

Northern Ontario Pipe Line Corporation

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Sinclair: He would not know an answer even when he asked a question.

An hon. Member: Better apply closure on the Minister of Fisheries.

Mr. Macdonnell: Before the Minister of Fisheries began his speech I was trying to say something about the caucus.

Mr. Sinclair: You were asking questions and you did not want answers.

Mr. Macdonnell: I think we can all imagine what did happen there. After all, one can well believe that those gentlemen I see opposite and to my right did not need a long period of study to understand this question. They were able, in an hour, to grasp the whole thing. The argument was, "Good old C.D."; that was the argument. After all, the minister is the hero of 1,000 contracts and 100 caucuses. He carries great weight and even his private and confidential correspondence we hear about, even that no doubt had its place.

The Chairman: Order.

Mr. Macdonnell: As I said a few minutes ago we had difficulty last year, but the government did pluck up its courage when the minister went fishing, and perhaps he may go fishing again.

I want to say a word about closure. There is evidently quite a misunderstanding about closure in England. It has been stated it occurred 21 times in a session, and that may be true, but that is not this kind of thing. It is done by agreement. It is not done against the will of the opposition for the purpose of closing them off. This closure is used in that way. No one who saw the way closure was applied could doubt for one moment that it was applied as the absolute antithesis of the whole principle of free discussion. It was applied in, what shall I say, irritation, almost in anger and with the feeling, "We will show you; if you want to have discussion, we will show you it is not so easy to have discussion."

I can understand quite well why the government wanted closure. It does not need the minister's crystal ball to know that. The reason they want closure is that they do not want disclosure. The last thing in the world they want is time to be given so the people can understand what this is about. They remember what happened a year ago. They remember that when the press got hold of what was happening, which they did not do quite as quickly as they have done this year, the government had to slow up and we got a measure of concession. That is the last

Mr. Sinclair: On a point of order—

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Macdonnell: I do not know what happened in this caucus—

The Deputy Chairman: Order. Is the Minister of Fisheries rising on a point of order?

Mr. Sinclair: Yes.

The Deputy Chairman: Then he will state the point of order.

Mr. Sinclair: I want to ask the hon. gentleman—

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Sinclair: I have a good point of order.

Some hon. Members: No, no.

The Deputy Chairman: Order.

Mr. Sinclair: I want to know whether the hon. gentleman is asking rhetorical questions or real questions. If they are real questions I will answer them.

Mr. Rowe: That is not a point of order. It is just an interruption.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. If the committee of the whole will kindly keep order for 30 seconds, I will dispose of this matter. The minister has not raised a point of order. The hon. member for Greenwood will continue.

Mr. Macdonnell: You must not pay any attention to the Minister of Fisheries. He is just one of those Rhodes scholars.

Mr. Sinclair: I know that. I am asking whether these are real questions or rhetorical questions. If they are real questions, they will be answered. If they are rhetorical questions—

Mr. Rowe: It is too late now.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Sinclair: Is this a real turtle or a mock turtle. If you are a Rhodes scholar, act like a Rhodes scholar.

Mr. Macdonnell: I was just making reference to the caucus which we all would have liked to be at.

Mr. Sinclair: You were asking questions which you do not want answered. You do not want any answers. You asked questions and you wanted some answered. If you want answers, ask me.

Mr. Fleming: Do you know anything about the rules over there?

The Chairman: Order.

Mr. Sinclair: He is asking questions but he does not want answers.