

pletely dissipate them, will leave this country a veritable wilderness. The problem we face in this regard, of course, is the whole attitude of the government in respect of making policy statements. The government is always preparing white papers. No one objects to white papers; as a matter of fact there is a good deal to be said for the preparation of policy statements with regard to various departments. But, in the main, these white papers have been so long in preparation that events pass them by. The government does not seem to be aware of the fact that time will not stand still while several years are spent in the preparation of a policy position.

I read in one report that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is preparing a white paper and I read in another report that his department is preparing two white papers, one on energy resources and the other on minerals. Possibly the minister could tell us what it is that is actually being prepared. I submit to the minister that we have been waiting now nearly three years for a white paper, and the difficulty about waiting so long is that events occur in respect of which the government has no position and problems arise for which the government has no solution. Consequently, we get a series of ad hoc arrangements and temporary policies which are contradictory, non-productive and in some cases counterproductive. What I am hoping today is that in the course of our discussion of Bill C-207 we will get a statement from the minister concerning the energy policies of this government I shall touch briefly on this because I wish to ask some questions in the hope that later we will receive some answers from the minister.

First of all, I raise the question of what the government policy is in respect of uranium. Last May the government took a decision in respect of Denison Mines in order to prevent that company passing into the hands of a foreign company. When the government did this the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) made clear that the purpose was to prevent Canadian ownership of the uranium industry dropping below the 40 per cent which then obtained. Since that time, however, the regulations issued by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources excluded companies which were already engaged in exploration work. The result is that a discovery in Saskatchewan by the Gulf Mineral Resources Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Gulf Oil Corporation of Pittsburgh, will not be covered by the policy laid down in May of 1970. I should like to know if Gulf Mineral Resources, a foreign-owned corporation, is to be allowed to share in the development of the uranium industry, how much this will reduce the percentage of the uranium industry which will be Canadian owned and how many more companies which were engaged in exploration work in May 1970 will be allowed to enter into production. I am wondering whether this means that bit by bit the Canadian control of the uranium industry will continue to decline. We should know that. Then, I should like to know whether the government has any cutoff point or any policy for retrieving control of some of these uranium operations which are in the hands of foreign corporations.

*Government Organization Act, 1970*

• (12:30 p.m.)

The second matter on which I hope the minister will make some statement is in respect of the production, sale and export of natural gas. Last fall, because members of this party took very strenuous exception to the government's decision to approve the recommendation of the National Energy Board of Canada in respect of the export of 6.3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas to the United States, we had a debate in this House. We were assured at that time that this was surplus to our needs. We were assured by the Trans-Canada Pipe Lines Company, whose officials appeared before the National Energy Board, that there would be no difficulty about meeting the needs of Canadian gas consumers in eastern Canada and for that reason the government should allow the export of 6.3 trillion cubic feet of gas over the next 20 years. Our worst fears are being realized. Just recently the Trans-Canada Pipe Lines Company officials have appeared before the National Energy Board and have said they are not going to be able to meet all the demands of their eastern customers. They have notified some of their eastern customers that they should not take on any additional commitments and that they should not enlarge their areas of operation because they will not be able to meet the increased demand. Mr. V. L. Horty, the president of Trans-Canada Pipe Lines, said at the hearing before the National Energy Board that his company did not anticipate the Canadian market would expand so rapidly. He said that the consumption had gone up by a surprising 122 billion cubic feet to the astronomical figure of 660 billion cubic feet. This increase did not happen over a long period of years. We are talking about a period from last October to this spring, and Trans-Canada Pipe Lines and the government, who were saying last fall that there would be no problem about meeting the demands of the gas customers in eastern Canada, are now faced with the prospect of the curtailment of gas to eastern Canada unless the National Energy Board or the government are prepared to allow Trans-Canada Pipe Lines to be relieved of the 1966 requirement which calls upon them to supply 50 per cent of their gas from Canadian sources. In other words, we have made so large a commitment of gas to the United States that we may not be able to meet the requirements of our own people here in central Canada.

What we need from the minister is a clear statement as to what are the realistic gas needs for Canada. How much gas are we going to require over the next period of years? The National Energy Board in its projections suggests that the per capita consumption of gas in Canada by 1990 will be the same as the per capita consumption of gas in the United States in 1975. Does anyone think that this 15 year time lag is realistic in a country like Canada where, first of all, we have a very cold climate and where, second, we are only beginning to understand the utilization of natural gas and, third, where more and more of the power utilities are turning to natural gas as one of the few non-polluting energy resources?

My conviction, backed up by many of the experts whom I have read, is that the estimates of the National