

law school of the University of British Columbia had this to say:

There are two very basic difficulties with the Davis proposal. First, it is apparent that the proposed assessment procedure will be implemented through administrative changes only. There will be no new legislation. Review of assessments will be done wholly within the Department of the Environment, according to departmental guidelines. Thus, the entire process will be in-house and subject to political pressure and bureaucratic self-interest and inertia. This approach was taken despite a recommendation in a report by a Department of the Environment task force composed of senior officials and based on some five months of research, that an independent environmental review board be established by statute outside the department to require and review environmental impact assessments. Mr. Davis himself has admitted that there will be a "natural resistance in the bureaucracy to another set of checks and balances".

● (2200)

My concern is that it is all very well to talk about natural resistance within the bureaucracy, but I think unless there is a very satisfactory explanation given to the House tonight a great deal of the resistance is not within the bureaucracy at all but, rather, is within the cabinet. In his statement the Minister of the Environment said, and I quote from *Hansard* of March 14, 1974:

Federal departments, Crown agencies and private companies with government contracts, grants and loans will have to prepare environmental impact statements. These statements will be screened by a panel of experts in my department.

In this way you do not get before the public the actual environmental impact statements at all; you get the government's own screening of the impact statements and, as a consequence, you get the government's own interpretation of what it wants you to hear; and I said this on March 14. The minister went on to say:

Recommendations for action, that is, for approval, for modification or for denial, will be made to the Minister of the Environment. Final dispositions will, of course, have to be worked out in consultation with other ministers of the Crown.

What does this really mean, and what does it mean in view of the answers given by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) yesterday? Apparently it means, if you take the answers of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development at face value, that within the department, in spite of this policy that has been set down, every department is going to assert a certain sovereignty in opposition to the very policy which the Minister of the Environment presented to the House the other day.

It is interesting to note that in view of whatever advice the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development had to proceed with the drilling over the opposition of the Eskimo people who said this would drive the game upon which they depended from their traditional hunting grounds, Professor Milton Freeman of the department of sociology and anthropology of McMaster University said on March 25:

—I can only conclude that Mr. Chrétien has been very badly advised to allow this work to proceed in ignorance of much of the pertinent information available, and with so much of a critical nature still unknown.

It is incumbent upon the government tonight to answer certain questions. I think it is fair to ask the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, in view of the answer to the question whether this environmental policy

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has any influence in the north—and certainly it was not followed in this instance—to tell us just exactly what is going on.

Mr. Len Marchand (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, in the three minutes at my disposal tonight I am sure I cannot deal with all the points raised by the hon. member, but I will consider his representations and send him a report a little later in respect of those points with which I cannot deal.

I want to assure the hon. member that the Department of Indian affairs and other people concerned with the development of the north are paying a great deal of attention to the recommendations of the Department of the Environment and, indeed, a great deal of attention to the environment whether in the case of ecological disturbance or environmental disturbance.

The minister has stopped seismic operations in two cases in point—in the open waters off Southampton Island where seismic work was stopped because of fears of disturbing walrus herds in that area, and on the Bathurst peninsula where no seismic work has taken place for three years because of the fear of disturbing the cariboo herds in that area. In the particular case about which the member is talking, the matter of the Bathurst Island seismic operations came before the advisory committee on January 9 and January 30 and received approval to proceed.

This followed the normal procedure adopted for the processing of all land use applications. The Northwest Territories land use advisory committee is made up of officials of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development together with representatives from several other federal agencies, including the Department of the Environment—wildlife services, fisheries and marine service, and environmental protection service. The NWT government is also represented on the committee by the territorial game management division. There was also communication between the minister and Mr. Tagat Curley, president of the Inuit Tapirisat, on this proposal. The community of Resolute Bay was advised of the application and its subsequent approval.

On the recommendation of the various experts consulted, and from previous experience with similar seismic operations in other areas of the Arctic, it was the consensus that the operation could take place with minimal disturbance to the environment.

ENERGY—OIL PIPELINE EXTENSION TO MONTREAL—REASON FOR REJECTION OF EXTENSION OF EXISTING SARNIA-TORONTO LINE

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to pursue a question which I raised last Friday and subsequently to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) concerning the construction of the Sarnia-Montreal pipeline. I asked the minister why, in light of the fact that there already exists a pipeline from Sarnia to Toronto, the government did not plan to merely extend the Toronto pipeline to Montreal, thereby saving construction time, saving money and avoiding the disruption of farmland in southwestern Ontario.