

Alberta Natural Gas Company

Alberta government, through its public utilities board, controls the sale price of gas in that province. It controls the charges that are made with reference to the pipe lines in existence today, and it has been doing so for years from the Turner valley into the city of Calgary. Imperial Oil bring oil from the Turner valley to their refinery in Calgary. It is a common carrier and the price is fixed by that board. There have been no complaints about it.

Therefore it is not a question of holding an auction sale and saying, "What do you bid?" It does not make one five cent's worth of difference to the government of Alberta. The premier of Alberta is one of the finest men I have ever known and one of the ablest, but I do not think he has given this question the consideration which he might have given to so important a matter if he had had more time. I have glanced at the Speaker and he will not need to rise. I have not finished what I intended to say. Therefore I am glad that I did not give you an undertaking that I would not speak again. There is another chapter, and when I have recited it I am sure hon. members from Alberta and British Columbia will stand up and be counted at the appropriate time in the history of this parliament.

Mr. J. L. MacDougall (Vancouver-Burrard): Mr. Speaker, on October 28 last I addressed the house when we were considering this bill. Since then I have heard a great many speeches both last session and this on the subject of pipe lines and natural gas and oil. I must confess, however, that very few of them have shed much light upon the problem, and very few of them have taken into account the exact nature of the matter which we have to decide.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is an application to parliament pursuant to the Pipe Lines Act to incorporate a company. The purpose of the company is to build a pipe line for the transportation of natural gas. The application is made to parliament because the laws of Canada require parliament to grant the kind of charter which this company now seeks. A charter granted by any other authority than parliament would not enable the company to do the work it proposes.

The bill does not authorize the building of a pipe line. Even if a charter is granted to the company there is no assurance whatsoever that it will ever build a line. It would be impractical for it to do so without first having a permit from the government of Alberta to remove gas from that province. It would also require the assurance of an export permit from the Department of Trade and Commerce before it could export any gas

[Mr. Smith (Calgary West).]

from Canada. To serve markets outside Alberta, and assuming that these markets are in other provinces of Canada as well as in the United States, a company requires both these permits. I think we are entitled to assume that before permits are granted by the authorities concerned the interests of the citizens of Alberta and of Canada as a whole will be protected. I have said that the house does not issue permits, and I would emphasize again the fact that the passing of the bill does not imply that any permit will issue.

I have also said that the measure does not authorize the building of a pipe line. If hon. members will look at the Pipe Lines Act, which was passed in the spring session of parliament of 1949, they will see that before a pipe line can be built the company must secure from the board of transport commissioners permission to build it. Section 11 of that act provides in part:

A company shall not . . . begin the construction of a section or part of a company pipe line, until, (a) the board has by order granted the company leave to construct the line.

Mr. Cruickshank: I rise on a point of order, and it is something in which I am rather interested. Is it permissible to read speeches in the house?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: I understand that at the present time the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard (Mr. MacDougall) is quoting a section of an act.

Mr. MacDougall: I continue to read the provisions of section 11:

(a) the board has by order granted the company leave to construct the line.

(b) the plan, profile and book of reference of the section or part of the proposed line have been approved by the board.

In his speech on February 28 last the hon. member for Calgary West (Mr. Smith) is reported as having asked the sponsor of the bill the question—

Mr. Lennard: You are not quoting the act now.

Mr. MacDougall: —"Where is this line being built?" The hon. member who replied as the sponsor of the bill definitely told him that he did not know, which was quite true. No one in the house knows where this or any other line is going to be built.

Mr. Cruickshank: Oh, that is nonsense.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Cruickshank: There is no statute about that.

Mr. MacDougall: I believe the hon. member for Calgary West did not place the proper interpretation upon the answer of the sponsor of the bill.