

Mackenzie Valley Pipeline

producers in Canada, they have to be regulated in the public interest. I think they should be praised because of the fact they are willing to go for the long shot, to invest their money and wait years before they have any return. We should keep that in mind.

What are some of the questions to be considered before we decide whether Mr. Justice Berger's recommendations should carry the day? He has reported on certain aspects. We have got to decide on Canada's economic situation. What is the expense going to be on our balance of payments if we do not bring gas from the frontier areas down into the area along the Canadian border? What would be the effect on the balance of payments? The picture is grim. The picture with respect to oil shows us as having a deficit on the balance of payments accounts with respect to oil alone if present projections go ahead and even with conservation of \$5 billion or \$6 billion by 1985. What about that? Are we going to need gas to replace some of that oil to help us with our balance of payments problem? Because of this government, we know Canada is fast sinking down into the sink hole in its international trade and balance of payments.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: If Canada can be saved with a change of government, then it should come this year rather than next year. Hon. gentlemen opposite should get their nerve up and call an election. It may be another year before we can start saving Canada. We have got to keep the balance of payments in mind. We have to keep the financing conditions in mind. We have to keep in mind the economic activity that will be developed in Canada if the pipeline does go ahead.

One thing we should not do is to make a premature decision. Neither the government nor parliament should make a premature decision. Because the United States of America passes legislation which indicates they want to make their decision by September 1 or 90 days thereafter, that should have no effect here in Canada. If it takes us another six months, we should tell them it is going to be six months, and they can change their legislation. Who ever heard of anything so foolish as the President of the Privy Council saying that we have to decide in August because the Congress of the United States passed legislation a year or two ago saying that the President has to recommend something by September 1? I say to the United States Congress, "Get your amendment ready. You might have to change it from September 1 to March 1, or even to June 1. If you do not want to wait until we are ready to make our decision in our national interest, go ahead and bring it down by LNG tanker from Alaska". We are not going to be rushed or hurried because the government of another country passes legislation. Has anyone ever heard of anything so foolish?

If we could properly make a decision, if the Lysyk report were on time and we had enough time to consider it, perhaps by December 1 we would be in a position to do it. We would not be in a position to do it by September 1. There is no government in this world, unless it were composed of the

[Mr. Crosbie.]

leader of the NDP, which could decide this issue by next September 1 properly and give all the various facts their proper consideration. The Leader of the New Democratic Party, if he were the Prime Minister, would have solved the whole thing five years ago. He would not have had a Mr. Justice Berger. He would not have needed him. There would be no pipeline.

The final twist today is: what about the Yukon Indians? Mr. Justice Berger has dealt with the Indian and native people along the Mackenzie Valley. He has not gone into detail concerning how they would be affected by the other area of the Alcan route. The Leader of the NDP is prepared to abandon the fewer number of Indians who are there.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. gentleman that his allotted time has expired.

Hon. Warren Allmand (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, as the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) said earlier, we are going to vote against this motion today, not because we are opposed to or decided on its substance or the arguments in its favour, but because it is premature. It is premature because parliament has established a National Energy Board to consider, among other things, pipeline applications, and to advise the government accordingly. For the government to accept or reject the principal Berger recommendations at this time would be an affront to parliament and the institutions established by parliament.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Allmand: What would the NDP say if the National Energy Board report happened to be published first? It was only an accident that it was not. If that report were published before the Berger report and the government were to make its decision on that basis without waiting for the Berger report, what would they have said? Obviously they would have cried murder, and justly so, if we had dealt with the National Energy Board report merely because it came out first and had not waited for the other principal report in this matter. It so happens that the Berger report has been published first by accident. That is no reason for a response now without examining the others.

If the government is to be fair and responsible, our response to whether we build a pipeline at all; what route it should follow; whether it should be delayed for ten years or any other period, must be based on a thorough study of the Berger report, the National Energy Board report, the Lysyk report and all other relevant documents. Any other course of action would be clearly irresponsible and even dishonest. Therefore we will vote against the motion, as I said, not because we oppose the substance but because it is premature.

● (1430)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!