

Boundary Pipeline Corporation

say that Trans-Canada Pipe Lines planned a pipe line to Ontario and Quebec. Western Pipe Lines proposed to pipe Alberta gas to Winnipeg, Minneapolis and St. Paul, which was an extension of what had been said earlier about bringing it into Minnesota only. Mr. Justice John D. Kearney, chief commissioner, said the board would hold up final approval of the Westcoast application until the board investigates whether gas reserves in the Peace river area are adequate. He noted that the board and the United States power commission have a "common concern" in the adequacy of reserves, and indicated that a co-operative survey could be made.

Westcoast Transmission is sponsored by Pacific Petroleum of Calgary, which has promised to supply half of its natural gas. The company has claimed that the Peace river gas fields, almost equally divided between British Columbia and Alberta, hold 2.2 trillion cubic feet of gas reserves with another trillion of probable reserve. This is supposed to allow for the demands of the market for over twenty years. It will be seen, therefore, that with this and other companies interested in obtaining permission to export gas, the gas will not be obtainable from Alberta, which has said "We have not sufficient reserves to permit any more gas to be exported. We will allow this gas to be exported from the northern part of our province because there is very little industry up there at the present time, and we feel there are sufficient reserves in that area to supply its needs for a long time to come. In the southern part of the province, however, we have not sufficient reserves; therefore we are not going to allow any export."

We have to consider as a committee, therefore, what is the purpose of granting this company the right to transport gas when there is little likelihood, according to these judgments, that the company will be able to obtain permission to transport the gas. On the other hand, it might be said, what harm is there in letting the company go ahead? A few years ago the politicians in Ottawa and Alberta would have been tumbling over each other if there was a company in sight looking for the right to develop, at its own expense, the natural resources of a province. We have reached such a stage in this country today, however, that we are very choosy about whom we want to develop our resources. We think this company is not in the best position to develop those resources. There are other companies in the field with prior rights, and they are in a position to do it. There is no need for this company.

I do not know, Mr. Chairman, whether there should be any arbitrary limit put on the number of companies that might be

[Mr. Browne (St. John's West).]

allowed the right to export gas from the province. When you look at the reality of the situation, with the Alberta gas and petroleum conservation board being so particular about granting permits, is there any likelihood of that board giving this company permission when there have been two other companies in the field ahead of it who have made application?

There was another argument used in this debate, and I do not know whether or not I would be considered out of order in talking about it. It concerns the fact this company made no secret of its intention to transport gas outside of Canada. The other company, Trans-Canada Pipe Lines, intends to follow an all-Canadian route from the province of Alberta about 2,000 miles across Canada. This company, therefore, should have preference over one whose avowed intention is to transport gas to the United States border and sell it in that country. One may look at that whichever way one likes, but there is no doubt from what we have heard here and in the committee that the provinces of Ontario and Quebec are very anxious to get what natural gas they can. It has been said that an exchange could be arranged by having gas from Canada taken into the northwestern and central United States in exchange for gas which would come through Detroit or Buffalo into Quebec and Ontario. Some mention has been made of that possibility. Are we to say that this company should be favoured on that account?

It seems to me reasonable that if some exchange of that sort could be arranged it would be desirable, because we might save the tremendous expense of bringing gas such great distances across the country. This company, Trans-Canada Pipe Lines, seems to be in a position to finance such a project once it obtains permission to get gas. I do not know how other hon. members feel, but it seems to me that Trans-Canada Pipe Lines Company offers the better proposition. While no great harm can be done by granting permission for the incorporation of this company, it hardly seems likely that such a company would receive consideration from the Alberta conservation board or from the board of transport commissioners.

Mr. Blackmore: Will the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): Yes.

Mr. Blackmore: I have gained the impression from the hon. member's remarks that he has the impression that the Alberta conservation board's action is more or less arbitrary. The board's concern is that no uneconomic development should take place. It would be