

Trans-Canada Pipe Lines

Then too, an issue referred to the commission is that of foreign control. I have always understood the government to be very interested in eliminating foreign control over Canadian corporations to the extent that they are able to do so. This gentleman can scarcely disapprove of foreign control in Canada when the companies which it is his duty to safeguard are foreign companies operating in Brazil where, as indicated by a bill we passed a few days ago respecting the transfer of Brazilian utilities to Brazilian statutory control and supervision, public opinion must be very strong against foreign domination.

Then we have Mr. Levesque, another member of the royal commission and probably a very estimable gentleman, but he is president of a company which distributed stock of the Quebec Natural Gas Company. I am informed that he was one of the promoters of Trans-Canada stock in the province of Quebec and was closely associated with the Trans-Canada pipe line deal. I say that when the Prime Minister was appearing in court he made it as abundantly clear as he could that he wanted a jury from which all jurymen regarding whom there might be the remotest suspicion of their being prejudiced would be eliminated. He carefully looked over his jury panel. I say that has not been done in this case.

The government should not abdicate its responsibility by referring the Trans-Canada pipe line matter to a review by any royal commission. Any royal commission established to inquire into the energy resources of Canada generally, and personally I think that is all right, should not be required to make any recommendation regarding the suitability of public or private development. That should be the function of the parliament of Canada because such a question is a political question to be decided by the representatives of the people in their city councils, their legislatures and in this parliament. The royal commission should not be asked to make what is by its very nature a political recommendation. The Prime Minister has a motion on the order paper for the abolition of closure.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Would the hon. gentleman go on and read the name of George Britnell? Does he object to him?

Mr. Coldwell: No.

Mr. Diefenbaker: He was appointed to a royal commission in Saskatchewan. Gordon Cushing?

Mr. Coldwell: No. I want to tell the Prime Minister that when he looked at a jury he did not object to all the jurymen. He only

[Mr. Coldwell.]

objected to the men on the panel who might be prejudiced. That is exactly what I am doing today.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Coldwell: Hon. gentlemen may laugh but you cannot laugh this off. You have loaded this jury.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is the old game.

Mr. Coldwell: You know all about this old game anyway.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I ask my hon. friend this question. In the opinion of the hon. gentleman are the other four members of the commission unprejudiced in every way according to his fine standards?

Mr. Coldwell: I have answered that quite fully. As far as I know, the other four gentlemen are. But I say to my hon. friend that when he chose a panel of jurymen he saw to it that not one of the twelve he chose would be prejudiced against his side if he could eliminate him from that jury. I say that in this case he has appointed a jury, the chairman of which is a very estimable gentleman but who, from his very nature, experience and economic associations, must be prejudiced in favour of one side in this particular matter. I was just going to say that the Prime Minister has on the order paper a motion for the abolition of closure. I am not going to discuss that now except to say that we criticized the former government's abuse of it, for such it was, as vehemently as did the Conservative party. It was noteworthy that the Prime Minister denounced closure from Halifax to Vancouver in his election speeches. We did too, but we did more than that. We denounced what in this house the Prime Minister called buccaneers and their piratical profits made, as he said, by adventurers from New York and Texas.

To abolish closure is one thing but it will not restore any of the buccaneers—the Prime Minister's own description—loot to the people of Canada. I do not know what the reason for this is. I am going to ask a question. Can it be that the Conservative party's wealthy backers want the Prime Minister and his government to forget their gains? Do they want him to bury the matter in a royal commission of inquiry lasting a year or two so that by the end of that time the Canadian people may perhaps forget or, what is more, forget it during the election campaign which the Prime Minister says is coming pretty soon?

Oh, it is before a royal commission. What other people say, of course, does not matter;