREA—SUGGESTION MINISTER MEET WITH PARTIES CONCERNED**

**Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, who has assumed an even greater responsibility as far as the government is concerned in the province of Quebec. Given the fact that the government has now officially reneged on its commitment to the cities with regard to urban transportation, and given the serious situation developing in Montreal and the announced intentions of CN and CP to withdraw commuter services in that city, will the minister meet with representatives of the urban Montreal community, Canadian Pacific and Canadian National to try to ensure that there will be no cutback of commuter services in metropolitan Montreal, and will the minister make an announcement in the House in that regard?

[Translation]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of State for Urban Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, my answer to all those questions is yes.

\* \* \*

[English]

**NORTHERN AFFAIRS****DRILLING BY CANMAR IN BEAUFORT SEA—REASON FOR FAILURE TO HAVE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF PROGRAM**

**Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and it concerns the continuing problems in the Beaufort Sea. I would like to quote from Page 72 of the technical assessment of the drilling program. I am

[Mr. McGrath.]

quoting the minister's own technical report as follows: "The most important question that arises is why Canmar blindly drilled into an overpressured zone, taking into account all the sophisticated pressure detection equipment in use". Given the fact that this study is now being conducted by the same people who made the mistakes in the first place, can the minister advise why he did not make sure there was an independent review, separate and apart from the officials who made the decision on site to go ahead with that very risky drilling project?

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, the review is not being carried out by the same persons who agreed to the drilling in the first place. I believe the hon. member is referring to certain preliminary reports or reviews which were prepared by different people and which are being submitted to the communities in the Mackenzie Delta for their reaction. Once we get that reaction we will then prepare a final report which will deal with the conditions and the obligations of Dome Petroleum with respect to any new drilling season, but the review process is presently under way. It is not being done by the same people.

**PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR PERMIT TO DRILL FOR OIL AND GAS IN BEAUFORT SEA—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster):** I hope the minister will check his answer out with the director of the northern natural resources and environment branch, Mr. Joyce. As reported in *Hansard* at page 3047 of February 15 the minister indicated that a five-year drilling permit is a very speculative matter. Given the fact that the minister's own officials have publicly advocated a five-year drilling permit, and given that his own officials have gone public, would the minister undertake that there will be an independent review of this, and would he refer this matter to the standing committee so that there can be some objectivity in terms of the kind of drilling permit which is granted?

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** The government will make the decision, and not the officials. Furthermore, our decision will be based on input from the communities and from outside persons and officials.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ENERGY****PROPOSAL TO MAINTAIN DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME TO CONSERVE ENERGY**

**Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Considering that in the near future our country will be confronted with a shortage of oil and natural gas and that