

● (1700)

He said: Mr. Speaker, some months ago I placed a motion on the order paper. I had hoped that it could have been debated before this time, but I realize a large number of motions precede it and that other members of the House have problems which they feel they would like to have debated in this assembly. The following is my motion:

That an Order of the House do issue for a copy of training and employment agreements prepared for the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline as referred to at page 61 of the Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

We have had difficulty in obtaining studies and information from the government on programs related to a potential Mackenzie Valley pipeline. We are told action is being taken in this field by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, but to date very little information has been made public by the department. This House has a right to know what specific steps have been taken, and what reports have been made regarding the training and employment plans for northern people once the Mackenzie Valley pipeline gets underway.

I should like to refer the House to the 1971-72 Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. It deals with this matter at page 61 and states:

A special staff group in the Department has been charged with the task of seeking effective means to increase employment and provide greater economic opportunity for northern people.

The pipeline industry and associated trade unions have contributed material and information to enable the Department to prepare a training and employment agreement for the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Industry and other government departments have suggested areas of training having potential for permanent employment.

My motion is designed to obtain specific information from the government concerning the progress made in its plans, as announced almost two years ago, to prepare a training and employment agreement for the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline to ensure greater economic opportunity for the northern people. I have several questions which I hope will be answered this afternoon.

First, has a training and employment agreement to assist northern people been formulated by the department, and if so what is it? If no plan has been prepared to date, is one in the making and when will it be ready? If no training and employment agreement will be produced by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, then what is being done to carry out the policy announced in the 1971-72 annual report?

I feel there is some urgency to this matter. There have been frequent statements from various cabinet ministers suggesting an early start on the Mackenzie Valley gas line. We have heard from the potential pipeline builders that an application could be made at an early date, perhaps within the next few months. There is no doubt that it would take at least a year before any application could be approved. Nevertheless, any effective type of training and employment agreement must be in effect at an early date if we are to have a genuine effort to provide greater economic opportunity for our northern people when these projects are underway.

Personally, I see no reason for the early building of a Mackenzie Valley gas line. It should be built to provide

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energy cheaply for the Canadian market and not overwhelmingly for export, as the present plans of the gas and oil companies indicate. We have had enough sell-outs of our non-renewable oil and gas resources. I hope a new approach to the development and use of these energy resources will develop in time to conserve much of these valuable resources for future Canadian use. Despite this position, we feel that the training programs and employment agreements to assist in improved economic opportunity for the northern people must go forward. They must deal not only with pipeline construction but with a number of potential economic and other developments in the north.

There are other reports on pipeline development which should be made public as soon as possible. All this information is essential if we are to be able to make those decisions which are in the best interest of Canada. It is not my intention to prolong my remarks on this matter, but I again point out that there are a host of problems facing us in the north. They deal with native rights, environmental protection, the wise use of resources and so on. Our NDP group insists that it have all the information for discussion on these matters so that they can be resolved in a proper manner and at an early date.

Mr. Len Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Harding) has brought this matter to the attention of the House at this time. Regrettably, we do not have the particular information to provide the hon. member at this time. Also, he asks some specific questions. I want to tell him that the department is still in the process of preparing such an agreement. It is still in draft form, and is continually being revised to reflect technological change related to both the construction and operation of gas transmission lines. It will take into account also the social and economic impact of such a major project in the Mackenzie Valley.

In this regard, the agreement is being prepared to ensure the maximum employment of northern residents during the construction and operation of the pipeline, should it go ahead. Also, the agreement will stress permanent positions for northern residents in the employment which the pipeline will create, such as in the operation of the pipeline, increased exploration activity, gas field development and operations related to petroleum activity. This is consistent with the government policy for northern development for the 70's which stated that the native people should derive early and tangible benefits from the economic development, and be seen to benefit. It will be remembered that in August, 1970 the government announced the initial guidelines for the construction and operation of northern pipelines.

Mr. Speaker, in order to let the House and the hon. member for Kootenay West know how serious we are that the best possible situation be created in respect of employment for the native people, and for the general residents of northern Canada, I should like to go over some of the guidelines, the expanded guidelines, made public on June 28, 1973 by the minister. We are very keen about this. We want to make sure that the native people and all northerners benefit to the maximum from the creation of the pipeline which perhaps will eventually go through the north. I shall go over some of these guidelines briefly in