

looked at in perspective. The Yukon has faced many of these problems before and has had experience dealing with them. There is a population of 24,000 in the Yukon but each summer there is an influx of some 350,000 visitors. Foothills advise that at its peak construction period the maximum number of employees who will be working in the Yukon will be 2,200. If you add to that their families, the maximum number of people who will be resident in the Yukon specifically with respect to the pipeline will be some 5,000 people.

The Yukon has seen the construction of the Alaska Highway built with guts and tractors by the U.S. Army Corps. of Engineers. The work was begun in March 1942 and completed in nine months. In the early 1940s it saw the construction of the Canol pipeline, involving 1,600 miles of pipe and 1,000 miles of road. This cost \$137 million and took 20 months to complete, excavating beneath the permafrost through the Mackenzie mountains while at times temperatures fell to 70 degrees below zero. The construction of the Haines-Fairbanks pipeline took place in 1954-55. It was 620 miles long, with 292 miles in Canada, and carried 12,000 barrels a day. There are other projects as well. I mention these few examples to indicate that in the Yukon the residents and local authorities are able to cope with fairly substantial projects. These projects have had minimal impact and the area remains a relatively beautiful and virgin territory. The people in the Yukon are able to adapt.

My plea through you, Mr. Speaker, to the government is to give to the people of the Yukon, through their elected representatives, the power and responsibility to deal with and solve problems that arise as a result of the pipeline construction. Let us not see a massive influx of federal civil servants involving themselves in problems that can be dealt with by the people who are native to or who have lived in the north for many years, and who have the ability to understand and solve the problems associated with pipeline construction and development of the north.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to take part in what I consider this most important debate on Bill C-25, but it is with some concern that I see the government forging ahead with the debate on this bill before the National Energy Board has published the contents of its report. As we have always demonstrated, the energy matter is always a matter of big money, without regard for the environmental and socioeconomic aspects which we must learn to appreciate, as soon as possible, for our own survival. Had it not been for the foresight, the objectivity, and the rigor manifested by Justice Berger during his three-year inquiry on the environmental and socioeconomic effects of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline construction, once again, as a nation, we would have infringed on the individual freedom of natives, and caused irreparable damage on an extremely delicate environment to which we are total strangers.

The recommendations made by Justice Berger take into consideration the opinions put forth by the two main groups

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who fought this project, namely the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee and the Committee on Justice and Freedom. The former categorically requested abandonment of the project, while the latter argued for a ten-year moratorium on the entire question of northern development.

As we know, the commission of inquiry chaired by Justice Thomas R. Berger was set up in March 1974 as a result of the enormous difficulties, financial, technical and social, created by the project in which two companies, namely Arctic Gas and Foothills Pipeline, had already invested considerable amounts of money. Contrary to what usually happens, the commission took an active part in the debate during the meetings through advisors who repeatedly stressed that the applicants, that is the companies, were in a position to prove their claims, particularly where engineering and construction were concerned. For instance, the commission produced the theoretical testimony of Dr. P. Williams of Carleton University in Ottawa according to which the underground pipeline of the Arctic Gas would be subject to differential upheavals that could damage it seriously, and technical methods to reduce or avoid such continuous uplift of the buried and refrigerated pipeline were still in their infancy. To our mind, that was a weighty argument in favour of putting off the project to a later date.

From the social point of view, the methods used by Justice Berger to collect the testimony of the indigenous populations was also remarkable since, far from limiting himself to those of the inhabitants of big cities, the centres of economic and political power such as Yellowknife, Inuvik and Fort Smith, he went to the trouble of travelling 1,700 miles throughout the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, using all means of transport including the canoe and the dog sled, to listen to 1,317 witnesses in 300 days of public hearings and give an opportunity to the native Dénés and Inuit who represent most of the inhabitants of the towns and villages to state their opinion while the members of the commission paid close attention to them as if they were experts.

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The position of the natives on the pipeline is well summarized in a few words found on page 11 of the lengthy Berger report. It will cross lands that are claimed by Canada's native people, a region where the struggle for a new social and economic order and political responsibility is taking place.

Canadians remember that unhealthy incapacity of the federal government to remain unbiased in its decisions about the development of energy resources, an incapacity which we pointed out on several occasions and which is due to the fact that it is entirely dependent on oil companies for its information. Regarding this, Justice Berger was very critical in his report of government industry co-operative efforts. Although it is neither realistic nor financially feasible to duplicate all industry services, there is a solution to that basic problem. According to Mr. Lewis Auerbach, scientific advisor to the Science Council of Canada, it would be possible to selectively reproduce key data for the evaluation of projects put forward by the federal government.