

*Oral Questions***NATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM**

## STATEMENTS MADE BY MINISTER

**Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown):** Madam Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. A total of 18,230 direct jobs would have been created in Alberta if the Alsands project had proceeded, including over 1,000 electricians, 1,860 pipefitters, 1,890 operating engineers, and I could continue, not to mention the thousands of jobs which would have been created in the rest of the country, especially in Ontario and Quebec, which would have supplied over 50 per cent of the major equipment to the project. Since the National Energy Program has been a disaster and has not produced the jobs promised by the government, could the minister explain why the people of Canada should believe anything he says, especially when he says that future jobs will be created by his pie in the sky programs?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, as far as the Alsands project is concerned, I may remind my hon. colleague that the government of Alberta and the Government of Canada made an extremely generous offer which was, in fact, considered as such by the other partners. The latter decided, however, considering the international oil price situation at the present time and the prevailing uncertainty about inflation rates over the next ten years, that they were not ready to embark on a project that would involve tremendous expenditures on their part. I may point out that, throughout these negotiations, both governments said there was a limit to what the taxpayer and the consumer should be asked to pay or to contribute toward the realization of such projects. I suggest that both governments went as far as they could, within reason, in making concessions to these companies. The companies decided that the concessions were no longer adequate. Well, that is unfortunate, and we are going to proceed with other projects which, I hope, will be less costly, both to the taxpayer and to the consumer.

• (1450)

[English]

## REQUEST THAT MINISTER RESIGN

**Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown):** Madam Speaker, if the minister had been as generous a couple of years ago as he thinks he is now, the project would have been 75 per cent completed today and Alsands would have a permanent work force of some 5,000 Canadians. That is all gone. "Black Friday", April 30, 1982, will be known as the day the minister lay down and pulled the coffin closed. Will the minister now admit that most of the NEP is faulty, is wrong for Canada, and will he resign before he eliminates any more jobs for Canadians?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, as I said before, our present energy policy is guided by agreements concluded by the Government of Canada with the governments of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan. The agreements were adjusted during the last few months to benefit the industry. A number of substantial concessions were made. Here again, there is a limit to the concessions that Canadian taxpayers should be prepared to make to the oil industry. As far as we are concerned, we are going to make sure that all reasonable projects that can be carried out, are carried out. However, we are not going to ask the Canadian taxpayer to pay whatever the oil companies care to ask. We are not going to do that, because we take the interests of the Canadian public to heart.

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[English]

**ENERGY**

## INCREASE IN NUMBER OF DEPARTMENTAL EMPLOYEES

**Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre):** Madam Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. We have heard today in this House how the loss of the Alsands and Cold Lake projects, plus the delay of the Alaska gas pipeline, will mean the loss of about 100,000 man-years of direct and indirect jobs during the construction phase alone. In fact, Madam Speaker, the only employment opportunities created by the minister's National Energy Program are in his own department, which has increased by 160 per cent in the last two years and 300 per cent in the last three years—according to the estimates 717 additional people in the first two years, and 873 over the last three years. Is the minister preparing to cut back on his own staffing requirements, or is his NEP geared only to promoting public sector rather than private sector employment?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, in previous answers I already indicated that activity in the oil industry during 1982 is expected to be greater than it was in 1981, and an even higher level of activity is expected for 1983. I may say that our energy policy had two objectives with respect to energy supply, namely, to increase supplies and to reduce consumption through conservation and by substituting other forms of energy for oil. Both approaches are working since, at the present time, there is heightened activity in the search for new oil in Canada, while oil consumption dropped 7 per cent last year. Both achievements are a result of the National Energy Program, and we intend to continue stressing these two aspects, namely, to increase oil exploration in Canada and reduce consumption through programs intended to help consumers conserve oil or substitute other forms of energy for oil.