

*Fundy Tidal Power*

of the Fundy tidal power, we will have not just a regional grid but a national grid.

When our party was in office, initiatives were undertaken by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) to make such a national grid a reality. Discussions lay in abeyance for a number of years, but have been resurrected and are now actively under consideration again, so that the power that would be produced from the tides of Fundy—which at one time could only be used in the south, in the United States—could now probably be used in other parts of Canada, making the undertaking a Canadian project of benefit to Canadians not just in the Atlantic area but in Quebec and Ontario.

Perhaps one of the reasons the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance in the last debate that we had on this matter indicated a willingness to line up with Atlantic Canada in the efforts to secure this undertaking is that he could see that in the long run, because of the many problems with which Canada was concerned east of the Ottawa Valley regarding the securing of a ready and reliable power pool, it would be able to benefit from the undertaking which I anticipate will come much sooner than was originally expected. It has been a long road to the point where we are in history today, as far as the Fundy tidal power is concerned. I am especially pleased to see my colleague, the hon. member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys (Mr. Muir) in the House because, like myself, he has advocated for a long time this method of securing power for the maritime provinces. We have been together on many joint undertakings which we hoped would further the cause of this particular development.

In December of 1974, the hon. member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys and I had the pleasure and opportunity of assisting Mr. Robert Monks, director of the department of energy and resources in the state of Maine, Mr. Stanley Tupper, former congressman, ambassador to Canada and counsellor for the state of Maine, Dr. Charles Berg, associated with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, and Dr. Mary Webster, also associated with the directorate of the department of energy and resources in the state of Maine, at meetings with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and a number of other officials in Ottawa. At those meetings, not only was the Fundy tidal power discussed but also the possibility of developing power from the Dicky-Lincoln complex in the main and, as a further alternative, harnessing the power that is available at Passamaquoddy Bay.

These undertakings are all bilateral in that both Canada and the United States have to be involved in a very direct way. They are very important because both northeastern United States and eastern Canada must determine how we are going to use the resources we have to produce the power we require to guarantee that we will not freeze in the dark in the days ahead. Because we do not have the guaranteed oil potential of western Canada, we must look to other projects which will give us the same kind of protection which oil in the west guarantees that part of Canada.

[Mr. Coates.]

● (1710)

I think that at all times we must consider our relationships with our friendly neighbour to the south and work out ways and means whereby we can be of assistance to each other, because the energy problem existing in Canada also exists in the United States. We have for a long time been great friends and great partners in developments of value and benefit to both nations. It saddens me at times to think that while we as Canadians went to the United States in the fifties and sixties and tried to convince them that they could assist us in the development of our oil resources by taking from us certain amounts of oil in order to allow us to develop our resources, today we are telling the same people, whom we convinced would have an assured market for oil from Canada, that maybe they cannot have the oil, and maybe this and maybe that and maybe something else. This is a far cry from what we told them in the days when we were trying to sell them our oil because we needed to do so in order to guarantee that we had an industry in western Canada. I hope that by looking at alternative resources and alternate means of producing the energy required, we can produce an over-all power pool by a combination of various means of energy resources which are available to all of us and which will benefit both countries.

Only last week Mr. Tupper made a determination on the availability of any surplus power resources we might have which would be of benefit to the northern United States. They have to make long-term decisions. They have to know if there will be surplus resources available to them and, if there are not, they have to know how they are going to handle the problem of producing the power they require in the days ahead. So it is important that we work together. It is also important, from Canada's point of view, to look at Fundy tidal power as a very unique type of long-term investment which will be of fantastic benefit, not just to the Atlantic provinces, not just to all of Canada but from an external point of view as well because there can be little doubt that this type of power will be developed around the world.

While the hon. member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys and I visited the La Rance tidal power project and looked at power possibilities associated with the harnessing of the tides there, and while we appreciated that it was a pilot-type project, we were also impressed when the director of that installation told us that that power project—which employed a type of construction which would not be acceptable today, certainly not acceptable in Fundy, and was very expensive from every point of view—has nevertheless shown that it can produce power and make a profit. If that is the case, there is no doubt that the tides of Fundy, with the highest tides in the world—around 53 feet—will produce power in the kind of volume which will make it feasible and a great asset to Canada.

But it will do more than that; it will provide our people with expertise in what is now a unique form of tidal power production. It will give them engineering expertise which will be important and useful. If our businessmen are as good as I think they are, they will use this development to produce a program of ways and means of selling our expertise to other parts of the world where it will also be useful. I think that apart from the federal government,