

was a desirable one, it was not working with as much expedition as desired. There is an undertaking to consult with the Department of National Revenue to try to ensure that this procedure is speeded up to the highest degree possible. We are also undertaking to see if there are means to clarify the meaning of the law about which there is some dispute. The result of the meeting was very positive. I think we will be able to see a clarification of the difficulties in the very near future.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Will the minister indicate whether any significant action will be taken to establish an interdepartmental committee of the relevant departments, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Justice, Revenue and his own department? In addition, did the minister or his colleague give any indication to the authors that they would be prepared to make a test case with regard to this particular situation? Will they in the further meeting which I understand will take place later this month give a definite time commitment in terms of some action to take place within the next few months so that the authors and publishers will not be fobbed off over the next two years as they have been for the past two?

Mr. Roberts: Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that it was not a question of fobbing off the authors. Both the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and I are aware there is a very real problem here and we are prepared to act in relation to it. We have taken actions in the past and we are now trying to make these actions more effective. As to the specific course the hon. member has suggested, that of an interdepartmental committee, it is not clear to me, at least yet, that there is a need for such a mechanism. We want to explore the approaches we developed with authors who met with us, to explore what they have suggested. It is not at all clear that the mechanism which the hon. member has suggested will in fact prove to be necessary.

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ENERGY

NORTHERN GAS PIPELINE—INQUIRY AS TO GUARANTEE CANADIAN PIPE USED IN CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister indicated in Hamilton on Wednesday with reference to the Alaska Highway pipeline, and I think I quote him accurately, that the Canadian steel industry will have to be competitive if it expects any of its steel pipe to be used on the Canadian portion of the Alaska natural gas pipeline. Will the Prime Minister now confirm to the House there is no guarantee whatsoever that Canadian steel pipe must be used in the construction of that pipeline?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this question has been dealt with again and again. Quite honestly, I think I must ask the hon. member to use a bit of common sense on this. Obviously, there is a preference. It is written right into the agreement with the United States. There

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is a preference for Canadian products and Canadian industry for the Canadian portion of the pipeline, but obviously it would be folly to make this absolutely without condition and an absolute guarantee. I suspect that if the hon. member thought about it, he would not be asking for this. The Canadian industry is a very competitive industry. The workers are very, very capable. The technology is possessed by the Canadian industry. However, we cannot say "You can submit any price, no matter what the cost, and we will take your produce." That would mean Canadian consumers would have to pay much more.

This is a matter of common sense. I do not think the hon. member or his party would want to get that absolute kind of guarantee, that at any cost Canadian industry can be assured of the contract.

● (1202)

Mr. Leggatt: If we are exercising common sense, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Prime Minister should know that the consumers of that particular product are Americans not Canadians. If the interest of the Prime Minister is to protect American consumers in terms of the construction of the pipeline, I can understand his answer. But the question remains. In terms of determining the value of the bid on that steel, given the nature of subsidies around the world, including the DISC program in the United States through which steel is being subsidized and the massive subsidies applied to Japanese steel, how is the Prime Minister to monitor whether competitive foreign bids which meet Canadian bids are not under some kind of substantial subsidization when the time comes to let contracts for that particular pipeline?

Mr. Trudeau: As to the first part of the question I hope the hon. member realizes, because his party supported the construction of the pipeline, that one of the objects is that Canadian gas will be flowing through it one day and it will thus be of advantage to Canadian consumers. If the hon. member is more interested in the shareholders of Stelco, that is another matter. But we are interested in the Canadian consumers who will benefit from that gas eventually.

With regard to the bidding practices of other countries and the possibility of subsidies, the government is conscious of that aspect. Of course, we will make sure that the bids are competitive in a true sense, and if there is any form of subsidy, hidden or not, we shall ensure that the bids take account of that situation and that there will not be any unfair competition against Canadian prices and submissions.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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PRIVILEGE

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY—STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Yesterday questions of privilege and points of order were raised together in connection with the