

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Hees: The Prime Minister has said that the government had jurisdiction. There is no jurisdiction under the Atomic Energy Control Act to prohibit the sale of uranium. The government does not have jurisdiction now, nor did it have a year ago.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands.

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ENERGY**POSSIBLE MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE—STATEMENT RESPECTING PROVISION OF RIGHT OF WAY**

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Prime Minister who has now had a week to study the speech made by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in Dallas, Texas, on March 9. When I asked a question a week ago the Prime Minister had not had a chance to read the speech. Since the Prime Minister was worried about distortion the other day, perhaps I had better read the relevant sentence:

In other words, if it is felt desirable to build an oil pipeline from Prudhoe Bay direct to the mid-continent market then a right of way through Canada I am sure can, and will, be made available.

Does this mean that the minister was speaking on behalf of the Canadian government and that the Canadian government is now saying, without any preconditions, that a right of way will be made available for the building of both oil and gas pipelines through Canada from Alaska to the United States?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Obviously the answer is no, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is asking if this will be done without any preconditions. The quotation he just read to the House contained the words "if it is desirable". Surely this is the whole phrase on which the case rests. If it is desirable in terms of public policy and in terms of government decision, a way can be found to do it. There is no problem here that I can see.

Mr. Douglas: Mr. Speaker, since two ministers have now issued invitations making it clear to the United States that the government would favour the building of an oil pipeline through Canada, may I ask the Prime Minister if he will undertake to give either of the give-away twins an opportunity to make a statement to the House so that we may be fully aware of what commitments the Canadian government has made, what the conditions are and when the ecological studies with respect to a pipeline through Canada will be completed?

Mr. Boulanger: Where were you on Friday? We were all day on that subject.

Mr. Trudeau: With respect, Mr. Speaker, I cannot agree with the premise of the question, that there has

[Mr. Speaker.]

been a firm indication to United States interests to build a pipeline. The minister said quite clearly that if it were in the Canadian interest, if it were desirable to have such a pipeline built we would make the conditions available whereby it could be built. This is not a clear invitation. This is an indication that there is a route there, that it can be considered and that we are looking at the various conditions under which it would be beneficial to Canada.

POSSIBLE MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE—WITHHOLDING OF COMMITMENT UNTIL STUDIES COMPLETED

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Since his statement said nothing about whether it was in Canada's interests but simply said that a right of way could and would be made available—

Mr. Trudeau: "If".

Mr. Douglas: —I want to ask the minister whether he is having discussions this week with representatives of the 17 companies comprising Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Research Limited. In view of the fact that Mr. E. C. Hurd, president of this group, has said that studies will not be completed for some three years, does the minister intend to delay making any firm commitment until these studies have been completed and also the studies by his own department?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, we had a debate on that matter on Friday and I spoke very clearly to the House about the situation. We said to the Americans what is obvious, that there is a route there that we can use if they accept the conditions that we have laid down about it, that it is going to be a common carrier, that it is going to protect the ecology, that it will have to give employment to the native people and so on. I think that this policy is in the best interests of Canadians. It was made public last August, so I am quite surprised that the hon. member has not checked it.

POSSIBLE MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE—OPPORTUNITY FOR CANADIANS TO INVEST IN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): I wish to direct my supplementary question to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that Canada prefers the Mackenzie valley route, does the government have any plans which would enable Canadians to invest in such a pipeline development? Are any specific plans now laid out which will enable Canadians to invest in this pipeline development should it come down the Mackenzie valley?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker, no specific plans.