

doing in terms of specifics to implement the National Energy Program.

● (2205)

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, very clearly, that there is great difference between the energy program as it applies to eastern Canada and as it applies to western Canada. In western Canada it is the problem of the effect of the National Energy Program on the activities of the oil industry which has played so vital a role in the development of that part of Canada. On the east coast, which is supposedly the beneficiary of the program, we have found that the consumer is no better off now than before the program was announced.

There are a number of items of very special interest to us; first, the natural gas pipeline extension to the east coast which is tied up in National Energy Board procedures. We were told that the matter would be heard in January. It is now near the end of February and the matter has not yet been heard. No approval has been granted and not one inch of pipeline has been constructed to the east coast. We were told there would be coal development under the National Energy Program. It is the end of February and the assistance for the development of the Donkin and Prince mines in Cape Breton, which have been delayed for almost three years now, is only now being announced. Tidal power, which is so important to the long-term future of east coast energy supplies and our ability to export energy to the very important regions of the northeastern United States, is not even mentioned in the National Energy Program.

The very day I asked the minister a question he expressed interest in tidal power. I am not sure he knew just what it was but I hope he will find out, since tidal power is very much a part of the future of the east coast. We have the offshore development, which I have mentioned many times in this House. In fact, the federal-provincial dispute is impeding the development of offshore resources. I have no better proof than an article which indicated an exchange between the Newfoundland representatives and representatives of Mobil Oil. I want to know some of the answers. I want to know how the government will implement the National Energy Program.

**Mr. Roy MacLaren (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, these nocturnal exchanges with the member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby) are becoming something of a tradition in this House. I am glad to have a further opportunity to discuss with him measures being taken in the Atlantic region under the National Energy Program.

Of course, we recognize that the Atlantic region is totally dependent on offshore oil supplies. The National Energy Program, therefore, provides this area with a variety of special measures over and above those available to other regions of Canada.

For example, the federal government is prepared to act to resolve regulatory issues in an expeditious manner so that construction of the natural gas pipeline to the Atlantic region

### *Adjournment Debate*

may begin as soon as possible. In the National Energy Program the hon. member opposite will recognize that the federal government has clearly stated it supports the gas pipeline to the maritimes. To ensure its financial feasibility the government has initiated the following measures: One, the city-gate price of natural gas in maritime communities will be the same as in Toronto; two, a contingency fund of up to \$500 million will be available to assist in financing the pipeline if it is necessary; three, grants of up to \$800 will be available to consumers converting from oil heating to gas heating; and four, grants will be available to distribution companies to assist them in developing gas markets.

● (2210)

In the area of conservation, special programs for the Atlantic provinces will provide grants to industrial and commercial firms to help finance the operation of their energy conservation investments.

Another important initiative for the Atlantic provinces is the utility off-oil program designed to reduce the amount of oil used to generate electricity in the Atlantic region and, consequently, reduce current and future electricity costs. The lowest cost alternatives are conversions of some existing oil-fired plants to coal, increased use of hydro power from Quebec, and regional use of power from the Point Lepreau nuclear station in New Brunswick.

Another program will be directed toward the increase of coal for the energy supply of Atlantic Canada by supporting the development of new coal utilization technologies up to the commercial application stage. Closely associated with the coal utilization package is a coal research and development program.

I could cite a number of other examples of initiatives under the energy program which will ensure a secure energy future for the people of the Atlantic region.

### THE CONSTITUTION—QUERY RESPECTING TELEGRAM FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA ECCLESIASTICS

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday I rose in the House to ask a question on the Constitution as it affects group rights. I pointed out to the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development (Mr. Chrétien) that he had received a telegram from the archbishop's office of the archdiocese of Vancouver signed by all the bishops of British Columbia and the Yukon. In part it read as follows:

In our opinion the imbalance between individual and collective rights in the proposed Canadian charter poses a threat to many groups and societies including the church and church-related societies such as schools, hospitals and social agencies.

The point, in fact, is that these people are correct in their view of this major omission in the Constitution. I think it points out the fact the government, in its haste to try to ram this Constitution through Parliament, made certain that many of the groups would not be able to appear before the committee. There were probably hundreds of groups and individuals