

*Renewable Energy*

for young Canadian firms in the private sector. Such firms will then have a partner of substance with much needed financial and general business strength. So as firms exploiting renewable energy move toward commercialization of solar, wind and biomass energy technologies, we foresee the corporation playing a strongly supportive role.

In conclusion, the National Research Council, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the new alternate energy corporation will all be important and aggressive actors in the development of renewable sources of energy. Their efforts will be carefully and strongly co-ordinated with other new energy policies to be announced next week. With a strong and coherent energy policy, therefore, the additional corporation proposed in Bill C-210 is unnecessary. I again thank the hon. member for this opportunity to discuss what is an important issue for all Canadians.

**Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody):** Mr. Speaker, I too am pleased to speak to this bill promoting renewable energy sources and technology by the establishment of a renewable energy corporation. I congratulate the hon. member for Wetaskawin (Mr. Schellenberger) for presenting this bill, despite the fact that it calls for another Crown corporation. I understand his party has some strong feelings regarding more Crown corporations, but he has gone ahead anyway. I congratulate him for his courage.

We in the New Democratic Party have no difficulty supporting the bill in principle. We feel, as the preamble says, that there is no doubt that conventional sources of energy are dwindling at an alarming rate in Canada and throughout the world. To back that up, we have witnessed far fewer oil discoveries both in traditional areas in Canada and in our more remote regions. There is no doubt that our petroleum resources are declining even though we have great riches in other forms of energy.

At the moment Canada has no real, substantial energy policy. In spite of what the parliamentary secretary mentioned in terms of what may come about, at the moment, it is fair to say, we do not have any energy policy other than the traditional one of exporting all our cheap energy resources to the United States as quickly as we can. First it was oil, now it is natural gas. Some agency of government, whether it is the member's proposed corporation or some other secretariat or commission has to be charged with the job of co-ordinating the development of new sources, especially in renewable energy fields. The parliamentary secretary says that a corporation of this type will be filling the gap. All of us will be pleased about that, and we look forward to the announcement. My party and I certainly can support the bill in principle, if not every comma or last detail. Indeed, we support enthusiastically the basic principle behind it.

● (1740)

Continued growth in energy consumption seems to be linked inextricably with growth in the economy. The hon. Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) still believes this is true, I think. The minister knows there is growing opinion

that the link between continued growth in energy and growth in the economy need not be made.

Sweden, Denmark, the United Kingdom and the United States have all produced studies to this effect, even within the nuclear establishment which is generally opposed to renewable energy. These studies have come to be regarded as milestones. I will mention a couple of them. For example, I speak of "A Low Energy Strategy for the United Kingdom" by Gerald Leach and the study on energy future prepared by the Harvard Business School in the United States. Those are only two which show that we probably do not always need to think of growth in energy use running parallel with growth in the economy. There are newer ways to look at it.

The thought that we cannot easily reduce our energy requirements by as much as 40 per cent without economic disruption is a mistaken belief. I think we can.

While ministers have made certain noises, tokenistic ones in my view, about the need for energy conservation—and I will outline and document this later on—the government is ignoring the real potential of an off-oil policy or an energy saving policy.

It seems to me the government is constantly preoccupied with the supply side, with punching more holes in the Beaufort Sea bed when there are many more gains to be made without risking our environment. We could put substantial sums into conservation. For instance, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Switzerland and West Germany, all highly industrialized nations, with economies working reasonably well, consume 50 per cent less energy per capita than we Canadians do. Japan and France consume two thirds of what we do. Japan and France too are highly industrialized countries but they make greater use of conservation measures than we do. These countries have developed sensible energy policies years ahead of Canada. No one can dispute that. While we may be very rich in energy resources, Canadians continue to be the energy gluttons of the world. I think the party is over now. We cannot continue on this wasteful path for much longer.

People do not want energy, Mr. Speaker. They want what energy provides, namely, heat, light, transportation and communication. Perhaps these ends can be met better by an over-all decrease in energy consumption or simply by increasing the productivity of each thermal unit of energy consumed.

The notion of self-sufficiency in oil is unrealistic unless we improve our energy efficiency. Indeed, Canada was self-sufficient in oil until 1975. But because of increased consumption and only one recent substantial oil find, we are no longer self-sufficient.

The process of improved energy utilization begins with very simple measures. We can improve the thermal design and locations of new houses, offices and factories. We can increase the insulation and employ heat recovery methods, such as heat exchangers in existing dwellings. We can increase the efficiency of appliances and furnaces—something which manufacturers and oil companies are loath to do. We can further improve gasoline mileage by building lighter vehicles and using more