

Minister's promise was to create jobs in the energy sector, not reduce them. What will the Government do to help the industry at this time of declining world oil prices?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the Government has already taken some positive steps in that regard, by recently doubling the small producers' credit. Let me add that my honourable critic has already indicated what he would do. He indicated on the way into the House that he would consider a stabilization plan, except that his Party has not figured out how to pay for it. At the same time he believes that consumers are paying too much at the pump. That is not a policy, that is a statement of desperation politics.

Mr. MacLellan: That Government is pathetic.

JOB LOSSES IN ALBERTA

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, 200 jobs are being lost every day in Alberta. How many jobs must be lost before the Government does something?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, nobody is more aware of the effect of dropping oil prices on the producing provinces than I. Nobody knows better than I and the Government that you cannot resolve the problems of downturns in oil prices by throwing money at them through government programs. That was attempted under the National Energy Program and it did not work. We are meeting with the provinces to deal with constructive issues and constructive solutions to this problem.

WESTERN ACCORD—REQUEST FOR RENEGOTIATION

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. It is quite clear that the Minister's much ballyhooed Western Accord is really now a failure. Even Premier Getty of Alberta wants a new oil deal with Ottawa.

Is the Minister prepared to deal with the results of times and events and renegotiate the Western Accord with western producing provinces, as Premier Getty wants?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the Western Accord led to record drilling, a 20 per cent increase in capital spending, and increased employment. The tragedy was that the industry was unable to recoup the money it lost under the Liberal program before the oil prices dropped. I will be meeting with the new Energy Minister of Alberta in Vancouver at the end of the week to continue our ongoing discussions in this area.

Oral Questions

SENATE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON PRICE STABILIZATION PROGRAM

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, is the Minister prepared to renegotiate the Western Accord as Premier Getty wants, or is she prepared to consider the Senate committee's recommendation that a price stabilization program be put in place to protect the small Canadian producers who are being killed with this failure of the Western Accord? Is she prepared to renegotiate with Premier Getty? Is she prepared to help the small Canadian producers?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, as you know, those are two questions in the supplementary. However, let me first advise the Hon. Member that I have not been asked by Premier Getty or any other Premier to renegotiate the Western Accord. There are provisions for that in the Accord.

In terms of the small producers, we have already removed the PGRT for all but the biggest companies which are continuing to pay it on a phase-down basis. We have already given relief to the small producers. We cannot protect them from a 50 per cent drop in world oil prices.

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PUBLIC WORKS

METHOD OF AWARDING CONTRACTS

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Argenteuil—Papineau): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works. Questions have been raised in the House concerning the award of small contracts by the Department of Public Works. The Minister replied that a report would be tabled concerning allegations to the effect that these contracts have been awarded without tender calls. Can the Minister tell us when the report will be tabled and whether he now has more information on this matter?

Hon. Roch La Salle (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to confirm to the House that indeed I made a commitment concerning the obviously false allegations of the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell that 90 per cent of contracts under \$30,000 were awarded without tenders. Mr. Speaker, you know very well that Treasury Board requirements do not specify tenders in the case of contracts under \$30,000. Despite this leeway given to us by Treasury Board, I am pleased to shed light on this report which I will be tabling later today and according to which 78 per cent of all contracts under \$30,000 have been awarded on the basis of tender calls. I do hope the media will take this opportunity to dispel any uncertainty created by these false allegations.