

Inquiries of the Ministry

Trans-Canada Pipe Lines of deliberate pre-variation and misrepresentation in their undertakings to the Canadian government just a few months ago, can the minister give any enlightenment to the house as to just what is happening in these hearings relating to the proposal for this pipe line?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): That is exactly it, Mr. Speaker; the staff is entitled, and as a matter of fact has the duty, I presume, to present views to the commission. But it is common knowledge that the Federal Power Commission has no obligation to accept those views and often does not.

Mr. Thompson: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I am quite aware that this is an internal staff report; but the importance of such an accusation certainly reflects upon the government, and we are entitled to know whether the submission given to the government by Trans-Canada Pipe Lines is of the nature described.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton).

[Later:]

Mr. M. W. Martin (Timmins): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. It is supplementary to a question asked by the hon. member for Red Deer. In view of this alleged misrepresentation, I am wondering whether the minister has looked into the matter to see whether possibly the same thing has happened with regard to the advice that was given to him. I should also like to ask the minister, in view of the serious and quite probable outcome of such an allegation, whether the government is studying some alternative way of supplying gas to eastern Canada, such as the looping of the northern line?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): With respect to the first part of the question, namely whether there has been any foul play or not or whether what Trans-Canada Pipe Lines said to the F.P.C. was true or not, I think the hon. member would be well advised to look at my file which is now in his possession, as it was tabled in the house.

Mr. Martin (Timmins): That is what made me suspicious.

Mr. Pepin: The views of the hon. member are well known here, and I presume in [Mr. Thompson.]

Washington also. A judgment regarding the quality of the presentations of Trans-Canada Pipe Lines in this case has been made by the government and the presentations were found to be correct. The National Energy Board also expressed an opinion on the actions of Trans-Canada Pipe Lines and found them equally acceptable. The Federal Power Commission in the United States is of course entitled to take a different view. That is all I can say on the subject.

FINANCE**SUGGESTED AGREEMENT WITH PROVINCIAL TREASURERS ON DEPOSIT INSURANCE**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. E. D. Fulton (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I should like to revert to the matter upon which the Minister of Finance was questioned a few moments ago. Would the minister take advantage of the presence of the provincial treasurers to try to reach an agreement or conclusion with them on the matter of legislation regarding deposit insurance, because this matter is becoming of increasing urgency in the deliberations of the banking committee?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the consultations in that connection have for the time being been completed and the legislation has now been drafted, but not in a form that we considered satisfactory for presentation to the house. That is the only reason for the delay; it is not the need for further consultation at the present time.

BANKRUPTCY**NORTH AMERICAN GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY—REQUEST FOR INQUIRY TO RESTORE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. W. Monteith (Perth): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Finance. Due to the fact that many sound and reputable Canadian insurance companies have considered his statements both inside and outside the house yesterday as a grave injustice to their position in the financial community, I wonder whether he would care to make any clarification of what has been implied?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I regret that there seems to have been some misunderstanding of what took place yesterday in this house. Indeed I understand that the Montreal *Star* carried a headline that the North American Life Assurance