

*Northern Ontario Pipe Line Corporation*

At this time I urgently place my first proposition before the government and particularly before the Prime Minister, who told this house last year that he did not like this third method. My earnest request to the government and to the Prime Minister is that they expedite this matter by referring it to a committee where we can get the evidence and learn what the facts are, and then from that evidence we can find out how Alberta gas can best be brought as quickly as possible to the east for delivery in Ontario, Quebec and the intervening markets across the country. All the evidence that has been furnished and all the evidence on record denies the right of this government to declare that it is expedient to adopt this course. I suggest that hon. members would be acting in an utterly irresponsible manner if, in the face of this evidence which is a matter of record, they declared it was expedient that we proceed in this manner.

However, Mr. Chairman, this matter goes far beyond the question of whether there is evidence that the project cannot be financed. Are we in any event going to approve of the plan that is now before us? We are asked to give our support to a proposal which places the handling of Canadian gas under the control of powerful United States interests, where it will remain. We are being asked to help with public money to place control in the hands of United States financial interests whose main concern is the delivery of gas to the United States. That is the market in which they are interested. The Canadian market is only a secondary consideration to them. It is true that they want Canadian gas and as much of it as they can get, but they are not showing nearly the same interest in developing the Canadian market.

The things we have been speaking of must of necessity be done by some other agreement than that which is now before us. We should not be asked to give this minister or this government a blank cheque. We should consider the situation only when we know we are going to have a definite agreement before us. We know now that the agreement we will be called upon to consider is not a real agreement at all. It makes a farce of these proceedings. That is all the more reason the government should withdraw this motion, let it stand and refer the whole matter to a committee.

What of the declared policy of the government in regard to the control of our natural resources? Do not let the government try to ask us to interpret its policy. It has already stated its policy. It has declared the similarity between natural gas and electricity. In view of the fact that the government itself

has declared that we must conserve those resources and that as far as possible the same principles should apply to gas that apply in the case of electricity, then we might ask when did the government change its mind.

We have a right to know that. We have a right to ask that question before a committee which will ascertain all the facts. We know perfectly well that on a number of occasions this government has refused the export of electricity although there might have been an immediate profit gained by the export of that electricity to markets in the United States. We know that this government has refused to permit water to flow from Canada into the United States for the purpose of producing electricity there. The government has drawn a similarity between electricity and gas. Let the government follow that policy or, if it declares it does not intend to, then the government should let us know when it changed that policy and what the present policy is.

Certainly nothing that has happened would explain the situation which the government presents to us. It was suggested today that this is not a monopoly. This method will provide a real and complete monopoly over one of our economic lifelines. This would be set up under the control of United States interests with the assistance of large sums of Canadian taxpayers' money.

We come now to the next stage. Because of its interest in the 675 miles of government-owned pipe line from Manitoba to Kapuskasing, this government would be bound to assure that it was a monopoly. There could be no doubt about it. The government, by its course, is assuring that it is creating a monopoly, and it is placing that monopoly in hands outside of Canada. It is assuring a long-term monopoly. If it is sound to follow this course, I hope we will then have an explanation from the Prime Minister as to why the government did not follow one of the two other courses which the government said it preferred. The Prime Minister has told us that either of the other courses would have been better than this. If the reports we receive are correct I am sure that most hon. members, including most hon. members opposite, will agree in their own minds that that is true.

The government recognizes that Canadians are concerned about the matter of control. The government has left no doubt in our minds that it recognizes that the people of Canada are greatly concerned. That is why the government keeps talking about this 51 per cent interest. The reason the Minister of Trade and Commerce raised that myth about the 51 per cent interest being assured