

The New Democratic Party has put forward this motion today because we believe it is essential that the Canadian people hear from the House of Commons clear support at this stage in the debate for the principles of decency and practicality that are embodied in Mr. Justice Berger's report. We hope to hear support from the government side, in particular from the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Allmand) whose prime responsibility is our native peoples in the north. But we also want careful clarification of the position of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie), who said critically on Monday, "No one asked Mr. Berger to recommend against a pipeline". In addition to the government, we also hope to have confirmed the support of the Progressive Conservative party. We were pleased to hear their leader say the following before the television cameras on Monday afternoon:

I think it's very clear that the Gas Arctic proposal is not going to be a viable one. I think it would be very hard to contest Mr. Berger's evidence indicating that we should not proceed directly with the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. I think the 10 year delay appears, on the basis of evidence we now have, to be a sensible one.

I said at the outset that our decision about the Mackenzie Valley can be not only decent but practical. This must be emphasized. Those people who are now telling Canadians that we have to sacrifice decency because we need the energy are posing a false choice. We are not dealing here with a choice between respect for the people and environment of the north and an energy crisis. It just is not so. Approving Mr. Justice Berger's recommendation for a ten-year delay in building a Mackenzie Valley pipeline will do more than allow native land claims to be settled and implemented on a just basis. It will not affect the gas needs of Canadians, wherever they may live in the southern part of Canada. The truth is, we will not need frontier gas in Canada until the mid-1990s.

● (1220)

Mr. Woolliams: Who said that?

Mr. Broadbent: The self-interested predictions that we are in imminent danger of running out of gas are flatly wrong, and flatly contradicted by the evidence. They simply ignore the most recent assessments of our gas supply and deliverability.

Mr. Woolliams: Who made the assessments?

Mr. Broadbent: Canadians must note, Mr. Speaker, that these ominous predictions of gloom come primarily from the same sources, the oil and gas industry, which told us in 1970 we had enough gas in Canada to last us 392 years; therefore, they said at that time, we can expect and desire to export more gas. When lucrative exports were cut off one year later the industry argued, for some strange reason, that we would run out of gas by 1978 and that we therefore needed the Mackenzie Valley pipeline to bring down what they called huge amounts of natural gas from the Mackenzie delta.

An hon. Member: They are a bunch of liars.

Mr. Broadbent: Every year the decision to build a pipeline has been put off. Similarly, the date on which we are supposed

Mackenzie Valley Pipeline

to run out of natural gas has been pushed back by the industry. What is the truth? The truth is that last year, in one year alone, more natural gas was found in southern Alberta than is contained in all the natural gas proven reserves in the whole of the Mackenzie delta. That is the truth; that is the reality. We should heed it, and not the propaganda of the oil industry.

Mr. Woolliams: You can be certain they did not find gas in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Benjamin: Not at all. There were a couple of finds.

Mr. Broadbent: How many Canadians know this basic truth, Mr. Speaker? I repeat, at current rates of consumption, and on the basis of known supplies in the south, Canadians have enough natural gas to take us into the 1990s. Again I ask, how many Canadians know that there are now three proposals for renewed gas exports while at the same time Arctic Gas supporters are shouting that we are running short of gas supplies. Once again, the erroneous arguments of the oil and gas industry are merely self-serving. They are mere propaganda, designed to serve their own interests.

A serious conservation program, which should be considered apart from the real leeway in time that we have, could bring more energy at cheaper prices than would be available from projects which have been proposed in the frontier regions. For instance, a national home-insulation program would save more energy every year than we can produce from current Mackenzie Delta reserves, and it would cost less than one-third per energy unit. And, unlike natural gas, insulation never runs out. A decision now to build the Mackenzie Valley pipeline would be, in part, a decision to ignore serious conservation measures. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) said three months ago:

The cost of gaining an extra barrel of oil by saving it is a fraction of the cost of finding and producing that same barrel. Conservation measures are the surest, quickest and most efficient way of making an ongoing investment that will reduce Canada's dependence on imported oil.

What are we, as a country, doing in terms of taking serious conservation steps? We have no national home-insulation program, which the New Democratic Party advocated as early as September last year. We have weak automobile mileage requirements. I say this as one who represents an automobile constituency, whose people would support and defend conservation measures for the automotive industry. We lack even mandatory labelling of appliance efficiency targets. We have no targets at all in this field. We are left merely with the true symbol of the Liberal party of Canada: public relations gestures, and nothing more.

Even if we were to use Delta gas now, the cost would be astronomical. As the minister himself said in an internal memorandum dated March 7 of this year, Delta gas would cost double what it is now and all other prices would be raised to match it. To bring in Delta gas now, he said, would be a decision which would arouse a good deal of resistance in the east. Some understatement! Some concern!

What the minister said does not even take into account what would happen to the price of gas after the inevitable cost