

*Alberta Natural Gas Company*

**Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West):** I rise, Mr. Speaker, to support this amendment. I have not spoken a great deal in this debate; but in its concluding stages I just wish to make a brief review of the situation from our point of view. The amendment is:

That Bill No. 7 be not now read a third time but that it be referred back to the standing committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines for the purpose of reconsidering the amending of the bill so as to provide that any pipe line built by the proposed company from Alberta to the Pacific coast must be by an all-Canadian route.

That contains the germ and meat of this whole debate. I trust that when the amendment is voted on we will find a good number of hon. members who have learned sufficient from the debate and who think enough of Canadian rights to support it.

In the early stages of this debate, when I think only one member of the group to which I belong had spoken, and that briefly, the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) accused us of filibustering. That indicated that the minister was annoyed with even a few members of the house making speeches in opposition to these bills. Although we have been accused repeatedly of filibustering, there is no question about it that the debate has since become thoroughly respectable. Why has it become thoroughly respectable? It has become thoroughly respectable because this government and a good number of the members who support the government realize that we are saying what the people of British Columbia want us to say.

A very interesting aspect of the debate has been that it is on a non-partisan basis. Members of all parties have expressed opposition to the bills. A good number of members of the party to which I belong, a large number of members of the Progressive Conservative party, as well as members of the Liberal party, including the well known hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Gibson), who as it were represents a position between the opposition and the government, and also the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Wylie), who represents the Social Credit party and who said that he and his group would refuse to vote for the bills until they knew where the pipe lines were going, have all indicated opposition to these bills.

The Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) has termed this a protracted debate, but I am sure that the debate has been of value. What has this debate accomplished? In the first place, a large number of members of this house from provinces other than British Columbia have been informed of the real situation and the facts surrounding the incorporation of these companies, the routes proposed and so on. Secondly, without doubt it

[Mr. Green.]

has informed the people of British Columbia and the people of Canada that if there had not been a minority in this house willing to continue the debate, against the opposition of ministers and other supporters of this government, the people of this country would not be as alert as they are at the present time to the seriousness of this situation. That is indicated by the support we have received and which has increased as the debate has continued. Neither the right hon. minister nor any member on the government side of the house has disputed the statement that the great majority of the people of British Columbia support the views we have been placing before this house.

There is another thing this debate has done. It has indicated to all members of the house, whether on the government or opposition side, that we require an entirely new approach when we come to deal in the future with disposal of our great natural resources. The present federal and provincial legislation has proved to be totally inadequate and obsolete and unable to deal with the proper distribution of these valuable natural resources. This debate has proved also to the people of Canada that there are men elected to the House of Commons who are willing to express an unpopular point of view, unpopular in the house but not unpopular in the country, when they believe it to be in the interests of the Canadian people.

Protracted as this debate has been, it has caused the people of British Columbia to express their opinion in no uncertain terms. I think this debate has proved the value of our parliamentary system and institutions. It has proved the right of a minority to talk as well as the right of a majority to vote them down. In having done that, I think a valuable public service has been performed.

When the motion for second reading of this bill was under discussion we were told repeatedly by members on the government side that we should discontinue the debate and let the bill go before a committee, that once it got into committee we could ask all the questions we wished and obtain all the facts. I was one member of this house who did not swallow that argument because I have seen bills go to committees before. I realized that when you get into a committee you are not quite as able to defend yourself as when you are in the house. That is exactly what happened when this bill went to the committee.

I think any fair-minded person reading the evidence, even though he was not present at the committee meetings, will realize that in effect a closure was placed upon the proceedings. We were allowed to examine only