the need for prompt and related actions by consumers, producers, governments and other public authorities. It is interesting to note that coal can be mined, moved and used in most areas in ways that conform to high standards of health, safety and environmental protection by the application of available technology and without unacceptable increases in cost. The present knowledge of possible carbon dioxide effects on the climate does not justify delaying the expansion of coal use.

Coal is already competitive in many locations for the generation of electricity and for many industrial and other uses. It will extend further into these and other markets as oil prices rise. The technology for mining, moving and using coal is well established and steadily improving. Technological advances in combustion, gasification and liquefaction will greatly widen the scope for the environmentally acceptable use of coal in the 1990s and beyond. Finally, the conclusions of the world study indicate that the amount of capital required to expand the production, transport and user facilities to triple the use of coal is within the capacity of domestic and international capital markets, though difficulties in financing large coal projects in some developing countries may require special solutions. Of course the protection of the environment remains one of the primary considerations in any decision to go ahead with large-scale coal development and use. The problem of acid rain can be met through the application of methods now becoming available to limit the release of sulphur and nitrogen compounds. The technology exists.

In co-operation with the provinces interested in coal, we are negotiating an improved agreement on coal technology with the United States department of energy. The Government of Canada was a party to the "Principles for Global Action re: Coal" adopted by the governing board of the International Energy Agency in 1979. It is heartening to the government that our support of these principles was, in the words of the Coal Association of Canada, "adequately representative of the views of the association", and as such they adopted them as a statement of their own policy. So, reality is far removed from the substance of tonight's motion.

In closing I should like to mention that my department is seeking ways to stimulate the educational institutions of this land so that they might begin again to produce qualified Canadians in the very important field of coal mining engineering. Last Friday I participated in a seminar where it was brought out that there are no real coal engineering schools in existence in this country; if we need a real coal expert we have to go to England or the United States, and if we want to train some of our mining engineers specifically in the field of coal we must send them offshore. I think this is a shame. Canada produces many hard-rock miners, but unfortunately there are major differences in both mining technology and in safety considerations when one enters a coal mine. I would hope that through our research station plant in the Cape Breton area we would develop some sort of training at the higher level, as well as at the mining level, for those in the trades. We have relied on foreign expertise for the most part in this field but clearly the future trend now suggests our emphasis in this area must change and our universities must meet the challenge, as I am confident they will.

● (2100)

In the near future—not later than the mid-1980s—a comprehensive international market for coal will be operating. The maturing of the international market for energy coal will yield a new international energy reference price. How Canada chooses to react as a supplier in this emerging international market will have important implications for the stability of that market and important implication for the resilience and depth of Canada's own energy supply capabilities. The Canadian government has not and will not abdicate its responsibility to take a leading role.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Lethbridge-Foothills rises on a point of order. I might point out that the time of the hon. minister has almost expired and there are many other members wishing to be recognized.

Mr. Thacker: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister knows that in Lethbridge-Foothills Petro-Canada is developing a test mine in coal. We have millions of tons of low sulphur coal. My question, which I wonder whether she would consider answering, is: what is the minister and her department doing to encourage the Ontario government, which presently imports over 20 million tons of high sulphur coal from the United States, to switch that to importing low sulphur, Alberta coal, something which would provide part of the answer to our trade balance deficit, as well as to the acid rain situation?

Mrs. Erola: Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the hon. member that Ontario, indeed, has been discovering its own coal and that at the present time our own CANMET is co-operating with the Onakawana Company to investigate the possibility of an electrical generating plant very close to the source. They will probably be operating within five years.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, one is tempted in the course of a debate on energy policy in general, especially speaking at the end of the day as I do, to take time to refute many of the things that have been said over the course of the debate, particularly by members on the government side.

Perhaps all I will do in commenting on the debate thus far is to congratulate the government on a well-arrayed barrage of papers prepared by the civil service, by the officials in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources for the various Liberal members who have spoken today. It has been a fine display of how the bureaucracy runs the government in this country.

As the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) mentioned earlier this afternoon, we thought it appropriate in a debate on energy that a particular topic which has not received very much attention in this House be at least brought up during the course of the debate today. My responsibility is to say a few words about the whole question of nuclear power. In my view, any debate on energy policy would have a fatal