

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, I will be pleased to make the legal opinion known as soon as I receive it. The lawyers are doing work. As the hon. member knows, they must do it thoroughly and carefully.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Allmand:** These non-lawyers do not understand. My hon. friend will understand. In any event, the work will be done well in advance of the passage of the bill. As well, I promised the Indians in Quebec that we would not proclaim the bill until this matter is settled.

\* \* \*

**ENERGY****NORTHERN PIPELINE—REASON FOR FAILURE TO REQUEST UNITED STATES TO POSTPONE DEADLINE FOR DECISION**

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** Mr. Speaker, as a non-lawyer I would like to ask the Acting Prime Minister a question.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** You are not only a non-lawyer, you are a non-nothing.

**Mr. Baldwin:** You are not even a good client.

**Mr. Broadbent:** According to a press report, the United States Ambassador to Canada, Mr. Thomas Enders, indicated in a very clear way that the United States is not under undue pressure to reach a decision on a northern gas pipeline. Since this assertion by the United States ambassador confirms what I said earlier in the week in this House, will the Acting Prime Minister explain why the government of Canada has not requested a postponement of the September 1 date at which time the Prime Minister of Canada informed President Carter that he would give our country's recommendation on a pipeline decision.

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Acting Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Prime Minister has indicated several times the desire of the government to reach a decision as quickly as possible, hopefully, which is the word he used in London, by September 1. If that time frame is not achievable, it would then of course be an option to consider whether the President ought to be requested to extend this period. I find it difficult to understand why the hon. member is constantly raising this question of more time. He does not seem to need very much time because he made up his mind on the Berger report in three days.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Broadbent:** We will deal with the brilliance of that answer in about a half hour's time. Since the Prime Minister, both in his statements inside the House and outside the House in Europe, has always indicated that the pressure was coming from the United States for a September 1 deadline decision, since the United States Ambassador as recently as yesterday

[Mr. Hnatyshyn.]

apparently said there is no such pressure and since the energy adviser to the President of the United States, Mr. Schlesinger, indicated there is no such pressure, why is the government of Canada maintaining that we must make a September 1 deadline decision when, as the Acting Prime Minister should know, there are so many unresolved issues, particularly on the Alcan possibility, which will not be settled by September 1.

**Mr. MacEachen:** I think the hon. member misunderstands the source of the pressure. The pressure arises from the United States law which obliges the President to meet a certain time frame.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Check again!

**Mr. Douglas (Bruce-Grey):** You check again!

**Mr. MacEachen:** What the Prime Minister is saying is that we ought to make up our minds and not be overtaken by events elsewhere over which we have no control.

**Mr. Broadbent:** That is not only nonsense, it is palpable nonsense.

**Mr. Douglas (Bruce-Grey):** Look who's talking about nonsense!

**Mr. Broadbent:** It will not do the minister any good to smile. Is he aware that the President of the United States is able to extend the deadline by 90 days, and, if he is, will he explain why the Canadian government, through its ambassador or through the Secretary of State for External Affairs, has not requested that use be made of such an option? I believe the United States expects a little initiative to be shown on our part.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS****PROBLEMS CAUSED BY TIMETABLE CHANGE ON SAGUENAY-LAC-SAINT-JEAN ROUTE**

**Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport dealing once more with the passenger service in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean area. In the last few weeks, the timetable has been changed in our area; the CN realized it was an impossible schedule and finally came back to the former one, which is satisfactory to us. However, we had requested an inquiry into passenger service and a few weeks ago I received a reply. I had addressed my letter to the CN St. Lawrence region and a Mr. Yvon H. Matte answered my request by saying Mr. Emery Leblanc was the one involved in this matter. I then wrote to Mr. Leblanc who told me that the matter did not come under his jurisdiction and he sent me to Mr. Adrien Levasseur who said that this was not his problem but rather that of the Canadian Transport Commission.

I would like the minister to enlighten me a little and try to find the responsible person in this matter.