

Private Bills

I hope that when this bill goes to the committee and when it returns here some hon. members who really believe that this legislation should provide as much impetus as is possible to the development of that area will be prepared to move a number of amendments which will ensure that this company will do exactly what we want it to do.

• (6:50 p.m.)

If what they want to do is transport oil and get royalties for transporting oil, then I am 100 per cent in favour of the company receiving a franchise. I believe the people of this country must be protected. If this bill is going to accomplish what members have said they wish to accomplish, it would seem to me to be a very unusual thing to pass it. Anyone reading it is going to be hard pressed to find out if it is the intention of the company to build the pipe line. The only place in which that intention is revealed is the title, an act to incorporate Rainbow Pipe Line Corporation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I must advise the hon. member that the time allotted to him has expired.

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): As my colleague has just said, Mr. Speaker, the bill before us is entitled an act to incorporate Rainbow Pipe Line Corporation. In view of the fact the bill has been introduced by the hon. member for Northwest Territories (Mr. Orange), one might be led to observe that this rainbow has an "orange" hue. However, that sort of remark is the type one is tempted to make when he is beginning to think about the desirability of having dinner.

I had an opportunity last summer of getting a glimpse of the Northwest Territories, as the hon. member knows, as a result of being a member of a committee which visited the area. I certainly share his interest and concern in the development of the basic resources of the area. As a result of that trip I realize that, in part at least, the development of a major oil producing field in the Northwest Territories would be a matter of great significance to that part of Canada and to the country as a whole. If the area is to develop in a major way, I believe that more and more it must find its basic resources beneath the ground.

The fact the hon. member is introducing this bill emphasizes his interest in the matter. However, I must say that I share the concern of the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) over the fact that this parliament should not go out simply hunting rainbows.

The name of the bill does not necessarily mean there is a pot of gold at the end for the people of the Northwest Territories. In this case it may be black gold. The sponsor of the bill did give some of the background, at least to the extent of indicating there was some relationship between the introduction of the bill and the activities that have been carried on within the boundaries of the province of Alberta. He explained that because of the geology of the area, activities in search of oil may shortly be extended beyond the northern boundaries of the province of Alberta.

Like my colleague from Timiskaming I am concerned about bills of this type which appear to give certain interests virtually a blank cheque to build a pipe line interprovincially, internationally or anywhere they may take the notion to do so. Reference has been made to the National Energy Board and the fact that there are bodies before whom a particular application would have to come. Perhaps the scepticism about the National Energy Board voiced by the hon. member for Timiskaming arises as a result of the terms of reference given to that board by this parliament. Perhaps the multiplicity of pipe line bills and the rather helter skelter approach that has been taken to the provision of transport for this particular product arises from a basic difference of outlook as to what constitutes a public utility, and the approach that should be taken to the building and development of public utilities. This is a particular area of debate which I believe should be made applicable to each and every one of these bills coming before us.

I really had no communication with my colleague from Timiskaming concerning what he would say about the bill. However, if time permitted I would have been inclined to draw the same parallel he did to indicate that we should take advantage of the experience gained from the railway boom in this country. I hope when the members of the committee consider this bill they will not take the line of argument advanced, that we should deal with the mechanics of incorporating a company and leave the other questions to the National Energy Board.

I hope before the bill is passed members will be satisfied that, even within the limits of present public policy in respect of pipe line construction, the proposal to incorporate this company is a bona fide one and will produce the necessary transportation facilities for the oil that may be produced in that area north of Alberta.