

*Request for Bay of Fundy Tidal Power Study*

stands as an example of what we in the Maritime provinces can do if when we are elected to this Parliament we place the problems of our area ahead of partisan politics and endeavour to accomplish what we all believe will be in the best interests of the people of our area.

I believe that the parliamentary committee, which is non-governmental but is composed of every member from the province of New Brunswick, every member from the province of Prince Edward Island and every member from the province of Nova Scotia, is an indication to the people of the Maritimes that with or without Maritime union we can do much to convince our people and the government, whatever government it might be, that we are determined to solve our own problems, wherever that is possible, by utilizing our own resources wherever they are available. I hope the same approach will be taken to offshore mineral rights as has been taken to Fundy tides. I say that our accomplishments to date, although we are not yet building the dams that will harness the waters that will produce the power, represent a tremendous step forward in the re-examination that is to be carried out.

I can foresee in the very near future the dams being built that will harness the tides that will produce the power that will make the Maritime provinces a "have" area of this nation—not an area that is worried about equalization payments, but an area like Ontario that is more concerned about having to pay additional revenues into the federal treasury to be used in other parts of this nation; because we will no longer be a "have not" area but will be a "have" area and will be able to contribute more than we receive from the federal treasury. It will be quite all right with me when that time comes.

I want to make it positive and clear that so far as Fundy tides are concerned, as Members of Parliament we want every bit of useful information produced to help make a definitive decision. We hope when all the facts are put together they will indicate that the federal government, in co-operation with the private sector of this country, should harness these tides and produce energy. But in order to do this I believe we must consider certain things that the original examination did not take into consideration. One of the matters that unfortunately did not receive the careful attention it warranted concerns what the power produced from the tides would do for the over-all electrical energy system in the Maritime provinces. In other words, Mr. Speaker, those who initially examined the possibilities of harnessing the tides looked too much at what the energy output from Fundy alone would be, rather than examining it from a system point of view within the Maritime provinces.

• (4:10 p.m.)

Fundy tides produce a unique type of power that is best used from a peaking point of view. In other words, they produce a type of power that when placed into the grid is most useful at a time when large volumes of power are required in large sectors of the Maritime provinces or the northeastern United States. This power is not of a value similar to firm power which can be produced in other ways and is saleable at a much cheaper rate than peak power.

[Mr. Coates.]

It is contended that the input of Fundy power into a grid system provides a type of power, expensive from the point of view of saleability, that would bring great dividends both to our nation and to the industrial community of the northeastern United States. Today we are aware that there is a great desire on the part of the utilities of the northeastern United States to secure additional power. They need it badly because they are facing black-outs and grayouts. Fundy has that power. All we have to do is harness the tides and the market is available.

In determining whether we should harness these tides and supply that market we must discover what the cost will be. We should not be rating the value of this power as compared with firm power; we should be rating it as a unique type of power saleable at a much higher rate. It is in demand to a greater degree than the firm power that can be produced from thermal or hydro energy.

The Americans want to buy our power, but as Canadians naturally we must think of Canada first, and we as Maritimers must first consider what this power can do for our region. At the same time, however, we must accept the fact that initially more power will be generated than we can use. We must also accept the fact that a market is available for it, and indeed we should be negotiating now with the power utilities of the northeastern United States to determine the extent of that market and the value of the power to be produced when the tides are harnessed.

I contend that when we examine what is available from the American point of view in the northeastern United States, coupled with what is now available and will be available in the future in the Maritime provinces, we will find that there is plenty of power to assist both areas at the same time. We will also find that we can look forward to a degree of industrialization in the Maritime provinces that has not yet been imagined. We will also be able to assist in solving a serious problem in the northeastern United States. The great value of this power is that it is pollution free. There is no great danger to the ecology of the Maritime provinces from the harnessing of these tides. There are none of the forbidding drawbacks associated with nuclear energy.

I believe that at the earliest date possible we should get this committee moving and have it examine the papers prepared for the International Conference on the Utilization of Tidal Power. We should do it today rather than the day after tomorrow. I hope that the government is now negotiating with the governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to arrange for the re-examination of the programming board's report.

I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that the personnel who produced the original report should be re-examining it. That would put us in the same position as the private who appealed the decision of a corporal to a sergeant to determine whether it was right, and had it confirmed. The sergeant appealed it to a lieutenant, who confirmed it was right and appealed it to a captain, who confirmed it was right, who appealed it to a major who confirmed it was right. In other words, you get into the position where everybody is confirming what you said was right. I should like new people to examine the programming