

accompanied by officials, for meetings with spokesmen from both minority and majority parties in Congress.

The purpose of Senator Olson's trip was not to get assurances of financing from the private consortium involved; it was to get assurances from the U.S. authorities, both the administration and the legislative branch, that they were fully behind the Alaska gas pipeline, and they were committed to see its construction and completion by 1985. In that respect, the trips by Senator Olson proved to be outstanding successes.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, since the resolution—I have a copy of it before me—makes no reference at all to U.S. Congress providing the guarantees that are necessary to complete the project by 1985, guarantees which are absolutely crucial for the resolution to have any meaning in terms of law, I would repeat my assertion at the outset, that what the senator went for was not successfully completed. A pious expression of wishes is one thing; signing on the dotted line, as the minister knows, is quite another.

I should like to ask the minister, since in the bill which was passed by Parliament two years ago it specifically asserted that—I quote from section 12—the pipeline would not be proceeded with unless “financing has been obtained for the pipeline”, and since the minister himself said last December that, to use his phrase, ironclad guarantees had to be obtained before any part of the pipeline would be proceeded with, does the Government of Canada today stand by these commitments?

Mr. Lalonde: Madam Speaker, it is thanks to the very firm stand taken by this government that we have succeeded in obtaining very strong additional guarantees from the U.S. authorities. In addition, now there is a firm contract signed between the producers and distributors in the United States by which those companies will spend \$500 million for the engineering and design of the pipeline. That was signed last week, or a couple of weeks ago.

● (1425)

Last Friday, the Senate passed the resolution to which the hon. member referred, and I believe yesterday the House of Representatives passed a similar resolution. The fact that we have those large commitments from the private sector and also that we have such clear and strong assurances—stronger than we ever had in the past—from the American authorities, both on the administrative and the legislative side, I think, is a pretty good achievement on the part of this government.

As to the specific question raised by the hon. member, the National Energy Board also is considering reviewing the four conditions which it has put forward before considering approval of the pre-build. We will hear the conclusions of the National Energy Board and the government, the cabinet, will consider the whole issue once we have reports to that effect.

Oral Questions

Also, I might mention to the hon. member that the government has requested the American authorities to give quick approval to four gas export licences which are still in suspense.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, I have a final supplementary question on this very important matter which the minister recognizes. Last week, before the committee of the House looking into the pipeline, Mr. Edge said—and I do not know if it was a slip of the tongue or not—that what was now being discussed in terms of the southern portion under discussion for pre-building was really a “different project”, not the same pipeline.

I should like to ask the minister the following question: does he disagree that what is now being discussed is a different project? Does he think it is the same, or different? If he thinks it is the same, will he stand by the original guarantees in the act to which he committed himself last December? If he is now agreeing that it should be defined as a different project, will he assure the House that before pre-building starts, that measure will be brought before Parliament for agreement?

Mr. Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I should like to tell the hon. member that we share his concern about this whole project, and that this government has given a great deal of time and attention to this issue since we took office. Our purpose is to see to it that the whole Alaska gas pipeline is built. The pre-build aspect must be looked at only in the context of the completion of the whole line. This is the policy of this government, and this is the policy we will stand by.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SETTLEMENT OF NATIVE LAND CLAIMS

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Madam Speaker, I have another question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of recent announcements by Petro-Canada concerning the supply of gas from the High Arctic to Quebec and eastern Canada, and the favourable results being obtained from Beaufort Sea oil and gas exploration which would do much to improve Canada's energy self-sufficiency, could the minister please advise the House what response the government will make with respect to the resolution passed last weekend at the Inuit Circumpolar Conference in Greenland which called for a moratorium on economic development in the Canadian north until Inuit land claims are settled?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I did not have the opportunity to read the text of those resolutions. I heard about them on the radio. I must assure the hon. member that the cabinet will thoroughly consider the representations made by the spokesmen for the Inuit. It is clear, however, that we must take into consideration the general interests of all Canadians as pointed out by the hon. member, especially the importance for Canada to attain energy self-sufficiency as soon as possible, especially as far as oil supplies are concerned.