

Oral Questions

[English]

Miss Carney: Madam Speaker, the minister has failed to explain why his departmental staffing has increased over 300 per cent when we have lost \$50 billion in direct capital investment.

PROPOSALS TO INCREASE ENERGY SUPPLY

Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre): Madam Speaker, the minister says he plans to accelerate the Beaufort Sea and east coast developments, both of which are years from on-line production. Since the industry says Hibernia production is at least ten years away, and there are as yet no commercial oil finds reported in the Beaufort Sea, and major technical problems prohibit the immediate transportation of natural gas, is the minister planning to command the oil to gush forth and the waves to part, or does he have some practical proposals in mind?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I have indeed very practical proposals in mind, and that is to work with the oil companies to make sure these projects are going to—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Shields: When? When?

Mr. Lalonde:—come into production. We will work with the government of Newfoundland to that effect. I would say my hon. friend is completely at sea when she says Hibernia production is at least ten years away. She must be the only one who believes that.

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AGRICULTURE

LIVESTOCK STABILIZATION PROGRAMS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture about stabilization programs. After the hog stabilization payment in 1981 and the piggy-back arguments which followed, the minister promised to bring in a new federal-provincial agreement for these programs. Last week's announcement on lambs, which ruled out payments to producers covered by provincial plans, points up the fact that the minister has not completed his promise to have a new program in place by March or April of 1982.

Since it appears that the main impediment to a new agreement is money, can the minister tell the House what financial proposals are being made to offset the drastic drop in returns for livestock producers, particularly in light of the fact that the old formula, based on 90 per cent of the previous five years' market price, is totally inadequate with the current rate of inflation?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, the hon. member knows that we recognize that

program was inadequate in 1978, and we proposed a new program at that time guaranteeing 100 per cent of income assurance for farmers. That was turned down by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, and by every province including his own. Now they are asking for pretty near the same thing.

We are proposing a new plan for them and I hope to be able to do that shortly. The pork producers talked about bringing forward a plan for four years; they submitted one just in the last few weeks and want me to adopt it immediately. The Canadian Cattlemen's Association have adopted one along the lines we proposed in 1977-78. I have some different thoughts on that.

We are proposing a plan, and we will be discussing it with the organizations and the provinces when it is presented. But they have run ahead with helter-skelter programs; the rich provinces with rich programs, the poor provinces with hardly any programs at all, hoping that we are going to piggy-back their programs. We made it pretty plain to them that there would be no piggy-backing of those programs any more. And we are doing what we said we would with the stabilization program for lamb.

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL MEETINGS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, the minister mentions that piggy-backing will not be allowed in any future agreement. What other principles is his department taking into the discussions, and will he outline these to the House? How many meetings have been held at the officials' level and at the ministerial level?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, there have been many meetings and I do not have a list in front of me. There has been a lot of consultation over a period of time and some of these officials are saying now that I refused to have my officials involved in any other meeting until the final proposal is presented. That is true; I said, "Quit wasting your time, get on with preparing the paper I suggested to you; bring it forward. We have had a two-person committee, we have had the Senate report and other studies; put them together and bring forward a paper." That is what we are doing at the present time.

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MINES AND MINING

LAY-OFFS IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Mines who will know that 100 per cent of iron ore production from northern Ontario mines, particularly in the Timiskaming and Wawa areas, goes to the Ontario steel industry. She also