

*Adjournment Debate*

## ENERGY—FUNDY TIDAL POWER PROJECT—INQUIRY AS TO COMMENCEMENT OF STUDIES

**Mr. J. Robert Howie (York-Sunbury):** Madam Speaker, the problem of assuring an adequate production of low-cost power for the Atlantic seaboard is compounded by the lack of co-ordination between the federal and provincial governments, the lack of positive leadership and planning.

I made the suggestion to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Jamieson) in committee and in the House that the greatest potential infrastructure dynamic in Atlantic Canada today is the Fundy tidal power project, which has been favourably endorsed and is to be the subject of a five-phase study. What I wish to do tonight is convince the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion that it is very important for his department to be directly involved in the Fundy tidal power project to ensure that its full impact as a development tool is recognized and realized. In other words, I want DREE to assume the leadership for this project and fill the vacuum which has existed too long. I feel that DREE has demonstrated the capability of being the vehicle to harness the input of all departments of government, the provincial governments and agencies, to move this project forward.

The Fundy tidal power project can have a tremendous impact on recreation, tourism, industry and commerce in Atlantic Canada. It could do for Atlantic Canada what the tar sands can do for western Canada. It is my hope that the minister would welcome the challenge. At the very least, DREE should be represented on the study board.

The Atlantic region of Canada has one of the greatest predictable energy potential developments in the world. At the head of the Bay of Fundy, between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the tides rise and fall some 50 feet twice a day, and this phenomena will go on forever into the future. The energy which this volume of water could generate passing through turbines amounts to billions of kilowatt hours when converted into electric energy. A large-scale Fundy power development would save over 10 billion barrels of oil over a 75-year period.

The development of a Fundy tidal power project in the Atlantic region would be the first real infrastructure on which all manner of other industrial enterprises could be founded. It is only natural that enterprises consuming power will locate where the source of power is large and constant, not threatened by external factors such as world politics and resource shortages. There is a vast potential for electrochemical and electrometallurgical industries which are so dependent on the availability of large blocks of electrical energy. Moreover, there could be a tremendous surge in tourism which will have a great impact on employment growth rates within the related service industries.

Fundy tidal power development has many advantages. It can provide an independent energy source for Atlantic Canada while conserving oil for the rest of Canada. It can help to improve Canada's balance of payments. It would provide Atlantic Canada and the rest of Canada with greater security against the risk of rising energy costs. It becomes part of the solution to the basic problem of regional disparity, and it gives people of the Atlantic region a sense of pride and confidence, not only in their

[Mr. Goyer.]

own region but in the knowledge that they can contribute significantly to the rest of Canada.

With all these advantages going for it, and a major energy crisis on our doorstep, now is the time for action on the Fundy tidal power project. It is time that the federal government, and in particular the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, took the initiative and provided positive leadership in this field. With strong leadership we can have interprovincial support, and with strong direction and purpose we can have federal-provincial co-operation. The sooner these great sources of renewable wealth can be developed for the benefit of the citizens of Canada, the better.

I suggest that a start could soon be made on the Shepody Bay and possibly the Minas Basin project by forming a Crown corporation, with shares owned by New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in proportion to their investment and legal rights, and with financial input from the federal government. Strong leadership from the federal government could bring the provinces together to settle the many questions concerning the division of obligations and benefits from such a project.

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to respond to the hon. member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Howie). He has spoken about federal leadership in energy matters relating to the Maritimes. I should like to point out to him some facts of life.

Let me point out, first of all, that the federal government in the past year has poured \$1 billion worth of compensation payments into Quebec and the Atlantic provinces to provide a uniform price for crude oil. I should also like to point out the Point Lepreau nuclear generating station which will receive half of its funding from the federal government, as well as the hydro interconnections between various provinces and the value of that standing offer by the federal government.

The hon. member has quite rightly raised the matter of the five Fundy tidal power studies. Surely this is one of our great untapped power generating sources. I assume that the hon. member is referring to the recommendations of the Bay of Fundy Tidal Power Review Board. That board suggested that the 1967-1969 Atlantic Tidal Power Programming Board study be extended by a series of phased studies relating to the five following points: first, marketing of tidal power; second, transmission of tidal power; third, retiming or storage of tidal power; fourth, power system studies relating to utilization and marketing of tidal power; and fifth, environmental impact arising from development of tidal power in the Bay of Fundy area.

I am happy to indicate to the hon. member that arrangements have now been concluded whereby the federal government is authorized to meet 50 per cent of the cost of the recommended studies, and the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia will each pay 25 per cent of the cost, up to a maximum total cost \$3 million.

Discussions have been and are currently taking place between federal and provincial officials on the setting up and management of the study program. A meeting of federal and provincial officials is currently scheduled to