

*Northern Ontario Pipe Line Corporation*

even started, which was a most unique and significant happening in Canadian parliamentary history. We are now in the committee stage and are faced with the fact that clauses 1, 2 and 3 of the bill cannot be discussed. As hon. members know, if the first clause of a bill is foreclosed, to coin a phrase which has been used several times, it simply means that the questions you would like to ask in respect to financing cannot be asked.

Now we are getting around to a different type of closure which was proposed today by the Prime Minister. It really is not a different type of closure; it is the same old thing, but it has a rather shocking corollary.

I wonder if anyone really believes that the date of June 7 set out in the agreement between the government and Trans-Canada Pipe Lines was not put in at the instigation of the government. As hon. members know, the agreement provides that if the money is not voted by parliament by that date Trans-Canada Pipe Lines is not obligated to finish the job by the end of this year. Does the government really believe this is an excuse for the haste it is harping on at this time? No, not at all. This was merely an excuse by the government to use the device of closure in a new and vicious form so that debate on this bill could be cut down, and so an excuse could be found to prevent the reference of Bill No. 298 to a proper committee where all the devious and mysterious goings-on and activities behind this bill with Trans-Canada Pipe Lines could be brought to light.

Only before such a committee as that would hon. members of this house be able to find out the answers to a great many questions. For instance, we heard the hon. member for Middlesex East, my colleague say that a telegram had been received from a company in Welland saying that by the early part of next year they would be able to make 34-inch pipe, and we heard from the government that nobody could make this pipe except certain companies in the United States and so forth.

That is the kind of thing about which we would like to find out. Very few hon. members, apart from the Minister of Trade and Commerce and the Minister of Public Works and perhaps one or two others, are engineers. We are told that 34-inch pipe is the size of pipe that is necessary. Perhaps it is. I am not saying it is not; but if we could call witnesses before the committee, if this were referred to a committee, we could find out what would be the optimum size. Maybe some other size would be just as good, or it might be better to use two smaller sized

pipes. It might be more expensive, and again it might not. There are many questions like this to which we should like to know the answers. Unless the bill were referred to a committee, there is no possible way of finding out.

With all respect to the front bench of the government party—and I know quite well, as I have said, that some of them are engineers—nevertheless hon. members could find out the answers to these things if we were to call experts and get the opinion of other experts. I imagine some of these things are not necessarily facts but are very often matters of opinion.

Certain members on the government side have said that the Minister of Trade and Commerce gets things done, and that is why he should be allowed to go ahead with this. I believe the hon. member for Mount Royal in his speech the other night made that reference, and I know it is the attitude of many other hon. members opposite. It is the attitude of the senior member for Halifax and the hon. member for Waterloo North that the important thing is to get things done. That is their opinion, but it is not the opinion of other hon. members.

This excuse of expediency and efficiency all throughout history has cost the lives of democratic governments. If the only excuse were expediency and efficiency, hon. members would be well advised to set up the type of government they have in Russia and formerly had in nazi Germany. Those governments were certainly efficient and expedient but certain other things, which I think hon. members realize, were lost in the process. Throughout history we have had plenty of examples. I have some of them before me. I am not going to waste my time or the time of other hon. members of the house in quoting lengthy examples from history to show how expediency and efficiency have destroyed democratic governments in the past, but I should like to make one or two references, and I would point to the example of Athens, Rome and Venice, where they had democratic governments, and to the parallel case in England in the time of Oliver Cromwell.

I see there is a little time left before six o'clock, and I should like to refer to the experience of Athens. There is a remarkable parallel in the way Athens originally lost its democracy to the situation of today. I should like to refer to a book by Basil Hammond called "The Political Institutions of the Ancient Greeks." I shall quote briefly

[Mr. Nesbitt.]