

Northern Pipeline

I should like to read a portion of the Lysyk report, as follows:

All Yukoners are eager to ensure that neither they nor their children will ever feel obliged to leave the Yukon for the lack of employment. If the youth of the region are prepared by education and technical training for careers that they cannot follow in the Yukon, their inevitable departure will frustrate the personal preference of those individuals and run counter to the best interests of the economy and the society as a whole.

I think the point is that if the pipeline goes ahead and the proper steps are taken to train people and upgrade their skills, the objectives set out in the report can be achieved.

I should like to make a couple of comments on the second stage inquiry that the hon. member for Yukon and the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) referred to. The twofold objective of the government in expediting the pipeline project and settling the socio-economic terms and conditions has resulted in agreement to a second stage inquiry. As the minister said, this is an agreement in principle with the concept put forward by the Lysyk report. Under the leadership of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development proposals for terms and conditions which will govern the pipeline company as it begins work on this project are being drafted. These will be open to public response through the pipeline agency and could be available for comment and review by the public as early as next spring.

This second stage inquiry has been termed by some members as a betrayal for not being the type of inquiry recommended. It seems to me the time has come to cross the bridge and decide whether the project should go ahead. What we must do now is decide on the terms and conditions under which the pipeline will be built. I think it is preferable to follow the course set out by the minister and have a set of draft proposals prepared which would be available to any group for comment. They might be amended following such perusal and the project could then go forward. In my view there has been no betrayal of the Yukon people and their interests under these specific terms.

Critics have objected to the fact that the pipeline regulatory body will conduct such an inquiry but I think that is in line with what was suggested in the Lysyk report. If hon. members checked the Lysyk report they would see it recommended a second stage inquiry to be carried out by the pipeline regulatory agency. One of the reasons for this would be to co-ordinate the many inquiries that will be going forward and avoid a proliferation of inquiries in the Yukon in the next few years. That is why we recommend that these further inquiries be assigned to the pipeline agency. Clearly the Lysyk inquiry recognized the need for a co-ordinated approach to a study of the impact of the pipeline and perhaps opposition critics could follow this example.

As the minister pointed out, there will be a number of investigations into the environmental, social and economic implications of the pipeline project. The environmental assessment panel of the Department of the Environment is continuing its study of environmental concerns under the terms and conditions set out in Schedule III, in the appendix to Bill C-25. Inquiries that Foothills or their consultants undertake will

have to be submitted to the pipeline agency. The largest role of the agency will be to co-ordinate the many inquiries.

The Yukon people will be given a chance to voice their concerns on specific terms and conditions drawn up by the government and they will therefore have a better grasp of measures to be implemented to protect their interests. Co-ordination will also allow the pipeline project to be expedited so that once construction begins Yukoners will be ready to take full advantage of it and to participate in the work and the supply of materials required for the project.

The numerous and wide-ranging inquiries into the social and environmental issues relating to the pipeline have served the important and valuable purpose of focussing the concerns of the federal, provincial and territorial governments as well as the pipeline company on the quality of life and the integrity of the land. These things are certainly important to Yukoners. It is necessary now to turn to specific proposals for the protection of these interests, to test public opinion and proceed with them. All this is surely in the best interests of the Yukon as well as builders of the pipeline. Legislation will create the pipeline agency and its passage will allow it to proceed with these important matters as soon as possible.

As the minister stated in the House, Mr. Speaker, a just and speedy settlement of native land claims is in the interests of both the native people and the government if they are to have their proper share of the benefits of the project. Since pipeline construction will not begin until 1981 there is time to make good progress on the settlement of land claims.

● (2142)

The opposition has expressed doubts that negotiations between the government and the Yukon Indians will result in a settlement in the near future and that delay in the reaching of a settlement will result in delay of the pipeline project itself. They have said that the land claims matter is out of the government's control and that no guidance is offered to bring the claims question to a quick settlement.

There are difficulties involved in these types of negotiations, but good faith has been generated on both sides, especially in the past year. The negotiations have been going on for quite a period of time and I believe substantially in good faith. Members of this House should understand that this is an extremely complex and difficult question with a lot at stake. It is natural to expect that both sides will bargain vigorously. It seems to me, in responding to the approach taken by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), that the proposal to proceed with establishing the terms and conditions under which the pipeline might be built can go on at the same time as land claims can be negotiated. Hopefully the deadline before construction would be such that the terms and conditions could have a very thorough airing under the process set out by the minister and would provide ample opportunity to conclude the land claims on a fair and just basis.

The government has agreed to give consideration to a \$50 million advance on the land claims settlement once agreement in principle has been reached so that the Yukon Indians can