A number of major projects are ongoing in Canada in regard to the development and the tapping of our natural resources. For instance, there is the $4,000 million Foothills pipeline; $3,000 million for the expansion and upgrading of the existing Great Canadian Oil Sands and Syncrude tar sands plants; an equal amount for the proposed tar sands operation; $2,000 million for electrical generation projects in the maritimes, including the Gull Island project; and the latest CANDU reactor now under construction in Le Preau, New Brunswick, at a cost of $684 million. These projects are part of an estimated $1,800 million investment between 1975 and 1990, which will provide a major boost to our economy. If I understand correctly, the federal government will participate in this project to the tune of approximately $1 billion a year, or close to 8 per cent of the total amount.

It is against this background that the motion has to be viewed. It has the merit and advantage of providing the average Canadian with an opportunity to play a role in moving toward self-reliance. It will allow the homeowner who is also a builder, and the developer who works for clients, to incorporate solar features in the homes to be built in years to come.

There have been positive statements on the use of solar energy and renewables in a number of documents which have been prepared by the government in recent years. Such positive statements appeared in the publication entitled: *The Way Ahead*, as well as in the latest Speech from the Throne. This direction was taken by the government in an attempt to benefit future generations. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) has warned that Canada will face an energy crisis in the 1980's.

The motion before the House will encourage Canadians to incorporate solar technology when building their own homes and to benefit from CMHC mortgages. The same will apply to builders and developers. This kind of involvement between governments and the public at large assists the nation in moving one step closer to self-reliance.

For the sake of time, I will limit my remarks today. The measure can stand on its own merits. I submit it for consideration by hon. members in the hope that they will give their valuable support to it.

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the motion presented by the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia). I should like to make a few remarks regarding the potential of renewable energy in this country, as well as about what the government should do in order to assist individuals, developers and builders to incorporate renewable types of energy in their homes, buildings and businesses.

● (1612)

Here we have a limited example of the kind of suggestions made to CMHC that they provide some type of incentive to builders or developers to place within their structures a source of renewable energy. This would be another expense added to the mortgage. We realize that today the cost of housing is becoming very high in this country, and by simply adding the cost of heating to the mortgage, we will not be encouraging individuals to use those sources of renewable energy, whether solar or any other kind, within their buildings.

It would be far better if the hon. member proposed to the House a tax exemption or a tax credit which an individual or developer could use toward the placement of a source of renewable energy, solar or otherwise, in his home, thus allowing him to write the cost off his income tax, either in the year when he built the home or to spread it over a number of years. In that way the price of the house would be kept down and people could afford to build. Encouragement would be given to businesses, farmers and all types of industry to use sources of renewable energy within their structures, not only new ones that are being built but existing structures. Housing is already out of reach of all but a few individuals in this country, and with inflationary prices, which are added on to mortgages, such as the increased price of labour and so on, the price of houses and other structures is increasing constantly.

The hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia) spoke about investment in non-renewable resources and about self-reliance. We on this side speak about self-sufficiency and about providing incentives necessary to allow for exploration of non-renewable resources as well as the placement of sources of renewable energy in existing and new structures in this country. We must spend billions of dollars on exploration of oil and gas and nuclear energy because we all realize that in the immediate future it will not be possible for us all to use solar energy and other sources of renewable energy in our homes, cars, and wherever else energy is required. However, what is also necessary are incentives for individuals to use renewable sources of energy, with a view to the future.

It is often said in these kinds of discussions that technology in this area is just starting to be developed and that we need a larger budget to develop renewable sources of energy and to make these systems available to everyone. I suggest that, although technology has not yet been perfected in that respect, there is sufficient expertise today to allow a large number of Canadians to benefit from solar energy and other types of heating systems. Currently there are many heating systems on the market with a high level of performance. They are available at medium cost. At present there are over 115 individuals and businesses in Canada offering solar heating systems to businesses and to private individuals. Also, there are more than 50 companies manufacturing and distributing these systems or fabricating on site solar heating systems and components. Technology in that area does exist. What we need now are incentives to develop it and employ it.

It is therefore discouraging to read about the research project that was conducted last year in the province of Manitoba in which both the federal and provincial governments participated. They spent $167,000 to place solar energy equipment on the dome of the provincial parliament building and they attempted to monitor its heating effectiveness. The cost of the project got out of hand and so it was abandoned. Surely if that amount of money were put in the hands of scientists and businesses which are in the process of building solar energy