

New energy supplies vital says Arctic Gas chairman

Canada must develop large new supplies of domestic energy to avoid the most serious economic problems that it has faced since the 1930s, according to the chairman of Canadian Arctic Gas Pipeline.

W.P. Wilder told a meeting of the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Montreal that the Canadian economy could potentially suffer most from the high cost of oil imports because it had the most energy-intensive economy in the world. He said this was due to climatic conditions, geography, the fact that many Canadian industries were intensive energy-users, and a high standard of living.

Production of conventional crude oil and natural gas from the western provinces — including expected new discoveries — would amount to only 30 per cent of Canadian requirements for these fuels by 1995, he estimated. Assuming no further increase in world oil prices, he said the resulting cost of net oil imports would amount to more than \$15 billion a year, equal to half the value of all Canadian exports in 1975.

More effective energy-conservation is essential, but increased supplies will still be required to avoid economic stagnation with resultant economic, social and even environmental problems, Mr. Wilder stated.

“To develop needed new energy supplies will require a major national effort, with capital expenditures of an unprecedented magnitude, and a careful ordering of national priorities,”

continued Mr. Wilder.

Gas from the Mackenzie Delta area, transported by the proposed Arctic Gas pipeline, can provide the largest single increase in domestic energy supplies at the lowest unit cost during the next decade, according to Mr. Wilder.

He estimated that the amount of Delta gas which could be supplied over a 22-year period would cost the Canadian economy nearly \$30 billion less than an equivalent volume of imported oil.

New gas reserves have been found in the Mackenzie Delta at a rate exceeding gas consumed in Canada during the past five years, he said. Given transportation facilities, he forecast that this rate of discovery would be at least maintained during the next decade.

But he warned that a failure to proceed with construction of a pipeline to transport Delta gas would inhibit northern exploration and frustrate the Government's aim of doubling frontier exploration expenditures during the next three years, to an annual rate of \$700 million.

“There can be no doubt that such increased exploration efforts are required now to meet our energy needs tomorrow,” he said. “Implicit in any such effort, however, is an assumption that the necessary pipeline facilities will be built. Who will spend three-quarters of a billion dollars a year to find new energy supplies unless it is assumed that the energy will be produced and transported?”

Industry to benefit from new medical engineering unit

A research and development organization to help Canadian manufacturers develop new medical instruments has been formed at the University of Toronto with the aid of a Federal Government grant of \$175,000 *per annum* for five years.

The new Biomedical Instrumentation Development Unit will be headed by Professor Norman F. Moody, the founder and former director of the Institute of Biomedical Engineering. The initial grant from the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce will assist with the establishment and operation of the unit.

The new unit, which is expected to become financially self-supporting by 1982, will enable commercial manufacturers to benefit from the expertise of the University's Institute of Biomedical Engineering where research and teaching in medical engineering has been carried out for more than a decade.

“Canada's health-care system absorbs an enormous sum in the purchase of electronic and mechanical instruments ranging from simple surgical clamps to complex brain scanners,” said Professor Moody. “Most of this equipment is imported, but now we can help Canadian manufacturers develop a profitable home and export market.”

The new unit has access to doctors and electrical and mechanical engineers who combine to produce new medical instruments and carry out clinical evaluations.

Manitoba moves towards improved health facilities under new five-year \$135.1-million program

The Health and Social Development Minister of the Manitoba provincial government, Laurent L. Desjardins, announced last month further details of a \$135.1-million capital program over five years for the construction of health facilities, of which \$91.3 million will be spent in Winnipeg, Manitoba's capital, and \$43.8 million in rural Manitoba.

The program includes the construction of 1,580 personal-care beds, 607 of which will be replacements. Of the net increase — 973 — rural Manitoba

will receive 492 and Winnipeg 481.

While there may appear to be a disproportionate distribution of capital funds between rural areas and urban Winnipeg, said Mr. Desjardins, it must be remembered that roughly one-third of Winnipeg acute-care facilities were providing services to non-Winnipeg residents.

The program is consistent with three major aims:

- to relieve pressure on the waiting list for personal-care accommodation causing improper use of hospital faci-

lities in the province;

- to enable Manitoba to move towards lower-cost alternative programs, in line with discussions with the Federal Government relating to proposed changes in cost-sharing agreements;
- to allow Manitoba to claim its full allocation of \$19 million under the Health Resources Fund Act and, in fact, perhaps obtain funds in excess of this allocation, since there is provision for extra funds for those projects that can be demonstrated as “having national significance”.