

## Oral Questions

[Translation]

## COMMUNICATIONS

## SUGGESTED MEETING WITH QUEBEC TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS

**Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Communications.

Last week her Quebec counterpart suggested in a public conference the setting up of a bipartite task force made up of officials of both governments whose terms of reference would be to determine the special demands of Quebec for which some constitutional clarifications might be useful. Is the minister willing to say whether she will comply with the wish expressed by her Quebec counterpart?

**Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of Communications):** I have not yet received Mr. Hardy's suggestion. I read it in the papers like the hon. member, but I can say that I am in favour of the setting up of that committee and of frequent meetings between federal and provincial officials. However, I would wish, as I have already said, that the terms of reference of that committee were much broader so that we might consider all the problems dividing us presently.

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[English]

## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

POSSIBLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR FOREST MANAGEMENT—  
GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George—Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, in light of the recent statements by the Director General of the Canadian Forestry Service, who is also a policy adviser to the Minister of the Environment, calling for the development of a national forest policy, saying that our forests are not well managed by even the most "permissive and charitable of yardsticks", can the Minister of the Environment inform the House whether he has within his jurisdiction the capacity to respond to these recommendations, and what particular agency will be made responsible to address itself to this challenge?

**Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of the Environment):** I have no communication to that effect, Mr. Speaker.

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## PUBLIC SERVICE

REASON FOR USE OF PRIVATE AGENCIES TO SUPPLY CASUAL  
HELP—POSSIBILITY OF INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CASUALS

**Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the President of the Treasury Board. Last year the amount of money spent by this government on casual workers hired through personnel firms increased by 77 per cent. Treasury Board alone more than doubled the amount it spent through these private agencies from \$209,000 to \$492,000. Considering that these private firms rip-off anywhere from 20 to 50 per cent of the wages of these workers, my question then is why is the government using these private firms rather than using the existing facilities of the Canada Manpower Centres to save the government

[Mr. Jamieson.]

money and prevent the exploitation of these casual workers?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, this is a mechanism used by many organizations to fill positions on a temporary basis. Every department can do it, but this does not create new jobs. The departments must use the money already appropriated for the number of man-years that they are allowed, and until now, we have found this mechanism rather effective. But we are now looking into this problem with the Public Service Commission to determine whether it would be possible to develop a somewhat similar mechanism within the public service that would not be more costly for the administration.

[English]

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Was the use of temporary employees included in the announced austerity measures in December which stated that hiring would be held to a 1.5 per cent increase this year and, if they were not, can we then expect to see another doubling of the use of temporaries in the upcoming year?

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, the casual employees within the civil service are considered within the guidelines. That means if they are casual employees, they are included in the moneys allocated to every department. Therefore, that will not change the maximum of 1.5 set in the budget.

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[Translation]

## ENERGY

## RESEARCH ON WIND RESOURCES—REQUEST FOR REPORT

**Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Since the research on traditional oil resources has declined more quickly than the National Energy Board had expected, and because of the threat of an energy shortage in the near future, can the minister tell the House whether his department has developed research programs in the field of wind energy, and if so, can he report on the true potential of wind energy in Canada?

[English]

**Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, in an announcement that I made about two weeks ago, I indicated that the government was increasing its expenditures for research and development, including research and development in renewable resources, solar and wind energy. The National Research Council is the agency responsible for administering the wind energy program. I invite the hon. member to contact them for further information. If I can be of any assistance, I will be glad to provide it.