

Alberta Natural Gas Company

or anyone else in authority in Canada, directed him to build it. That could be the Yellowhead route. I do not think the company that now has a charter has any franchise for the Yellowhead route or any other route, because I believe they have also surveyed and applied for a permit to use the noted route known as the Crowsnest-Spokane route. They have made application to follow this route, so that one can see at once that there is no franchise on any of the routes; and whichever is determined as the most suitable to Canadian needs will be the one to be built.

To vote for these bills is not to vote for a route. It is a vote for the best interests of the Canadian people. It was stated categorically in the committee that they would build an all-Canadian route if it was determined that that was the most logical and feasible of the routes. It has been brought out by the previous speaker that the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific Railway are the logical companies to build these pipe lines. I am sure the committee on which I served would have been just as willing to grant a charter either to the C.P.R. or to the C.N.R. to build a pipe line, if such a bill had been before it.

But we were not considering a bill of that kind; it was not a bill to incorporate the C.P.R. or the C.N.R. We were simply discussing a pipe line bill, and the committee was not railroading in any shape or form. It was performing its duties as best it knew how.

It was stated in committee—I said it myself—that there was considerable time wasted in the house in the last four months listening to people discussing pipe lines who knew nothing whatever about them. Those same people, in my humble opinion, wasted a lot of time in committee expressing their opinions and framing questions they knew could not be answered.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): Would you care to be more particular? Who were they?

Mr. Byrne: I had not intended to speak on this question tonight. I wish to assure the committee, however, that when I speak I do so to exonerate members who sat on the committee from the charge that they did not act in accordance with parliamentary procedure. I feel they did. Further, if we were to imagine that the route depended upon our decision here tonight, we would be under a misapprehension. That will not be determined. If we turned down these bills it

[Mr. Byrne.]

would not mean that the pipe line would travel through the Yellowhead route.

I asked both engineers who appeared before the committee if it was economical or feasible to supply the cities of Trail and Nelson by following the Yellowhead route. I asked both men and directed my question particularly to Mr. Dixon, who has been in the pipe line business practically all his life. His statement is on record, and I doubt very much if he would make a statement knowing it to be false. His reply was that it was impractical and most unlikely that a pipe line built through the Yellowhead route would be able to serve those places economically. That was another reason for wishing to have others incorporated, and also for taking in the southeast corner of British Columbia through the use of the Crowsnest route.

It should be well understood that in any decision we make in this matter we are not determining the route. Let me repeat that I have more confidence in our civil servants than some seem to have. I believe they will look after the best interests of the Canadian people to an extent greater than would be indicated in any declaration made by anyone in any incorporated company.

Mr. Laing: Mr. Chairman, I believe we are drawing to the end of a debate which has been characterized by a great deal of material, some of which has been relevant, some semi-relevant and some utterly irrelevant. I hope what I have to say tonight will be at least semi-relevant to the subject.

Part of the argument I was going to advance has already been made by the hon. member for Edmonton West, and part of it has been made by the hon. member for Coast-Capilano. In our province of British Columbia we are particularly concerned with the development of industry within the province. The hon. member for Edmonton West has said that he spent twenty years in Alberta. Well, some time this fall I shall have spent forty-six years in British Columbia. I take second place to no one in this chamber in my knowledge of that province, and I think I know some of the factors in connection with it that make it difficult for us at times in the province of British Columbia.

I speak with particular reference to the fact that within greater Vancouver we have over half the entire population of the province. We have not the clearest weather, but almost any day one can go to one of the higher promontories of our beautiful city,