

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. the hon. member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca):** Could the minister indicate in what way the government is co-operating with the provincial government and Great Canadian Oil Sands to handle the pollution that is occurring in view of the fact that it has been going on for nearly two weeks, outside of sending officials to the area?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. It seems to me that, essentially, the hon. member has reiterated the question asked by the hon. member for Peace River.

ATHABASCA RIVER—POWERS OF INQUIRY  
TASK FORCE

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, in light of the answer given earlier about the appointment of a task force with which the province of Alberta has agreed to co-operate, will this task force have the power to subpoena witnesses and call evidence, and if that has not been arranged will the government be requesting the government of Alberta to agree to such a procedure?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, we have been directly in touch with the company responsible for that pipeline to inform them that they would be held responsible for the incurred damage as far as legally possible.

I wish to point out to the hon. member for Calgary North that there are over there not only government employees, but additional employees who are trying to control the damage, and we have acted as soon as it happened.

[English]

ATHABASCA RIVER—REQUEST FOR STATE-  
MENT ON DAMAGE TO WILDLIFE

**Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister whether he would be prepared to make a statement on motions, after his officials have reported, with reference to the damage done to wildlife such as waterfowl, fish and furbearing animals in the area?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, it does not seem so far that any great damage has been caused to the animals

[Mr. Woolliams.]

of the area. It remains possible that the damage caused to fisheries might be quite serious, but I have received no report in that respect. As soon as I have one, I will gladly submit it to the House.

[English]

ATHABASCA RIVER—SCOPE OF TASK FORCE  
INQUIRY—ESTABLISHMENT OF  
PERMANENT BODY

**Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I should like to ask a supplementary question concerning the task force that has been assigned, Mr. Speaker. Is this an ad hoc task force appointed just to look into this particular problem? If so, does the government have plans for the establishment of a more permanent and satisfactory group to deal with oil pollution problems?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I know that following other similar incidents, the Department of Transport conducted extensive studies of methods used to clean up damage caused by oil.

As far as the pipeline itself is concerned, I wish to inform the hon. member that in Inuvik, some very important experiments are going on in order to make sure that in the future pipelines will be constructed so as to make such accidents impossible.

[English]

**Mr. Aiken:** May I ask a further supplementary to clarify the matter, Mr. Speaker. Does the government intend to set up a body which would deal with oil pollution problems both on land and on water and not just through the Department of Transport's special task force?

**Mr. Baldwin:** You had better amend your legislation; you had better change your bill pretty soon. It is out of date even before it has been applied.

[Translation]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I think a joint study of the problem by the various departments would certainly be appropriate, and I take due note of the recommendation of my hon. friend.

[English]

HEALTH AND WELFARE

SAFETY OF DRUG, TOLBUTAMIDE, USED BY  
DIABETICS

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Wel-