

Trans-Canada Pipe Lines

Mr. A. B. Macdonald (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words. It is a little bit difficult to speak on the resolution because of the very excellent, powerful and all-comprehensive remarks of the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart (Mr. Coldwell). I do not think that the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Green), the house leader, seriously attempted to come to grips with the case presented. He used a great deal of his time on matters which indicated that he was not too keen to come to grips with the real question. He said that this amendment was socialism. If this is socialism, I suppose the public ownership of Canadian National Railways is socialism; I suppose the public ownership of Trans-Canada Air Lines is socialism and that the proposition put forward by his former leader, then leader of the opposition, for public ownership of the trans-Canada natural gas pipe lines was socialism. I do not think that argument can be treated seriously.

Whatever the long-term merits of socialism may be, they do not arise here any more than they arise in connection with some public project like the Ontario hydro where the Canadian people have been at pains to use social ownership as a means of controlling and keeping control of the vital lifelines of public existence. Undoubtedly gas pipe lines are just something else of the same nature. The government, by refusing to accept its responsibility to govern, is selling out the people of Canada. That is a strong statement but I want to show what I mean.

In the province of British Columbia one natural gas pipe line company, Westcoast Transmission, has piled up stock option profits amounting to \$69 million already. The special tax free capital gains out of that company alone amounted to \$69 million before the pipe line was opened. That company too, which is United States controlled, has turned around and under the control of its United States parents is selling gas to United States distributors for 10 cents less than the price to distributors in British Columbia. Westcoast Transmission Company is controlled by Sunray Midwestern Oil in the United States.

This is going on at the present time. There is no academic question here. That company has a 20-year contract to sell its gas to United States distributors at 22 cents per thousand cubic feet while at the present time it is charging Canadian industry and Canadian consumers in British Columbia 32 cents per thousand feet. What does that mean? It not only means that the Canadian consumer is being milked for these stock option gains

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

—he is the one who will have to pay them off—it not only means he has to pay a higher price for his own gas than the United States consumer but it means that this is a sell-out of Canadian industry. United States industry using cheaper gas can compete very much better with Canadian industry.

Mr. Johnston (Bow River): What is the price to the people of Rosetown-Biggart?

Mr. Macdonald (Vancouver-Kingsway): I do not know that. I cannot answer that question.

Mr. Ellis: Tell us the price in Winnipeg.

Mr. Macdonald (Vancouver-Kingsway): My hon. friend may want to change the subject, but here is a case where Canadian consumers and Canadian industry are being sold down the river at the present time and the government, instead of proposing action to preserve vital Canadian interests, has proposed a royal commission which will certainly last for one year, two years, who knows how long?

An hon. Member: How do you know?

Mr. Macdonald (Vancouver-Kingsway): Because I know how long it took a similar commission on long-term energy prospects in the United States. I note that the commission set up by the government, and about which they were so serious, has not met and will not meet until next week although it was appointed some time early in October. Why this long delay when Canadian interests are being sold out by the supplying of our own gas to the United States at a cheaper rate?

Mr. Broome: I suppose you like the way the Indonesian government has just grabbed hold of everything.

Mr. Macdonald (Vancouver-Kingsway): That may be Conservative policy. It is not ours.

Mr. Ellis: A bright question.

Mr. Macdonald (Vancouver-Kingsway): There is another point that parliament should consider about this matter. Since the 14th of October when parliament opened we have been trying to do something for the retired citizens of our country, the disabled, the blind, our veterans. Think of how much we have provided for these people and how much has been reaped by a small band of speculators in our natural gas pipe lines, \$69 million in British Columbia alone and, as the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart said, \$75 million in connection with Trans-Canada. Then there is Quebec Natural Gas and the Northern Ontario pipe line. While we talk about setting up a commission to discuss the question, all that money is going tax free into the