

content in any application that is made in respect of the construction of a pipeline.

Then, I asked:

Mr. Speaker, is the minister in a position to advise us whether there have been any discussions with the governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan—

The answer was "No". Finally, on March 11, 1971 the Minister at that time said they did not know whether or not they were favouring a pipeline. The reason was they had no feasibility studies which the government had supported and laid before Parliament as well as the Canadian people.

Now, I shall go to the questions and answers recorded on March 5, 1971. I asked five questions on that day and received the same kind of wishy-washy answers. There was no decision. I said:

Yesterday the Secretary of State for External Affairs stated that no decision had been made by the United States authorities in reference to the pipeline from the rich Alaska northern slopes to Valdez.

Of course, that is dealing with TAPS.

In view of the fact that a consortium of companies in the United States has already stockpiled pipe for the building of such a pipeline, is the minister aware of that and is he now aware of the decision made by U.S. government authorities to build such a pipeline in view of the stockpile?

I advised the government in that question that according to reports from official places in Washington that United States had been stockpiling the pipe to build TAPS so that the crude petroleum could be moved by tanker down the west coast of British Columbia. What was the answer? There is no point in asking questions if you do not receive information and use the information once you receive it. The Secretary of State for External Affairs, then the Acting Prime Minister, more acting than Prime Minister, said:

No, Mr. Speaker. It may be that there are such stockpiles; I do not disagree with that. I do know that no decision has been made. I would like to tell the House that the United States Secretary of State has indicated to me that he now agrees to enter into consultations with us on this question. I am sure he would not have done so if a decision had already been made.

The United States had already stockpiled the pipe. The study had been completed and they had decided to build the pipeline, but they thought they would soothe the Secretary of State for External Affairs. As I listened to him, I decided that he must be the most optimistic minister I had ever heard. He reminded me of a story I was told by a fellow who said that his 85-year old father married the woman next door, who was 70 years of age, and five days later purchased a house near a school. He was very optimistic. That situation is similar to the one we face when dealing with the jurisprudence of the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Mr. Pepin: That is not optimism; it is potential.

Mr. Woolliams: I will leave it to hon. members to draw any conclusion they want from that, but it did seem to me to be optimism.

Mr. Nielsen: He has no potential, so it must be optimism.

Oil Pollution

Mr. Woolliams: At that point I asked the minister this question:

In light of the answer, can the Acting Prime Minister say whether the Canadian government has made up its own mind as to which transportation route would be the best in Canada's national interest, that is, down the Mackenzie delta or to the port of Valdez and then by tanker to the United States? What is Canada's position and how did the government arrive at it?

The minister could very briefly have said that they did not have an answer. Let us hear what he did say:

I thought the hon. gentleman would have learned by now from the repetitive statements I have made in the House that the Canadian government feels there is a very serious risk in the movement of oil by tanker down the Pacific coast, and it would not be in the interest of either of our two countries.

Well, what kind of nonsense is that! I said:

Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the minister's statements in that regard, but does the government then endorse the building of a pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley and through the Prairies to the industrial centres of the United States?

The minister said:

I am sure that as a member from Alberta he would wish me to be in as strong a bargaining position as possible in relation to the United States, and to ensure that if an application is made it is one that meets our requirements and not only those of the United States.

The point is that now the United States is going ahead with this project. The expression one might use would be that it is too late to close the barn door after the horse has run away. This is what the government has been doing continually.

I want to deal with some more questions I asked on this subject to show the lengths to which all of us on this side went to try to obtain an answer to a very serious problem of pollution about which all members from British Columbia and all members here were concerned. Of course, they should be concerned. They should be concerned about action on the part of the government. I do not know what hon. members opposite say to their minister in the caucus but I would sure like to be there some time.

An hon. Member: Come on over.

Mr. Woolliams: The hon. member says: "Come on over". I could not stand the vacillation and procrastination. We could certainly do without the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) because he got the House in such an uproar last night that the Speaker almost had to use his prerogative to adjourn the House.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): You mean the opposition.

Mr. Woolliams: I will not become involved in an argument with the minister. On March 10, 1971, as recorded in *Hansard* at page 4135, I asked this question:

The minister suggests that various departments are studying this matter. Will he at this time, or perhaps later on motions, make a statement indicating the evidence on which he bases his recommendations or his opinion of that evidence? Would he give us some indication of the type of personnel who provided the evidence on which he bases his opinion?

This is the answer of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development at that time: