

*Oral Questions*

get strong assurances from the American government, the American authorities, before approving those exports.

What we have indicated is that we wanted to have assurances, strong assurances and complete assurances, from the American authorities that the whole pipeline will be constructed. This is the matter that the cabinet is now examining, making sure that no approval will be given unless we have satisfactory assurances from the American authorities that the pipeline will be constructed.

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, I would call that an ironclad flip-flop.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**An hon. Member:** You know all about flip-flops.

**Mr. Clark:** As the minister knows, our government approved exports, the pre-build and the whole pipeline. Foothills has now stated that they need a decision by next Tuesday in order to meet start-up requirements for construction this year. Does the government accept that as a firm deadline; and, if not, what deadline do they consider to be firm and applicable in these circumstances?

**Mr. Lalonde:** Madam Speaker, from previous experience I thought that the hon. Leader of the Opposition did not like the word "deadline". I understand that the Foothills company have indicated that they needed a decision by June 15. We are in touch with the company—

**An hon. Member:** July 15.

**Mr. Lalonde:** By July 15. We are in touch with the corporation and we will assess whether this is really a complete deadline or whether there is flexibility.

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, the House of Commons would like to know the decision of the government at least by Tuesday, if they could find it in their heart to give it to us.

Let me put a simple question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Has the Government of Canada made a decision on the pre-build? If so, what is that decision?

**Mr. Lalonde:** The answer is no, Madam Speaker.

ALASKA GAS PIPELINE—EFFECT OF CONSTRUCTION ON  
CANADIAN ECONOMY

**Hon. Bill Jarvis (Perth):** Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I appreciate the minister's discomfort: all of us who have been here any length of time say things, either in opposition or in government, that we have to change later.

**An hon. Member:** To swallow.

**Mr. Jarvis:** Well, I have said many things I have regretted; there is no question about that.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

● (1420)

**Mr. Jarvis:** But this is not one of them. I think I can assist the minister in his embarrassment, particularly concerning yesterday when his colleague, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, could not confirm in any way the impact on the economy of the pre-build portion.

Presuming that the Minister of Energy is the one responsible in cabinet for steering this through, can he give us today—either in terms of man-years or in terms of dollars, including or excluding the multiplier or spin-off effect—some indication of what the industrial impact, in terms of employment and infusions into the economy, might be from the pre-build? If he can give it in terms of regions of the country, I think it will be very helpful to the House.

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to correct my hon. friend on two points. However, I do appreciate his efforts to help me. First, there is no embarrassment whatsoever as far as I am concerned, and I want to assure him of that.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**An hon. Member:** You do not embarrass easily.

**Mr. Lalonde:** The pre-build will be approved by cabinet only if it is to be an integral part of the Alaska gas pipeline. This is the view of this government. This was put forward in the act passed by Parliament a few years ago, and this is what we intend to stand by.

As far as his second point is concerned, I would like to correct the hon. member in terms of parliamentary or cabinet responsibility. Senator Olson, from the other place, is the minister responsible for the pipeline authority.

**Mr. Nielsen:** You are the one who answers here.

**Mr. Lalonde:** But I answer for him here. Third, the benefits for Canada of building the pipeline, even now or at a later date, are very substantial indeed.

**Mr. Nielsen:** What is this later date?

**Mr. Lalonde:** When we were considering a motion under the provisions of Standing Order 43, the hon. member from Edmonton gave a number of figures which I do not dispute. I think those figures are, indeed, reasonably accurate. I would not want to confirm every single one of them, but in broad terms I would say they do represent reality.

**Mr. Clark:** Why doesn't Herb know?

**Mr. Lalonde:** This government is interested in building not only the pre-build portion but the whole of the Alaska gas pipeline, which will benefit all parts of Canada tremendously.

**An hon. Member:** Get moving, then.