

Adjournment Debate

● (2205)

Let me conclude by quoting a little poetry, as the Prime Minister did on the night of the election. He quoted Robert Frost. He said that the woods were "lovely, dark and deep," and he had "promises to keep and miles to go before I sleep." I could quote another poet whose name is Robert, Robert Service. In one of his poems about Canada's north, he said that "a promise made is a debt unpaid, and the law has its own stern code."

I remind the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Prime Minister that when you talk about having promises to keep and miles to go before you sleep, you better not fall asleep at the switch on this promise. It is not only in the interests of eastern Canada, but in the interests of the whole country that we have a secure and cheaper source of supply for a vitally needed commodity like natural gas. We are paying out far too much money now to eastern potentates and OPEC nations for oil. The cost is not only escalating, but it is a severe drain on this country's treasury, moneys that could be used for far more pressing needs at home and abroad than to import expensive oil when we could have natural gas of our own.

Mr. Robert Daudlin (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, in responding to the statement by the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) on July 2, and on other occasions in this House, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) assured the House that the government considers as a matter of highest priority the completion at an early date of the Q and M Pipe Lines proposal to the maritime provinces. In this connection, he noted that he has had two meetings with the promoters of that project, and emphasized that the government is very much interested in seeing the pipeline completed through to the Atlantic coast.

Members will recall the fact that on May 15 of this year, the minister announced the National Energy Board's recommendation that a certificate be issued to TransCanada Pipe-Lines to extend its natural gas transmission system to Quebec City. Steps are now being taken to settle right of way matters so that that project could be commenced early next year providing for an extension of natural gas service as far east as Quebec City. The NEB, however, was not satisfied that the Q and M Pipelines could be constructed and operated in an environmentally acceptable manner until further assessments of an environmental nature were completed by the sponsors.

The Board also was not convinced that full consideration had been given to the impact of east coast offshore oil and gas discoveries on the planning and design of the proposed maritime pipeline extension. Consequently the minister has urged the promoters of the project to complete their environmental studies and other assessments to provide information which would satisfy the NEB so that this project could be got under way as soon as possible. While the government would like to see the Q and M complete the environmental work identified by the Board as soon as possible, to date there has been no

decision by the company involved to complete the necessary steps or to file a new application with the NEB.

The hon. member for Central Nova made reference during his statement of July 2 to the possible interest of the province of New Brunswick in this project. That province made known its views on energy supply before the National Energy Board in a hearing on the Q and M project. While it was certainly not opposed to the Q and M project, it was concerned that various energy options for the Atlantic region be considered before a final decision was taken on individual projects. It emphasized the importance of assessing the effects on area employment and economic development in reaching project decisions.

The federal government, of course, must have regard to the views of all governments directly affected in meeting the energy needs of the Atlantic region and this was well expressed by the minister when he addressed the Pipe Line Contractors Association of Canada in Montreal on May 15 of this year. At that time he emphasized that it was critical to choose the most efficient alternative energy sources for Atlantic Canada and that the federal government should proceed with the agreement of the provinces involved.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to the reduction of oil dependence in the Atlantic region, and it believes that a gas pipeline affords one of the best approaches to this objective. The government will continue to press for a completion of the pipeline project but, of course, it cannot force the National Energy Board to reopen its application. We can be assured that the NEB will be prepared to deal expeditiously with a new application and, in the meantime, the federal government is continuing with other plans for meeting future energy needs of all areas of the Atlantic region.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT—CALL FOR AMENDMENTS TO PROVIDE PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION OF DISABLED CITIZENS

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, last week in the city of Winnipeg a great event took place, the Rehabilitation International Congress, where 4,000 people gathered from around the world, indeed more than 100 countries, to consider the problems that are endured by disabled people, not only in Canada but throughout the world. It was a great success, I would say, in terms of input from the people in the non-governmental sector, because it was mostly made up of voluntary associations.

● (2210)

One discouraging and disappointing note is that in Canada governments are lagging behind in their attitudes, their programs and in their services to disabled citizens. This, of course, includes the federal government.

We had hoped that in preparation for the great event, the congress, the new social services legislation would have been in place. It had been talked about for many years—I was on the committee which travelled all the way to Tel Aviv in 1976 to make an appeal to bring the congress to Canada, and one of