

the development of power from the tides. He has made public statements in the past weeks and months to the effect that he is not entirely happy with the pace at which the federal government is becoming involved in this project. He wants to see the tempo of development quickened. I must say, however, that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) has been most co-operative, and there is now hope that, with the help of the minister, the pace of Fundy tidal power development will move more quickly and come to fruition within a reasonable period.

Throughout the period when tidal power was merely an abstract idea the leading newspapers of the Maritimes, the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* and the *Saint John Telegraph Journal* succeeded in keeping the project alive in the minds of their readership. There were dark days when skepticism almost overcame the region's enthusiasm, and these two newspapers materially aided in keeping the light burning.

Returning to the present, it is easy to see that we shall tread a difficult and costly road. Many unknown factors will need to be clarified over the next few years. I have already intimated that in our present Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources we have a man who has a real appreciation of the total energy problems facing our nation. We hope he will move ahead with this project. He has indicated, in his statements on the reviewing committee report, that he is not frightened by the complexities of Fundy tidal power and is willing to ally himself with our region if the new two-year study confirms the initial findings.

On December 4, 1974, an article in the *Chronicle Herald* bore the heading "France Only Site of Tidal Power Plant". It referred to the La Rance tidal power project in France. It is interesting to mention that the hon. member for Cumberland-Colchester North and I visited this project in France. Very likely we were among the first representatives of Canadian political agencies to visit it. May I quote from the article, as follows:

Engineers have long dreamed of harnessing the enormous energy in the rise and fall of the tides to generate electricity, but so far only one site—La Rance, on the coast of Brittany, France—is producing commercial power.

The huge sums of money required and technical problems stalled all other possible projects. However, soaring costs of producing energy from fossil fuels have renewed interest in harnessing tides to generate hydroelectric power, especially in eastern Canada.

After a Nova Scotia government delegation visited New York earlier this month for talks with the investment community on a variety of projects, *Business Week* magazine reported that Canada probably would move faster than any other country in the west on the tidal-power question.

The sponsor of the motion told us of the way in which supporters of tidal power had been welcomed by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and of the treatment they had been given by the department. This reminds one of what happened a number of years ago when President Franklin D. Roosevelt commissioned a study into the possibility of harnessing the tides of Passamaquoddy Bay, between Maine and Canada. Since Maine is about as far from Washington as Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are from Ottawa, the project came to nothing. It did not go ahead.

Fundy Tidal Power

I hope that what has happened in the past will not determine what is to happen in the future. You see, at one time it was held that what was good for General Motors was good for everybody. That is not necessarily so. It was thought at one time that what was good for Quebec and Ontario was good for B.C., P.E.I. and Nova Scotia. Often that was not the case. The Seaway was constructed at great public expense to help all this country, and there is no doubt but that the harnessing of the Fundy tides will be of great benefit to all this country.

● (1740)

Les Kirkpatrick, president of Nova Scotia Power Corporation, told *Business Week* he estimates tidal power would cost 15 mills a kilowatt hour at the Fundy site, roughly comparable to the cost of nuclear power. The hon. member for Wellington (Mr. Maine) spoke about nuclear power. For his information, proponents of this project contend the advantage of tidal hydro projects is that the fuel—the tides—is inflation-proof because it is free and renewable and, unlike river-based projects, tidal plants would not run short of water during droughts. They also say a tidal plant would have a life-span of at least 60 years, double or triple that of a nuclear or fossil-fueled plant.

I do not want to take up too much time and talk out this motion. I hope it will come to a vote. I appeal to hon. members to give consideration to the motion sponsored by the hon. member for Cumberland-Colchester North (Mr. Coates) along the lines he has suggested. The Canada Development Corporation should become financially involved in any way possible.

Another point I wish to make is that far too often, particularly in latter years, those in the government and some in the opposition have attempted to pluck the feathers of the American eagle and throw darts at the Americans. Who would say that we should not co-operate with them technically if they were willing to become financially involved in Fundy tidal power as long as we had complete control? I think it would be a good thing. We often boast about the undefended border from east to west which has no guards, soldiers and so on. However, we seem to like taking pot-shots at the Americans. I feel we should try to co-operate in projects of this nature. Is the hon. member in the back row trying to say something?

An hon. Member: I will in a few minutes.

Mr. Muir: I would rather he stayed seated on what brains he has rather than interject from his seat.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Muir: I am learning from the Liberals. However, I do not want to learn too much from them, especially from the new experts who came here in 1972 and 1974. They think they have forgotten more than the most senior members of this House will ever know. My good friend, the whip of the Liberal party, realizes the situation. I am sure he understands what is going on. In any event, I wish to take my seat—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!