

Acting Prime Minister would comment on the political philosophy and the nature of supporting only those industries which are going bankrupt while no support is being given to one which is economically viable and is providing very important jobs in an area which is currently suffering a 40 per cent increase in unemployment from last year. Would he tell the House—

Madam Speaker: Order.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, of all the hon. members in this House, my hon. friend should be the last to complain. The port of Prince Rupert has been the object of great attention on the part of the federal government in recent years. Three major developments are now taking place there in terms of the grain elevator and the coal facility, and in terms of the petro-chemical facility in future months. The federal government contribution to each one of those is really very substantial.

Concerning the particular point the hon. member raises with respect to the fish plant, unfortunately, or fortunately, it does not come under my jurisdiction. I will take responsibility for bringing it to the attention of the responsible minister and providing an answer to the hon. member as soon as possible.

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ENERGY

DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES TO ALSANDS PROJECT

Mr. Maurice Harquail (Restigouche): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the recent statements and announcements with regard to the Alsands project, could the minister tell the House which projects the federal government envisages to replace the kind of investment and employment that the Alsands project was intended to provide?

Mr. Nielsen: He read his list already.

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, first of all I would like to point out that, contrary to what one hon. member said a minute ago, the Exxon project in Colorado would not cost five times the cost in Canada. As a matter of fact, it would cost \$5 billion to produce 47,000 barrels of oil, while Alsands would cost about \$14 billion or \$13 billion to produce 130,000 barrels of oil. Therefore, I suggest that the mathematics were all wrong.

As far as the question asked by my hon. friend is concerned, I would like to point out to him that Canada can still reach self-sufficiency by 1990 by concentrating its efforts and money on the exploration and development offshore, the Atlantic coast and the Beaufort, and also by constructing upgraders in Montreal and Saskatchewan and by accelerating the activities with regard to heavy oil and enhanced oil recovery in the prairies, in the western provinces. We are confident that those activities will enable Canada to meet all of its needs by 1990.

Oral Questions

PIPELINES

ALASKA GAS PIPELINE—QUERY RESPECTING START OF CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Madam Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Last week, and even earlier today, he was unable to give us any straight answers concerning the Alaska gas pipeline, and I am now giving him the opportunity to redeem himself. Will he tell us when this project will start, or has he completely botched it?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, as I indicated earlier, I would like to refer my hon. colleague to the statement made by the Alaska pipeline project partners. In their statement, the partners made it quite clear that they remained entirely committed to carrying out this project, and that in the coming months they would be developing an appropriate financing formula, in view of the fact that they had already completed the necessary engineering work.

[English]

Mr. Nickerson: Let me remind the minister of what he said on July 17, 1980. At that time he said that “the government of Canada has accepted the United States’ commitment, assuring timely completion of the whole project”. I repeat the words, “timely completion of the whole project”.

REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): If the minister is serious about the thousands of Canadian jobs that this project would generate, and if he is concerned with the billions of dollars of spin-off benefits, would he undertake, either personally or through the Prime Minister, to meet with his United States counterparts so that we are not faced with another Liberal Alsands disaster?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, meetings have taken place with the U.S. administration concerning this matter. I am sure there will be further meetings. However, I want to point out to my hon. friend that the problem is not with the U.S. administration at the present time. The problem is that the private sponsors have had difficulty amongst themselves. The pipeline commissioner, Mr. Sharp, has been in touch with them on a regular basis. We will continue the pressure with regard to that matter.

I refer my hon. friend to the statement made by Foothills over the weekend, which indicated, and I quote, “The companies have, as a group, reconfirmed their commitment to the project”. It went on to state, “Pre-construction work for Phase Two will be maintained in both Canada and the United States, funded by the companies in today’s meeting and fitting to this schedule”. That is the statement by the companies.