

Prairie Transmission Lines

tell us. That is something the British Columbia members who have so little regard for the welfare of British Columbia that they vote for these bills should tell us. They should make it quite clear to the house just whom they are supporting in this matter, British Columbia or some pipe line promoters. On the fifteenth of November the Minister of Trade and Commerce said, as reported on page 1806 of *Hansard*:

As the situation stands today, the incorporators of each of those two bills have a monopoly, so far as gas moving in either direction is concerned.

I have asked if there is to be only one pipe line in each direction and if each company is to have the monopoly. If one company is to have the monopoly then there is only one way in which the interests of the people of Canada can be properly protected and that is by the pipe lines being publicly owned.

This country has been a real paradise for charter promoters. I remember when I first went to the west, around 1908 every politician no matter to which party he belonged would not dare to appeal on a public platform unless he had a railway policy. I had formulated a railway policy of my own. It was based on the fact that the workers built the railways but the only use they had for them after they were built was to walk the ties looking for another job, another railway to build. I found that the ties were not spaced properly for easy walking. My policy was a revolutionary one; it proposed that the ties should be spaced so that one could take three at a time. As ties are spaced the distance between two ties is too short and the distance between three too long. It is easy to see that few people accepted my policy because the people that wanted charters did not walk the ties.

Everyone was getting charters. I go back to an even earlier period, and I should like to draw the attention of hon. members to something which is apropos of the situation with which we are now confronted. I should like to quote from page 1272 of *Hansard* of June 23, 1887. Mr. Scriver was speaking. The house was discussing the rules respecting private bills which would make it necessary that plans of routes be filed before a charter was granted. Mr. Scriver said:

My limited experience in the railway committee satisfies me that a great deal of time has been lost through the want of such a bill, and that we have chartered a great many companies when we had no plans presented to satisfy the committee that those projects were anything more than paper projects.

Is there anything in the bill we are now debating to show that it is not merely a paper project? We may be told that if there were two or more companies it would be better for

[Mr. MacInnis.]

the province of Alberta, that they could make a better deal if there were competitors in the field. Surely that is poor reasoning because Alberta has the gas. That province has the thing that these pipe line owners want and they can hold the gas until the pipe line people pay their price if that is the way they want to do things. It is certainly a poor argument to say that Alberta is going to do better if we issue charters to three, four, five or six companies.

Why stop there? Why not issue as many charters as are asked for? I suppose they would go out selling stock and there may still be a few suckers around with a little money.

An hon. Member: Page the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Mayhew).

Mr. MacInnis: I am surprised the Minister of Fisheries has been as silent in this matter as he has been. Perhaps he is a very busy man and I really have no quarrel with the Minister of Fisheries. We should have had our lessons in connection with charters. We allowed railroads to be built all over the country and then when they went bankrupt we had to take them over in the interests of the people of Canada. The people of Canada are still paying for the bungling policies that enabled promoters to fleece the people.

I think the time has arrived when we should use Canada's natural resources to build up the wealth of the country. Canada is being denuded of its minerals, lumber and all other natural resources in order to build up the wealth of the United States. It is time we began to use the natural wealth of Canada for our own benefit. What can be done under the provisions of this bill goes far beyond the building of a pipe line. I do not know whether hon. members have read it, but I should like to refer them to section 6 of the bill, which reads:

The company, subject to the provisions of any general legislation which is enacted by parliament, relating to pipe lines for the transmission and transportation of gas and oil or any liquid product or by-product thereof, may (a) within the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia or outside Canada—

How can we issue a charter to build pipe lines, or to do any of the other things that are mentioned in this bill, outside Canada? I do not think that parliament has the right to pass a statute for the building of pipe lines outside Canada. Let me read some of the other things that may be constructed:

—may (a) within the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia or outside Canada construct, purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire, and hold, develop, operate, maintain, control, lease, mortgage, create liens upon, sell, convey or otherwise dispose of and turn to account any and all interprovincial and/or international pipe lines, for the transmission