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learned of it after arriving here; I had not known about it. It concerns the decision of Foothills which was announced this afternoon. I have in my hand a statement which appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, I think last Friday. It was written by Jeff Carruthers and the subject, "Pre-building concept for pipeline is dealt damaging blow by report".

I do not want to take too much time up on it because I would like to have a couple of other questions that relate to the report as well, but it is of such a fundamental nature that I would be derelict to the whole committee if I did not use up my time to find out on behalf of the whole committee what the connections are between the NEB report which was just released and the effect it has had, as particularly outlined in the article by Carruthers, on the decision that has just now apparently been made by Foothills.

By the way, I believe it is also true, and I would like you to confirm it, that on the same day as the government announced its decision about the exports, and to whom they were going to give the exports, the licences for these amounts were also included in the *Globe and Mail* in the same edition, so it was quite clear which companies would get allotments of gas for transmission and export. Is that correct? Also, can you confirm that that was in the same *Globe and Mail*.

Mr. Stabback: Mr. Chairman, the National Energy Board issued its report after it had been considered by government along with a submission requesting approval of the Governor in Council of the licences that the Board was prepared to grant and which approval was granted on the day that the Board made its report public. The amounts approved were those recommended by the Board. They are contained on the second page of its press release where they are set off against the volumes that had been requested by each of the 10 applicants.

With respect to the statement of Mr. Carruthers—I have read it but I do not have it in front of me—I must say I was somewhat surprised by the tenor of the article which indicated that the Board's decision went against the interests of the pipeline. Referring to the press release itself, we indicated our view that it was supportive of the pipeline. It is still the Board's view that the decision is supportive of the pipeline.

About one half of the exports granted were to Pan-Alberta and the conditions on the licences to Pan-Alberta were that the gas had to move through the Foothills pipeline system. We pointed out in the press release that the licences issued to Pan-Alberta would foster the prebuilding of the southern sections of the Foothills system and we recognized in the press release and in the report that it would give a significant boost to the entire project.

The point probably at issue is the length of the licence that the Board was prepared to grant. Pan-Alberta had sought longer term licences, significantly longer term, I think in the order of 12 years, and the length of the licence that the Board approved was in the case of the western leg, seven years and in the case of the eastern leg, six years. The Board did not grant any authorizations beyond December 31, 1987, which was the

[Translation]

ne l'ai appris qu'en arrivant ici. J'ai devant moi un article de Jeff Carruthers, paru dans le *Globe and Mail* de vendredi dernier, je crois. Cet article s'intitule: *Le rapport rejette le principe de préconstruction du pipe-line*.

Je ne vais pas consacrer trop de temps à cela, parce que je voudrais poser d'autres questions au sujet du rapport. Toutefois, cela est tellement important, que je me dois, au nom du comité, de demander quel est le lien entre les aspects que souligne l'article de Carruthers dans le rapport de l'ONE et la décision que vient de prendre Foothills.

Au fait, le jour même où le gouvernement a annoncé sa décision quant aux exportations et quant à la manière de les répartir, dans la même parution du *Globe and Mail* dont j'ai parlé tantôt, les permis et les montants respectifs étaient publiés. On savait donc clairement quelles compagnies allaient pouvoir exporter et transporter certaines quantités de gaz. Cela est-il exact? Pourriez-vous le confirmer également?

M. Stabback: Monsieur le président, l'Office national de l'énergie a publié son rapport après que le gouvernement l'ait examiné en même temps qu'une demande d'approbation par le Gouverneur en conseil, des permis que l'Office était prêt à accorder. Cette approbation a été accordée le jour où l'Office a rendu public son rapport. Les demandes qui avaient été approuvées correspondaient à celles qu'avait recommandé l'Office. Elles figurent à la deuxième page du communiqué de presse en regard des quantités qui avaient été demandées par chacune des dites sociétés.

Pour ce qui est de la déclaration de M. Carruthers, je l'ai lu mais ne l'ai pas devant moi. Je dois avouer ma surprise d'apprendre que l'article laissait entendre que la décision de l'Office était contraire aux intérêts des compagnies responsables du pipe-lines. Au sujet du communiqué de presse même, nous avons dit que, selon nous, le rapport était favorable à la construction du pipe-line. C'est d'ailleurs toujours notre avis.

Près de la moitié des exportations ont été accordées à Pan-Alberta, à condition que le gaz soit transporté par le gazoduc de la Foothills. Dans le communiqué de presse, nous avons souligné que les permis émis à Pan-Alberta favoriseraient la préconstruction des tronçons sud du réseau Foothills et, tant dans le communiqué que dans le rapport, nous avons admis que cela donnerait un élan considérable à l'ensemble des travaux.

La question qui est probablement contestée est la durée du permis accordé par l'Office. Pan-Alberta a cherché à obtenir des permis à beaucoup plus long terme, des permis de 12 ans, je crois, alors que le permis accordé par l'Office était de 7 ans pour le tronçon ouest et de 6 ans pour le tronçon est. L'Office n'a accordé aucune autorisation ultérieure au 31 décembre