

Pipe Lines

the C.P.R. might well point out to his colleagues that if any similar method of financing is to be employed by private investment in this way it would be well for the government to introduce into the legislation a similar provision that the president and a majority of the board of directors must at all times be citizens of Canada. That certainly will be particularly true if the taxpayers' money is to be used to finance this venture, as is now suggested.

The Minister of Trade and Commerce, with that facility that he has in offering promises which are not subsequently fulfilled, has said, "We free ourselves from the necessity of having to wait for the permission of the federal power commission." They free themselves from no such necessity whatever. He has made it clear again today that the eastern part of this line carrying the gas into Ontario and Quebec is dependent upon the permission of the federal power commission. They free themselves in no way from that permission. In fact they make it much more likely that the decision will be delayed and that it will be very strenuously fought, because one of the arguments that has been put up is that this is a government-subsidized venture which they do not want to have competing with their lines in the United States. Here certainly will be subsidy on a grand scale, 90 per cent of the cost.

When the Minister of Trade and Commerce says, "What were we to do?" I say, "Well, months ago they could have invited, as we suggested in this house, the proposals by others, or even by the Trans-Canada itself, under an appropriate organization, to do this job as a Canadian job and with the assurance that the president and a majority of the directors at all times would be Canadians."

Do not let anyone pretend for a moment that the fact that a majority of the directors at this time are Canadians has anything whatever to do with the control of this company. Those directors hold one share each. The real holdings in this case are in the hands of large organizations which undoubtedly are perfectly legitimate organizations in their own field. Make no mistake about it, however. We have the anomaly here that we have been told that Canadians cannot finance this, and now the government says, whether you like it or not, you Canadians are going to finance it, but you are going to finance it in the way that the government deems best.

Mr. Diefenbaker: By bailing them out.

Mr. Drew: What this really amounts to is that the government, and now the caucus [Mr. Drew.]

of the Liberal party, as indicated by their trained applause, have agreed to bail out the Minister of Trade and Commerce from the confusion into which he got himself by the course he has followed. The present Minister of Trade and Commerce can be too expensive a luxury for Canada under circumstances of that kind.

The interesting thing, Mr. Speaker, is that all those who have so roundly applauded this strange and unique proposal for making Canadians finance a United States-controlled venture did not know about it until late this morning. It is wonderful that they were able to come to a decision so much more quickly than the government as to the correctness of this proposal.

I repeat, Mr. Speaker, that this proposal is one which calls for examination. It is not going to delay the building of this pipe line. This can be done speedily. There is a standing committee which could be set up tomorrow to start this inquiry. Let us have the facts; we have not the facts now.

Mr. Bennett: I'll say you haven't.

Mr. Rowe: You got them only this morning.

Mr. Drew: The hon. member for Grey North very wisely says, "You haven't got the facts". He did not have them until this morning, either.

Mr. Bennett: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, I did not say that. The Leader of the Opposition said, "We haven't got the facts", and I said that was obvious.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, the remark stands exactly as it was put on the record. The hon. member for Grey North who now suggests that others should have had this information is one of those who came to such a speedy decision when the whip was cracked this morning in the Liberal caucus.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Trade and Commerce said that he was trying to make a serious statement. It is a serious statement, one of the most serious that has been made in this house. What this amounts to is an invitation—

An hon. Member: Why don't you try one some time?

Mr. Drew: —to investors in the United States to come to Canada and be financed to the extent of 90 cents of every dollar, and still retain control over the investment under terms that would be entirely satisfactory to them. Now, let us by all means have investment from the United States—