

Northern Pipeline

based on low pressure pipe. I have not had any estimates as to the man-years of employment that might occur against the possibility that the National Energy Board would recommend high pressure pipe. I do know quite well that the plant in Regina is interested in obtaining business and, as was pointed out this morning by the premier of Saskatchewan, its ability to get that business might be very directly influenced by the selection of the pipe pressure. Certainly I have not any prepared estimates on the basis of high pressure pipe.

This is very a complicated subject, but just let me say that the National Energy Board will make its recommendations and its intentions known, and it must take into account, in addition to the economic factors, the factors of safety and reliability. The decision or recommendation of the National Energy Board is one for that board within Canada, but I have no estimate of the labour cost.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have just a brief question for the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen). Since the minister signed the agreement with the United States on behalf of Canada and has said several times today that the National Energy Board will announce the specifications, I would point out that under the provisions of article 10 of the agreement, which established a technical study group for the purpose of testing and evaluating various kinds of pipe, the last sentence states that it is understood the decision relating to pipeline specifications remains the responsibility of the appropriate regulatory authorities, and "authorities" is in the plural form. Do I take it that the technical committee will not make this recommendation, but that the National Energy Board, which will be part of the technical committee, will make that decision solely on its own?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, that is my understanding. It is my firm understanding that the National Energy Board, under the terms of this proposed bill, will be making its recommendation on the basis of the results of the technical study. In fact we have been in continuing consultation with the United States. On the basis of all the information and proposals of the United States it will be the chairman of the National Energy Board who will convey to me, either this week or the first of next, its conclusions, and I will make them known. It is the National Energy Board that will make that recommendation.

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, the minister, and I do not fault him for this in view of the complexity and length of the bill, has taken some 50 minutes to put the government's position on record. Let me say one kind thing about that presentation, and that will probably be the last kind thing the minister will hear from me regarding this bill throughout my remarks. I accept the understanding he gave today in respect to informing members of the House concerning pipe design, pressure and pipe size, before we conclude this debate. That is surely essential.

Having said that, I find myself in disagreement with a great many things the minister believes the bill contains. Before

[Mr. MacEachen.]

going on to those I want to criticize, with all the force I can muster, the stance being taken by the NDP on a bill so vital to the national interest as is this one.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: When the minister is describing remarks being made by members of this party, the opposition, and I will not use the term "official opposition" because, as the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) has been around long enough to know, that is a term invented by Mackenzie King to split the opposition, he should single out the party whose members have been making remarks that lead him to believe they are going to encounter unconscionable delay in getting this legislation through. Let me make it abundantly clear that this party does not in any way intend to delay unduly the passage of this vitally important legislation through this House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: The Leader of the NDP (Mr. Broadbent) has said things today, as he has been doing ever since we came back after Christmas, along with other members of that party, which clearly indicate they are going to marshal their entire forces for the purpose of deliberately delaying or filibustering this bill. I am sure that is what the government can expect. I hope those members will change their minds because the matters at issue here are far too important to Canada to have that kind of irresponsible attitude adopted by the NDP.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: The spurious question of privilege raised today by the leader of that party was more than adequately answered by the Deputy Prime Minister, and any member with any conscience at all would accept his undertaking for what it means in a House composed, as it is, presumably of honourable members. If those members had done their homework they would be knowledgeable on matters the Deputy Prime Minister was trying to explain. However, they did not believe him.

We had the good fortune to hold several meetings of great assistance to us in obtaining information and education on the subject matter of this bill. I want to compliment the officials of Foothills pipeline who went to the expense and took the time and trouble of coming here and sitting with us for one full day, from nine in the morning till almost six in the evening. The same kind of request was made by the government party and the same kind of co-operation was extended to their members who expressed an interest in the legislation. I dare say that members of the NDP did not even take the trouble of requesting that kind of enlightenment, and I would be very suspect in regard to heavy and intelligent participation in this debate by members of that party.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): You are wrong again.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister is aware, I am sure, that there are proceedings which were