

Northern Pipeline

House that will form a special committee. If we see that the government is not meeting their objectives as to Canadian content, then a debate will arise in this House and the government will be accountable.

An hon. Member: Too late!

Mr. Nielsen: It is not too late if it is done on a quarterly basis. The steel orders or the pipe orders will not be placed for five-year projects inside of three months. That would be ridiculous. The monitoring process plus the powers of the agency, plus the powers of the minister as well as the powers of the governor in council, which are so broad and sweeping in this bill, provide that kind of guarantee. That is to say nothing of the fact that the Canadian steel industry itself, which must know the factors inherent in the bidding process, is confident that it can outbid any other steel industry, wherever it is, be it in Japan, Italy or anywhere else. The same applies to the pipe industry. I am satisfied with that kind of comfortable position with respect to successfully gaining the majority of the Canadian content for this project.

Mr. Blackburn: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member for Yukon whether he can cite anything in the bill or from the committee hearings that would give the Canadian government the right to delve into and investigate how bids are set up in Japan or Italy. Is there anything in this bill that gives the Canadian government the right to go to the other two countries and find out whether those governments have subsidized their own steel industry, or to what extent they underbid our own?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, that is a very silly question. The government has no power to get into the internal affairs of another country. The power the government has and the power which the standing committee will have will be to look at the contracts—

An hon. Member: No way.

Mr. Nielsen: The hon. member asked me a question and I listened to him while he was asking it. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, but I listened to the hon. member while he was asking the question and now I ask him to listen to the answer. The government and the minister will have the power to veto the contracts that are intended to be entered into. That is where the crunch comes. If the government approves a contract which the hon. member might think offends the intention spelled out in the international agreement, that contract comes before the monitoring committee of this House and then we will have a word to say about it if they fall down on their job—

An hon. Member: After the fact.

Mr. Nielsen: It is after the fact by three months. I emphasize the fact that all these orders are not going to be placed within three months. We will have ongoing responsibility to be critical of the government, to expose any failures that they may fall heir to with respect to Canadian content provisions on an ongoing basis. Quite frankly, it would be political suicide

[Mr. Nielsen.]

for them not to adhere to those Canadian content provisions in the light of that monitoring process.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I have had some real difficulty this evening figuring out which party the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) belongs to. He has been defending the government legislation a lot more strongly than the government has.

An hon. Member: Much more effectively.

Mr. Nystrom: Perhaps he has been defending it more effectively; I am not saying that he has not. Perhaps the minister for sport and fitness should move over one seat and let the happy wanderer from the Yukon join the happy rancher from Crowfoot.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nystrom: I think that is his objective—to run as a Liberal candidate in the next election campaign.

An hon. Member: He will soon be the unhappy rancher.

Mr. Nystrom: I am happy to see that the member from Edmonton is saying that the member for Yukon will soon be an unhappy rancher—

An hon. Member: I meant the member for Crowfoot.

Mr. Nystrom: The member for Yukon seems to be very content to argue in the House that if the government that he has so much confidence in makes a mistake we can rectify an error right here on the floor of the House. If we cannot rectify it in the House, we can do so in the committee. In other words, we can make a correction after they have made a mistake.

I for one do not have that much confidence in the Liberal government. First of all, their priorities may not be the same as ours. Secondly, if we refer the question to a committee, the government has a majority on that committee and there is no way of knowing if we in the opposition can do anything to change what has happened or to change their minds. The member for Yukon has been a member of parliament longer than I have. He should know that when the government gets into House committees hon. members are often frustrated by the majority that sits across the way. There are absolutely no guarantees that if the government is doing something wrong we on this side of the House can rectify it. I say that to the government members as well. If they happen to lose the election—and it might be very soon—when they are sitting in the opposition I am sure they would want more guarantees than are in this legislation to stop a government that is doing the wrong thing. I quote no less an authority than the member for Yukon's hero, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Horner). The hon. member is defending the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, who said on February 20 at page 3036 of *Hansard*, in response to points made on this side of the House about guarantees: