

*Northern Ontario Pipe Line Corporation*

We hear a great deal about the function of the committee on money bills. It is one of our parliamentary safeguards in relation to one of the most important functions of parliament, to protect the public against oppressive taxation. Yet what do we see here? The house is not given an opportunity to obtain information. This whole proceeding of the resolution before a money bill has been made a farce by this government. Here is a major project, one of the most important ever to come before parliament, involving the expenditure of millions of dollars, and parliament is not to be permitted to pursue its duty to seek information upon it. Information is not what the government wants parliament or the people to have.

If there were a committee, as there should have been, witnesses could have been called before it, papers could have been called for. But the government will not face a committee. They fear to face the revelation of the facts that will be exposed in a committee and they do not want to discuss it according to parliamentary processes. They do not want to produce letters, correspondence and memoranda. The time factor in this debate is entirely of the government's own creation.

We come now to shameful paradox No. 1. The more far-reaching the issue, the less debate is to be permitted by the government upon it. The more important the measure, the less parliament is to be permitted to know about it.

What of this project? Here we are engaged on a measure in relation to the vital subject of development of resources in Canada, the construction of a pipe line across half of this great country from Alberta to the markets in the east and particularly the market in Ontario, by this Trans-Canada Pipe Lines company, over 83 per cent of whose stock is owned by Americans and will remain under United States ownership, make no mistake about that. As regards this fictitious argument that the Minister of Trade and Commerce has trotted out twice already, that under clause 6 of the agreement there is to be an offering of stock in Canada, I do not think any child is going to be misled by that kind of eyewash. In a public offering in Canada, Americans will have full opportunity to come in and order what stock they want through Canadian brokers.

This company entered into two solemn undertakings at the outset: first, that they could finance this project without government assistance and, second, that they could finance it without gaining the right to export gas to the United States. They have not fulfilled their obligations. They are in default.

[Mr. Fleming.]

This is a continuing default. In the face of this the government has simply temporized. They have dilly-dallied, they have entered into undercover deals, secret negotiations, and the secrecy was carried further by their denials of the existence of correspondence when correspondence was already in existence in their files.

What does this government's proposal amount to? It proposes to use public funds drawn from Canadians in all parts of Canada from British Columbia to the maritimes, and it is going to use that money first of all in constructing at public expense that portion of the line in northern Ontario. Even that portion of the line which should be easiest to build—on the prairies—they are going to use the money of the people of all Canada to build. If this company has any hope of honouring the undertakings into which it entered at the outset, surely it could have financed the construction across the prairies, but the government is coming to its rescue, and the company set up to construct a line through northern Ontario is to be denuded of its capital by this measure in order to finance the construction across the prairies. It is a wild venture on that basis. If the company cannot even finance the construction across the prairies, then I am afraid it is useless for any hon. member to expect this company to be able to finance the repayment of \$80 million by April 2 next. It is a wild venture as it stands right now. The house is invited to take a wild leap before looking. There is no assurance of the financing by the company. It would not only be irresponsible on the part of the house, it would be utter madness to take this wild jump. The company is years in default. Has that not registered on hon. members opposite?

So we come to shameful paradox No. 2. The bigger the scale of default, the more aid this government gives. The longer the delay and the longer the continued default on the part of this company, the more benevolence this government is prepared to extend to it at the expense of the Canadian taxpayer. We do not believe in policies of that kind, and we shall fight them. This policy on resources, indeed, is in its essence a proposal to put the money of the Canadian taxpayer at the service of United States investors, and I for one do not think that is the right or duty of any member of this Canadian parliament.

There are alternatives. In view of that company's default, why is not the door opened wide to allow others to come in who may be prepared to finance it? There was Mr. McMahon. It would be interesting to know, —and we could find out in a parliamentary committee—just why he was scared off at