

the possibility of utilizing solar energy as one of the renewable energy sources available to us. This, however, will not be the major source in the renewable field, even if nuclear energy, which in some of its aspects is a renewable source, is excluded. The best prospect of its contributing to our energy needs is that it might in 15 years provide about one per cent.

My argument, however, is not on that point. If Parliament is asked to incorporate an institute in the solar energy field, surely we can then expect similar bills to incorporate institutes in all the other areas of renewable energy, such as bio-mass—which is the use of agricultural and forest waste—wind energy, geothermal energy, hydraulic energy, tidal energy, and so on. So the first question that arises is: Are bills to be introduced requesting Parliament to incorporate institutes for each of these sources of energy? In my opinion, the question indicates the absurdity of the suggestion and, therefore, the absurdity of the bill now before us.

The fact of the matter is that this institute could be incorporated as a viable entity by going down to the city hall with \$5 and making out the necessary papers. The more usual manner in which to proceed, of course, would be through the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and an application for a regular charter. So I ask: Why is this bill necessary? Perhaps the answer will be that this is a private member's bill. This private member is very popular and hard-working, and perhaps this was a consolation prize to him for some other disappointments he may have had. We cannot object to that very much, except that we face a continual problem of criticism from the public, and from the public service itself, that the legislative process is so slow and the legislative calendar so cluttered up with important bills that it is necessary from time to time to take such shortcuts as \$1 items in the supplementary estimates—that is, amending bills by \$1 items—and so on. When we inquire as to the reason, we are invariably told that it takes too long for a bill to pass through Parliament. Well, somehow time has been found to pass this bill, and present it to us.

Then there is the question: What purpose will this bill serve? The sponsor gave us a partial answer. He said this institute will be a bridge between the private sector research in this field and government research. I wonder if it will.

First of all, is there any necessity for another institute to do this? We already have a very substantial presence of both the private and public sectors in the field of solar energy. The government alone has expended about \$10 million, and we have a complete establishment set up within government at this very time in this particular area. That establishment is spread among the NRC, which is involved in solar energy research, and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and its research program in respect of renewable resources, as well as programs within the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Fisheries and the Environment. In the private sector, believe it or not, there now exists the Solar Energy Society of Canada. It is in place. So, I ask why it is necessary to have another institute. It may be that it is

necessary but, again, why should this sort of thing take up the time of Parliament?

Senator Hicks raised the very important question of the relationship of this institute to the NRC. He is, perhaps, a more staunch defender of NRC's areas of jurisdiction than I am. We are both members of the Science Policy Committee, and I certainly respect his views. I agree with his concern in this particular area. It does not appear in the bill as presented, but the sponsor went much further than to say this institute would be merely a bridge; he went so far as to say that this institute would take over all responsibility, both government and private sector, in this field. I wonder if that is so, but that was the statement he made. The bill was passed by the other place, so a case could be made that Parliament is giving this institute the right to take over all responsibility for solar research. Is that the intention?

The question also arises as to whether this is a government bill. It is not a government bill in the strict sense, but has it the support of the government? Is the government in favour of the establishment of this institute in this particular way? The answer, I think, is yes, because the sponsor was able to thank two ministers for their statements—once again, statements of the kind that we can expect from ministers in the other place—that they would agree to second reading of the bill and agree to have it referred to committee. That, in fact, took place, and the bill underwent some revision in committee.

The proposed objects of the institute are to carry out research, to receive assistance from government, and to acquire and expend moneys. Clause 5 makes it very clear that none of the expenses of the institute shall be a charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Obviously, the bill could not have been introduced as a private member's bill had it entailed a charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

So, what is this institute? It is not a government institute. There is some government sponsorship. We have claims as to its jurisdiction which seem to be contradictory. Again I ask: Why this bill? Is it a precedent? Is it a precedent that we will regret? Certainly, I think we would regret it if an honourable senator with a particular interest, let us say, in tidal energy were to rise in the Senate and request the first reading of a bill to set up an Institute for Tidal Energy Research in Canada.

Senator Hicks also raised an interesting question as to the draftsmanship of this bill. In fairness to Senator Austin, I believe he did agree that the draftsmanship was very deficient. If we pass the bill in its present form, which I hope we will not, it will put us in the absurd position of having incorporated, by act of Parliament, an institute with 12 to 25 directors but no members. As Senator Hicks pointed out yesterday, there is no provision whatever—not a word—in the bill to say who can or who should be members. Senator Austin did suggest that that is one matter that can be corrected when the bill is in committee. It will at least give us an opportunity in the Senate to put an amendment, not to a Commons bill but to one of our own, on the record, which will be another mark on the wall for Senate achievement. We are always very reluctant, I would almost say afraid, to amend Commons bills, but at least we