

National Energy Board Act

example, I know that a great deal of trouble has been experienced in the northern parts of the Soviet Union in the building of pipelines. The same thing is happening in Alaska, where in the experiments and survey work which has been undertaken exceptional problems have been encountered.

I feel that putting such a provision into the act would give the Energy Board much more power in defining exactly how, where and when a pipeline or other means of energy transmission should be built. I am convinced that before too long we will have to draft other legislation and other codes to protect our northern ecology. I believe that we cannot strengthen this act enough, and that we cannot make it too clear to the companies who will build these lines and exploit our resources that we in Canada will insist on very high standards being met and that we have a real policeman set-up in the members of the Energy Board, who will insist on proper standards being met and maintained in the interests of Canada generally.

We do not oppose the bill. I just felt that this provision would tighten up the bill. I thought this was the time to make the few remarks I have made, in the hope that the minister, perhaps in another session when amendments are moved, will consider bringing in a similar provision and will tighten up some of the other clauses to make absolutely certain that we protect fully the precious ecology of our Arctic areas.

Mr. P. M. Mahoney (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, I also wish to take only a few moments because I know the anxiety of hon. members opposite to get home. The comments which I wish to make principally relate to the increase in number of members of the National Energy Board members, from five to seven, as provided in clause 2 of the bill. The increasing importance of petroleum as a primary source of energy for the world is, I think, recognized in this increase. Petroleum, natural gas and crude oil are now providing 62.6 per cent of the primary energy of the free world. In Canada, the figures are even more impressive. Oil is providing 47.6 per cent, natural gas 18.4 per cent, making a total of 66 per cent. The other two main sources are coal, at 11.1 per cent, and hydro power at 22.8 per cent.

One of the criticisms of the Energy Board as presently constituted, a criticism that has been directed at it principally from the petroleum industry, is the shortage of people on the board who have experience in that

[Mr. Harding.]

industry. At present it is suggested that only one of the five members has a background in this industry, and his was derived in service on the Petroleum Natural Gas Conservation Board of Alberta. In other words, he too came up through the public service, as have most of the board members.

The increase in the number of members on the board from five to seven presents a very clear challenge to the people in the industry who have been criticizing the board. Here are two vacancies which, certainly on the basis of the importance of petroleum and natural gas in our energy picture in Canada, representing as they do something like 66 per cent of energy production, provide an opportunity for people in the industry to step forward and make themselves available to perform a function of public service that is necessary and desirable and will certainly add a great deal to the knowledge and expertise of the board.

How many of the people who are critical of the board from time to time are prepared to take a cut in salary to \$20,520 a year will be a question that we will look forward to answering with interest if any of them choose to ask it. However, I think that in light of the criticism that the industry has levelled at the board over a period of time, very clear opportunities are now being presented to it. Also, there is a real challenge to the industry and to public-spirited people in the industry to stand up and be counted and say that they are available to serve the public.

I would note in closing, and with a degree of regret, that while I do not feel all government departments can possibly be decentralized out of the national capital region, a board such as this might very well be located in the province of Alberta. Even though the distance between the two cities is only 180 miles, the provincial government has chosen to locate the Petroleum Natural Gas Conservation Board in Calgary rather than Edmonton. It seems to me it would be appropriate, if the federal government is at all serious about the indications of decentralization that have been made over the years, for it to give serious consideration to establishing this board in Calgary.

• (5:10 p.m.)

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to delay the passage of this bill, but I wanted to place on the record a small caveat and at least a whisper of concern on behalf of the Atlantic provinces, British Columbia, the