

*Northern Pipeline***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

NORTHERN PIPELINE ACT**ESTABLISHMENT OF AGENCY TO SUPERVISE PIPELINE
CONSTRUCTION**

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. MacEachen that Bill C-25, to establish the Northern Pipeline Agency, to facilitate the planning and construction of a pipeline for the transmission of natural gas from Alaska and northern Canada and to give effect to an agreement between Canada and the United States of America on principles applicable to such a pipeline and to amend certain Acts in relation thereto, be read the second time and referred to the special committee on a northern gas pipeline.

Mr. Speaker: The House will want to know that we are doing everything we can to expedite the production of the transcript of this afternoon so I can have some guidance from it. I understand the desire of the House to proceed with the matter forthwith because there might be some agreement that the matter be finalized. In the circumstances we may be able to produce the record very shortly, but it may take a few minutes. I would like some guidance from the House as to whether it would be useful to adjourn the House for a few minutes or say, until 5.30 p.m.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I have been planning to speak in the debate and I would be ready to speak now. I could speak either on the assumption that I am dealing with the amendment or speak on second reading. If that is agreeable, I will proceed now.

Mr. Nielsen: That is agreeable to us, Mr. Speaker, and if the Chair should find that the circumstances are as I outlined them and that the motion is out of order, then it would be considered that the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) will have closed the debate.

Mr. Speaker: Just to add another interesting procedural aspect to it, let me point out that it is indeed a fact that if we find out after the fact that the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) is speaking to the second reading motion, he closes the debate. If we find out after the fact that he is speaking to the amendment, I understand there might be a disposition to close the debate anyway. Perhaps while the President of Privy Council is addressing the House I can examine the transcript which has just been handed to me, and report to the House. Now that I have it, it should be possible to settle this very shortly.

Mr. Peters: Mr. Speaker, I think it would be a terrible precedent to allow a member's speech to be switched to another stage of the debate after the fact. I am prepared to let the minister speak on the amendment and, if it is found later that he was out of order, he could go ahead and make a speech on the motion. However, I would not agree to transferring his speech after he has made it to another stage of the debate. The

[Mr. MacEachen.]

amendment is before the House until Your Honour has made your decision on it. If the President of Privy Council wishes to speak, he should do so on the amendment, but I would not agree to having it transferred. That would be a terrible precedent.

Mr. Speaker: Now that I have the record in front of me, perhaps I might be of some assistance to hon. members. The record shows that, in concluding his remarks, the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) moved the amendment, seconded by the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters). The text of the motion was then read. I will quote now from the text of the transcript as follows:

THE ACTING SPEAKER (MR. TURNER): Order, please. I suggest that we take this amendment under advisement and continue with the debate.

MR. MACEachEN: Mr. Speaker—

THE ACTING SPEAKER (MR. TURNER): I remind hon. members that if the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) speaks now, he closes the debate.

MR. KNOWLES (WINNIPEG NORTH CENTRE): Not on an amendment.

MR. MACEachEN: Mr. Speaker, I want to raise a point of order on the amendment. I do not think this amendment is acceptable on second reading. I think the amendment has not been put before the House. If I speak I clearly understand I am speaking on the main motion so I would have to clarify the situation or continue the debate.

Then the Acting Speaker put the motion. However, prior to putting the motion, he said to the House:

Order, please. I suggest that we take this amendment under advisement and continue with the debate.

It would seem to me that in these circumstances the proper interpretation of that is that the Acting Speaker at that time had indicated to the House there was a procedural reservation. He said then that we should continue with the debate and put the question, subject to taking it under advisement. I do not know what other interpretation could be put on it, which would mean that the matter was one of procedural regularity. Further, the first person to speak after that was the President of Privy Council who said:

Mr. Speaker, I want to raise a point of order on the amendment. I do not think this amendment is acceptable on second reading . . .

The Acting Speaker having indicated that he wanted to take it under advisement, I do not know what other notice he could give to the House of his intention to do that. I think that the matter of the procedural regularity of this motion is open for discussion now.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, what the transcript in front of you does not show is the space of time when nothing was happening.

● (1712)

It is perfectly true that the Acting Speaker said at one time that the matter should be reserved, but then after that certain things were said and certain things happened. We sat for a moment, and then the Acting Speaker got up and put the motion. My interpretation is that at that point he had decided there was going to be any discussion on the procedural matter, and he put the motion. Then he called on the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) to speak, and then on the hon. member