

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** In Hamilton.

**Mr. MacEachen:**—has indicated its intention to secure some of the market in the United States for the pipe to be laid in that country. It seems to me the hon. member can be assured that Canada is in an extremely good position to gain great benefits from this project.

NORTHERN PIPELINE—DISCREPANCY IN ESTIMATES OF  
EMPLOYMENT CREATED

**Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South):** The Deputy Prime Minister has consistently referred to 100,000 man-years of employment. The study to which two of my colleagues referred the estimate of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, which includes both Alcan and Dempster speaks of not 100,000, but 69,078 man-years. If the Dempster link is not constructed and a reduction of 30 per cent is made, the figure is brought down to 46,000 or 47,000 man-years. Is the minister prepared to table this report and explain the divergence between the figures of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce and the figures he himself has been using?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council):** The Foothills company itself, in its estimates placed before the National Energy Board, made an estimate of the manpower required. I am sure that on the basis of varying assumptions, one could reach different conclusions and I am not surprised if reports such as the one referred to by the hon. member for Yukon, prepared by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, indicate that, given the worst possible assumptions, the employment content would be at a different level.

As I say, I am not surprised if that should be the case. But I will have no hesitation about attempting to deal with these varying estimates before the committee. However, it does seem somewhat futile to attempt at this stage to engage in battles over the estimated number of jobs which will be provided. What we ought to do is get this project under way and make it a reality.

**Mr. Fraser:** I must say we would progress a lot faster if the Acting Prime Minister would come clean with the House. Yesterday, asked how the number of jobs would be affected by the type of pipe selected, he said, "Certainly, I have no estimate prepared on the basis of high-pressure pipe." Is the hon. gentleman prepared to put before the House and the committee the government's own, independent assessment of the number of man-hours of employment which will be created by this project, and stop this fluffery, these statements that there are perhaps some low-basis calculations floating around which the government has not found out about yet?

**Mr. MacEachen:** We have not hesitated to put before the country our projected estimates of the number of jobs which will become available. These estimates were made public after the agreement was announced in Washington by the President and by the Prime Minister. They reflected our view of the total

[Mr. MacEachen.]

man-hours which will be derived from the pipeline system as a whole, including the Dempster as well as from the pipeline system excluding the Dempster. Contrary to what was said yesterday by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands, none of it was put in small print; it was all in the same large-size print which even the hon. member can read.

**Mr. Fraser:** In view of that reply, can I ask the minister why he made it quite clear yesterday in this chamber that the only estimates he was using were those he had obtained from Foothills? How can the hon. gentleman now say that he has given the government's figures to the House, the country or anybody else?

**Mr. MacEachen:** The hon. member misunderstands the situation. Yesterday he asked a question with respect to estimates prepared against the possibility that the National Energy Board would recommend the use of high-pressure pipe. I am not prepared at this stage, for obvious reasons, to begin issuing estimates on the basis of high-pressure pipe being used.

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ESTIMATES

DELAY IN INTRODUCTION—TOTAL FIGURE

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. As we have heard much rhetoric from the other side of Wellington Street concerning fiscal restraint at the federal level, would the hon. gentleman tell us why he has chosen to delay the introduction of his estimates into the House, by comparison with former years? Will he tell us whether those estimates in total will amount to a figure below \$45 billion, on a national accounts basis?

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, I indicated that the estimates would probably be tabled on February 22. As far as I recall, they were tabled last year on February 16. I regret the six days' delay. There is nothing significant about it. As to the figures, they will be made known to the House when I table the estimates on February 22.

**Mr. Stevens:** Bearing in mind that fiscal restraint is an important discussion point at the first ministers' conference, would the President of the Treasury Board not at least consider allowing that meeting to know what, in fact, will be the figure of total government spending for fiscal 1979, bearing in mind that in October when the Minister of Finance brought in his so-called budget, he did not choose to show the 1979 figures, as had been the custom in former presentations?

**Mr. Andras:** The tabling of expenditure plans for next year goes on at different dates for different jurisdictions throughout the country. Ontario is planning to make its figures public on or about the first week in March. This is a normal process. I do not intend to make a statement at the federal-provincial