

the kind done by the National Research Council, by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, or any other agency. It will take that research and promote its commercial application by companies in the private sector.

In addition, as is clearly stated, the bill seeks to promote the use of solar energy in Canada. The institute, as a concept, is a desirable one. There is no similar agency in this country which now provides, on a full-time basis, that type of direction or which gives promise of that type of coordination and organization. I did not say, in my introductory remarks, that the institute would do the research, or that it would have an exclusive part of any research or even commercial application program. I did say that it would make a valuable contribution in that area if it were created and allowed to proceed.

Honourable senators, the creation of the institute should be encouraged and supported, and the role of the Senate is in the proper modelling of this particular institute so that those tasks can be performed.

Therefore, I ask honourable senators to defeat Senator Godfrey's amendment and allow the bill to proceed to the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, where those who seek the creation of this institute can describe its purposes and its organization and deal with amendments that are required, and where scientific witnesses, as well as those from the field of commercial application, can give evidence as to the pressing need for a higher level, an advanced technological level, of solar energy effort in this country.

Senator Godfrey: Honourable senators, I have a question for Senator Austin. Can the honourable senator tell us the names of those who will take on the responsibility of running this institute, either by way of being directors or members? If not, would we not be simply creating something that will float in mid-air for someone to grab at some particular time?

Senator Austin: I have no names. If this institute is created by an act of Parliament, there will be provision as to how its members will be recruited. I am sure that responsible Canadian citizens will come forward to further the objectives of this entity.

Senator Lamontagne: Honourable senators, may I ask a question of the sponsor of the bill? Do I understand that this proposed institute would be a private institution?

Senator Austin: Yes, it would be a private institution, but it would, of course, make representations to government and seek to work in that area which, as Senator Lamontagne knows so well, is deficient—that is, the area of coordination of public and private activity.

● (1440)

Senator Lamontagne: It seems to me, honourable senators, that if it is to be a private institution, financed by whatever means, and regardless of whether it has access to public funds or not, it does not need an act of Parliament in order to come into existence. It has only to seek incorporation in the ordinary way.

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, that point was the subject of an argument by Senator Grosart yesterday, and I have not replied to it on the basis that I would have an opportunity to do so later in the debate. Let me say that a major reason why the creation of this institute by Parliament would be in the public interest is that Canadians are notoriously unready to deal with changes in patterns of energy consumption, conservation and price. It is clear from the scientific evidence—some of which I gave in my introduction, and of which I have more to give—that solar energy will have to play an important part in home and space heating in this country. An institute of this kind, as approved by Parliament, would put the stamp of recognition of Parliament on the critical nature of the energy problem and the critical need to advance in the solar sector.

Senator Grosart: May I ask Senator Austin a question? Would he not agree that the passing of this bill would create a precedent for bills setting up institutes of geothermal research, of tidal and hydraulic research, and of wind research, all of which forms of energy, according to the latest reports, will eventually make a more important contribution to filling the energy gap than solar energy? Does he not anticipate that this will create a precedent, and that we will be taking up the time of Parliament in setting up these kinds of institutions throughout the whole field of energy and scientific research and development?

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, as I said in my opening remarks on May 18, all of those forms of energy—tidal, geothermal and wind—I would include within the definition of renewable energy resources and of solar energy resources. They would be part of the program of this particular institute.

Senator Grosart: May I ask the sponsor of the bill, then, if he is really saying that a solar energy application institute, such as is proposed, will go so far beyond the terms of the bill that it will actually take in other fields of energy research over and above that which Parliament would permit it to do? Is he really telling Parliament that if we pass this bill this institute, in its activities, intends to go away beyond the approval given by Parliament?

Senator Austin: Honourable senators, as I said on May 18, the bill is deficient in that it contains no definition of solar energy. I gave such a definition in those remarks which was inclusive of the energy forms just mentioned. I do not believe that Parliament can be offended in any particular way by the passing of this bill by the other place. In terms of the rules of statutory interpretation, I believe that when Parliament speaks, or, at least, when one house of Parliament speaks, something of value is presumed to have been said, and in this case the other house has given us a bill. I presume that that house considers this bill to be of value. What I would like this chamber to do is make it a valuable, coherent, concise and better-oriented piece of legislation.

Senator Grosart: I would ask the sponsor if he would reply to my question. Does this institute intend to go beyond the terms of reference given it by Parliament? Does it intend, as I