

Northern Ontario Pipe Line Corporation

that agreement. In other words, after the passing of this bill the government can amend that agreement or make some other kind of agreement which would not have to provide for the repayment of the money or that the company be regarded as in default in the event of failure to achieve construction by a certain date. Therefore, because the agreement is not annexed to this bill as a schedule, because parliament is not made a party to this agreement, we cannot be sure that it will not be altered, amended or substituted, as has already happened in relation to this company.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, we are being asked to part with our control over the ultimate destination of this money; we are being asked to part with control over the guarantee of repayment; we are being asked to part with control over the terms and conditions under which the company would be regarded as succeeding or defaulting. And it is because we are being asked to part with that control that I submit that by this bill in its imperfect form we are being called upon to violate some of these basic principles to which I have already referred.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that though the bill itself does provide certain conditions that must obtain in the agreement, those conditions are far less than are contained in the existing agreement that is circulating amongst us; but we as a parliament are not a party to the agreement circulating amongst us and we will not be a party to it unless it is included in the bill as a schedule thereto.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that in view of all the changes, the extensions and so on that have happened in the past, we have the right to feel that unless parliament itself is involved in this agreement, unless we are a party to it, unless it is in the bill, we have no guarantee that the agreement will not be changed by the two parties to it, and I feel that under the basic principle of the right of parliament to maintain control over the voting of money, over the destination of that money, we have the right to have before us a bill which is more than something pretty close to a blank cheque; we have the right to have before us a bill which includes in it as a schedule something that we vote on or in other words the very agreement that is going to be implemented so far as this whole proposition is concerned.

I am not denying the bona fides of the parties that made the agreement that is before us as sessional paper 174-P. The important point is, so long as it is only a two-party agreement those two parties can change it. What we need, if parliament is to be asked to vote for this, is a three-party arrangement. We have to be in on it, too. I submit

[Mr. Knowles.]

that for reference to be made to this agreement, for it to be tabled, for it to be discussed by the minister who is sponsoring the bill and yet to keep it apart from the bill so that the government and Trans-Canada can amend it or change it as they wish to is being unfair to parliament and to that extent I suggest this bill is imperfect in its form; that it violates the basic principles of parliamentary control over the expenditure of money and that Your Honour should not allow the minister to proceed with it at this time. Indeed, under the provisions of citation 634 of Beauchesne's third edition, I suggest it is quite clear what Your Honour should do. Citation 634 reads:

If the Speaker finds that the bill is in blank or in an imperfect shape, he will decline to put the question and will return the bill to the member who must take another opportunity of bringing it up in conformity with the rules.

Because of the extent to which this bill is blank in that it does not have the agreement attached to it as a schedule, and because of the imperfection in that it violates the principle of parliamentary control over expenditure, I submit that Your Honour should return the bill to the hon. member who is seeking to move it and ask him to correct these imperfections.

Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: There is a point of order before the house now. The hon. member cannot rise on a point of order when there is one point of order already before the house.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has indicated that the bill has no marginal notes and no explanatory notes. The explanatory notes are not a part of the bill nor are the marginal notes. The bill has no marginal notes and no explanatory notes and they are not a part of the bill. The bill consists of the various clauses that are there. In order to judge whether a bill is in blank or in an imperfect shape, it had to have blanks when it was introduced and given first reading. There were seven consecutive sections.

The hon. member should perhaps remember that when the motion is made for first reading, the motion in fact has become so purely formal that we do not ask that the bill be now read a first time and be printed but in fact that is being ordered by the house to satisfy the requirements of standing order 74 which says:

All bills shall be printed before the second reading in the English and French languages.