

*Canada Oil and Gas Act*

because of severe deficiencies in the information put forward by the pipeline company, "it is not possible to complete an environmental impact review at the present time". Despite that conclusion, neither Foothills nor the government's own Northern Pipeline Agency has made any progress toward meeting the deficiencies which have stalled the environmental assessment. Indeed, as if to induce environmental disaster, the government has already approved surveying and other work on the right-of-way through the Yukon, despite the fact that the EARP analysis identified major environmental reservations on that route and requested work on alternative routings. The Northern Pipeline Act passed by Parliament on April 4, 1978 required by law that the pipeline be built according to broad objectives which included "minimizing any adverse effect on the social and environmental conditions of the areas most affected by the pipeline". Clearly, the purposes of that act are not being met. Quite apart from the issue of accountability of Parliament, the situation is bound to create impasses to the eventual construction of a pipeline in the Yukon. Unless the present government has its head completely in the sand, which is quite possible, they will be aware of the mounting legal and other difficulties their actions are generating.

Even within the government, responsible officials are as perplexed as I am and as are my colleagues on this side of the House. Senior officials in Environment Canada's western and northern region have said, according to a confidential memo to which I have been made privy:

Based on our experience with the Northern Pipeline Agency, on the basis of what we have seen, we would not recommend a single agency approach because, in the case of the Northern Pipeline Agency, it is prepared to expedite construction of the pipeline, rather than to protect the environment. We feel that a more direct involvement by DOE would be better.

This kind of deliberate fiddling, and I use that word judiciously, with important environmental matters in the government's decision-making is all the more astonishing when we compare it to the recent Q & M pipeline decision. In yesterday's *Globe and Mail*, the National Energy Board chairman, Mr. Edge, referred to the environmental problems which led the board to reject the bid by a consortium of companies to build a gas pipeline into the maritimes. At page 11-8 of their April 1980 "Reasons for Decision" the board said and I quote: —the board wishes to stress that Q & M has not satisfied the board that the pipeline could be constructed in an environmentally acceptable manner.

Consistency in decision-making—particularly environmental decision-making—is obviously not something of importance to the government.

I, as a maritimer, wonder sometimes why it is that when a project like the Q & M pipeline, which is so important to my region, is at stake, the federal government suddenly decides it is going to be concerned about environmental matters and to hold up the project on the basis of environmental principles, while other projects which have equal cause to be looked at from an environmental point of view are allowed to go ahead without any environmental assessment required despite the government's own regulations.

We require more than legislative consistency or the removal of conflicts of interest posed when departments engaged in

protecting the environment are the very ones involved in promoting major projects which are going to damage the environment. More fundamental than most of the themes I have talked about, there must be a will by the federal government and by the cabinet, in particular, to honour environmental principles. There must be a consistent adherence to environmental principles because they are worthy in their own right. That is what we require from this government.

The government's good faith in environmental questions is seriously in doubt. In my view this government does not care about the environment, and that fact is reflected in Bill C-48. Is it not ironic that the Minister of the Environment should have been given special responsibilities for constitutional matters? He has been asked by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to aid in a major way in piloting through this House the resolution on the constitution. Yet the government's own charter of rights for which the Minister of the Environment has special responsibility makes no mention whatsoever of environmental rights. Is it any wonder, sir, that Bill C-48, by the same token, is such a serious affront to sound environmental principles? It is a shoddily drafted bill; it is a bad bill. Worst of all, as far as the protection of the environment is concerned, it is a dangerous bill.

● (2120)

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Demers (Duvernay):** Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to speak on this extremely important matter, Bill C-48, which spells out Canada's energy policies for years to come. Among other things the bill will enable us to reach three aims: security of supplies and subsequently self-sufficiency for Canada, access for all Canadians wherever they live in Canada to wider participation in energy industries, especially gas and oil, and finally fairness of prices and sharing of revenues among governments and industries.

The program is based on Canada's extensive energy potential. The country is already producing more energy that it can consume and it can use its surpluses of electricity, natural gas and other fuels such as solar, wind and tidal energy to make up for its oil shortage. Total demand for oil will therefore be sufficiently restrained to equal domestic supplies at the end of this decade. The prices of natural gas will increase more slowly as a result of negotiations between the federal government and the producing provinces thus remaining lower than the normal prices of heating oil. The natural gas distribution system will also be extended here and there to serve the main cities throughout Canada and the prices of natural gas in eastern Canada will be standardized to promote its use as a replacement for heating oil in residences as well as in industries. The replacement of oil by natural gas, electricity and other energy sources will be supported through federal consumer grants in order to reduce the use of oil to 10 per cent of the total energy demand in residential and commercial sectors before 1990. We propose to subsidize people who convert their heating systems