

*Northern Ontario Pipe Line Corporation*

ago and yet they do not even know now when the proposal they have put before us could be completed.

If there has been any delay it has been the delay of this government in failing to deal with a proposal that was before the house five years ago. We want to see this Canadian gas moving and we want to see it moving at prices that will be fair to the producer in Alberta and fair to the consumer in Ontario and Quebec. It is particularly important that gas be made available to communities in northern Ontario, that great central arch which joins eastern and western Canada. It is not merely a part of Ontario. It is the central area of this continent and that area does need this natural gas.

It does not follow, however, that this is the plan which should be adopted to fulfil that purpose. In fact, and I should like hon. members opposite to bear this in mind particularly, the government disliked this plan very much only eight months ago. They said so. Let me read what the Prime Minister said on July 8 last year, as found at page 5862 of *Hansard*. This is what the Prime Minister said:

There are three alternatives that are being carefully investigated and about which, of course, the commitments of many different interests are required. There is one that we prefer to the other two. There is a third that we do not like as well even as the second. The officials of the Canadian company are endeavouring to get the commitments that would provide for the implementing of No. 1. They are also ascertaining whether, in the event that is not possible, they could get the commitments that would be necessary for the implementation of No. 2. That is the situation. I hope we shall not have to fall back on No. 3.

The government, Mr. Chairman, is falling back on No. 3. I hope the Prime Minister will explain to us at the earliest possible opportunity exactly why the government is falling back on a plan which he disliked eight months ago. I think we should know from the Prime Minister what the other plans were and why they could not be carried out. We have not yet had that explained. We have sought over and over again to obtain information in the house in regard to what the government was doing. We have not been able to obtain information from the Minister of Trade and Commerce at any time. In fact, it was only a few days after the Prime Minister's statement that the Minister of Trade and Commerce left the impression that he did not know about any such three plans. The Prime Minister's statement was made on July 8. On July 14 of last year, as recorded at page 6156 of *Hansard*, the Minister of Trade and Commerce said:

Mr. Chairman, I am unable to throw any light on the pipe line situation other than to say that [Mr. Drew.]

every possibility is being studied, and studied intensively. I hope a solution can be announced before long, but I cannot announce it today. My hon. friend has the advantage of me if he knows what propositions one, two and three are; I do not.

That was six days after the Prime Minister had said: We have three propositions; we like the first best, we like the second not quite so well and we do not like the third. Yet the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who sits beside him in cabinet as well as in the house, had not even heard about it or at least he said so. Does any hon. member of this house wonder why we accept every statement from the Minister of Trade and Commerce with a very large grain of salt? In view of the fact that we have not been able to get the information from the Minister of Trade and Commerce as to what the three plans were and what happened to the first two plans, we have a right to know from the Prime Minister why he is now supporting the third plan which he did not like eight months ago and told us so. We certainly should have that information. It cannot be because the minister had not heard of the other two that the government is falling back on the third plan which the Prime Minister hoped they would not be called upon to do.

It is generally stated that plan No. 1 called for the guaranteeing of bonds, and plan No. 2 called for advances by the industrial development bank. Those two proposals fell through. The house will wait with interest to find out what the reasons were. If there were no other ground, Mr. Chairman, for opposing this motion that the government commit public funds for this purpose, there would be the strongest reasons for opposing it when we have no evidence before us that the pipe line cannot be financed privately. On the contrary, the basis upon which Trans-Canada was given permission to proceed was that it could finance an all-Canadian pipe line. Trans-Canada did not get permission to proceed because the board of transport commissioners, the government or anyone else liked the colour of their eyes or the way they looked when they appeared. They got that permission because they gave an undertaking that they could finance an all-Canadian line without any subsidiary lines. That was the basis. That was asserted at the time of incorporation. It was asserted on many different occasions after that.

If the members of this house are to act with some measure of responsibility in regard to this motion, then surely they must review the facts which lead us up to this present situation. Let us recall what the sponsor of the bill of incorporation said when it was presented to the House of Commons. I refer to the bill of incorporation of Trans-Canada