

*Renewable Resources*

in the product development for projects such as solar or wind installations and the like.

Last year the House asked a number of its members to form a task force to bring forward a report on energy alternatives. It has been referred to as the Lefebvre report, but it is actually entitled, "Energy Alternatives". The report was made. It contained some 65 recommendations to assist Canada in attaining energy self-sufficiency through the help of renewable energy.

• (1600)

Perhaps I might read a paragraph from that report made by the chairman, the hon. member for Pontiac-Gatineau-Labelle (Mr. Lefebvre). He said:

Canada has the resources to be a leader in global energy transition. In this century we have the opportunity not only to secure our own energy future, but also to export new energy technologies we develop along the way. We appreciate that this transformation of our energy system will not be easily achieved, and our recommendations reflect the magnitude of the effort required. We are, however, optimistic that with a concerted effort, and enthusiastic and sustained commitment, the task can be accomplished.

I agree entirely with that statement. Canada has the potential to attract many interested citizens to use those renewable energies which exist under our lands, on our lands and in the sky. The 65 recommendations should be acted upon by the government as quickly as possible. It is my hope that some of the private member's bills which I have introduced will assist to that end. I have reviewed the update to the National Energy Program which was tabled in the House by the minister last week. He has said that many of the committee's recommendations are already being implemented. For example, he said that:

—the Government of Canada has greatly increased funding for research and development in the areas of conservation, renewables and synthetic fuels.

I hope that this is true. However, I am not as optimistic as is the minister that all these recommendations are being put into place in rapid succession. I feel that much more could be done. It is my hope that the department will move quickly to implement those recommendations.

As one reads through the recommendations it can be seen that Canadians have much to be optimistic about. It is evident that the committee and the task force have done an excellent job. It is desirable that these studies be conducted in order to show the potential of renewables. We must persuade the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) to assist in implementing and selling these ideas.

This bill will not require any extra effort by the officials or even additional manpower in any department. All that is suggested by the bill is to have the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Department of the Environment and the Department of Agriculture insist that while their officials plan and implement their surveys, they look for the potential of renewable energy in Canada at the same time. I believe it is a relatively simple request.

When I phoned officials at the geological survey branch of Energy, Mines and Resources, I discovered that they have been conducting many of these surveys for some time. They have indicated the potential of hydroelectricity—which is a renewable energy—within their surveys. The Department of

Agriculture has been conducting surveys on biomass. The Department of Environment has conducted surveys on wind conditions around airports due to their effect on airplanes. There are surveys from the Department of Forestry with respect to the potential in that area. I am uncertain as to whether the committee mentioned surveys conducted on available heat units from the sun.

People who would like access to that information might have difficulty finding out which department to get that information from in the first place, and it is not in any usable form, in any event. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources makes the information which it has from its surveys on oil and gas potential available to the private industry as well as to Petro-Canada. That information is analysed and conveyed to the industry. No such analysis is conducted on potential renewable energies such as wind or biomass, which can be made available to Canadians so they may realize the potential of these resources. This information is unavailable for many towns as well. There are many towns on the prairies which have difficulty finding water if they are not close to a river.

We know that in the early 1960s the minister, who was at that time the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton), commenced an extensive survey of the prairies under the ARDA program to determine what the ground water sources were in that region for use in the agricultural and other industries. As a result of those surveys, many towns which are now looking for water sources use that information because it is available in the department. I believe that some towns in Saskatchewan have used that information and have found fresh water sources from aquifers below.

New heat pumps are being developed. One has been developed by the National Research Council and is now going to the testing stage so it can be approved by the Canadian standards agency and made available to Canadians. That heat pump will have the capacity to take the heat from water and turn it into air heat to heat our homes. This would present a great advantage to many rural communities in Canada. In order to make use of this development we would need to know, for example, the sources of ground water below our surface as well as its temperature in order to determine whether it would be viable to drill a well. It would also be important to determine if we can return the cooled water so it can again be reheated underground. That is an example of the kind of survey which can be conducted and made available to Canadians through these proposed changes to this bill.

I am sure that the same kind of aquifers exist all across Canada. Perhaps many wells have already been drilled in Ontario, the maritimes and British Columbia for which that information is already available. This information would be very valuable if our officials were to collect the data and condense it into usable form.

In the United States a number of years ago the renewable energy proposals that were introduced by the administration at that time were taken very seriously. Officials there came up