

will see the cost of the average home heating bill. But if we look at what it would cost four years hence to heat with electricity—and this is the argument that the hon. member for Vaudreuil was making—we find the cost moves from \$680 today, with oil, to \$965 four years from now. If the person improves the insulation in the home and achieves a 25 per cent reduction in the amount of energy required to heat the home, the cost comes to \$725, which is very little over the cost of heating with oil today. The important thing is that the national energy program is designed to convert a significant number of homes across the country from heating oil to electricity and, especially, natural gas.

Even staying with heating oil, the price under the national energy program is \$1,280 compared to \$1,930 at the world price. If the CHIP program is employed and there is a reduction in the amount of energy used then we come out under the national energy program with \$960 for heating for the average home. The program was designed to switch to natural gas and to increase the supply available to homes across the country, such as those in many parts of northern Ontario which do not presently have natural gas available. The program will provide incentives to furnish that supply to many communities which are not presently served. Under the natural gas heating regime four years hence the heating costs will be some \$710 for a typical home. If increased insulation is applied the cost will be \$525, less, in fact, than the cost of heating a home using an oil-fired furnace. So, I think that the argument that the hon. member for Vaudreuil is making, which is that we should be considering using more electricity for space heating, is important, certainly in provinces like Ontario where we have a surplus of electricity and in the province of Quebec where vast supplies are being brought on stream and where there is such an excellent opportunity to use electric heat.

In the period from 1925 to 1963 a tax was imposed on exports of electricity. I understand it was in the realm of .03 cents per kilowatt hour of electricity. Of course, the volume was quite low then compared with what it is now, and the revenues realized were not very great, but today, as I indicated in presenting the figures earlier, some \$738 million are realized by domestic utilities which, of course, has a very good effect on the cost of the electricity used in the country.

● (1730)

If we look at the actual production of electricity across the country and the number of exports, it is interesting to note we exported some 30 billion kilowatts of power in 1979, whereas during the same period of time we imported some 1.792 billion kilowatts of power. I understand that in the first seven months of 1980 imports rose to 2.2 billion kilowatts of power. So the question of the export of electricity is a very important matter. It seems to me that as we move to greater use of electricity, natural gas, biomass and waste from forest products for domestic heating, we will probably be exporting less electricity and using more domestically, avoiding these exports.

Power Lines

Such exports could in fact be displacing heating oil along with natural gas and other domestically produced fuel sources because one of the objectives of the national energy program is to reduce the amount of oil used across the country by conversion to electricity, natural gas and other sources, and renewable resources as well, to the extent that heating oil would account for some 10 per cent of the use of energy in domestic heating and commercial and industrial uses. Thus we would save some 375,000 barrels of oil a year if we were able to effect that kind of conversion and the replacement of heating oil by products like electricity and natural gas during this decade. I think that is a very important target. It is one which I hope we can meet because along with conservation it can have a very dramatic effect in moving us away from the use of oil and toward other more plentiful sources such as electricity.

So, I hope the hon. member for Vaudreuil will be given these documents which relate directly to exports of electricity from the province of Quebec to the United States, in particular to the state of New York.

Mr. Ralph Ferguson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State, Small Businesses): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us today relating to high tension electrical lines crossing the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers deals with a relatively technical subject which involves an element of government regulation. I am very familiar with such crossings, because in the county of Lambton, which is my home county, a similar high tension line crosses the St. Clair River into the state of Michigan, feeding into the Detroit-Edison grid network from the Lambton generating plant, which is a coal-fired generating plant in Ontario.

I am pleased to note that in this particular instance the government regulation seems to work. The two projects in question required approval by the federal government, and that approval was obtained by Hydro-Quebec in a short time with a minimum of bureaucratic effort.

The legislation which requires approval for the two power lines is consolidated in the Navigable Waters Protection Act. The NWPA, as the act is known, is administered by the federal Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) and is designed to protect the public right of navigation.

The act prohibits the construction or placing of any work in, upon, over, under, through or across any navigable water unless the work and the site and plans have been approved by the minister upon such terms and conditions as the minister sees fit. Volume III of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1927 first interpreted the word "work" to include telegraph or power cables or wire. Such structures from that point in time required the approval of the minister—at that time the minister of public works—where placement of same was contemplated over any navigable waterway in Canada.

In this case, Hydro-Quebec submitted two separate applications to the then minister of transport for approval of a 735 kv transmission line at two separate locations. These applications are described as follows: