

● (2120)

We also suggested a commission to be known as Hydrogen Canada to look after the research and development, demonstration, commercialization and utilization of hydrogen. That is an obvious need, since our report puts such importance on hydrogen as the energy currency for the future. It is pretty obvious that the world is moving to the use of hydrogen. We made that point in our report and I think this will become more obvious as the months go by.

Canada now leads the world in the technology necessary to produce hydrogen. As with other nations, we have not done the research and development, demonstration and pilot projects that are necessary in order to make the expansion of hydrogen plants viable.

The committee has asked the government to consider making sufficient contributions to nuclear fusion research to at least permit this country to sit at the international scientific table on fusion. The Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Roberts) has indicated that this advice will be followed. We must now ask what is the position of nuclear fusion in the future. I say unequivocally, Mr. Speaker, that my personal position is that the answer to an abundance of energy in the future will be fusion.

There is no scientific reason why we cannot have fusion and there is no engineering reason why we cannot have it. I hope the money will be found for the research and development necessary for the commercialization of fusion. Although I feel, as do members of the committee, that conservation is important and will always be important in the area of energy, when you consider that the world's population will increase from over four billion to 11 billion in just over 50 years, even with conservation and the other renewables that I have mentioned, important as they are, having regard to the supply of hydrocarbons and the danger in their use, it seems obvious that we must consider fusion for the long term.

I take the position that we in the North have a burden that we must carry to supply energy for people of the South. I do not see how we can make available to the billions of people in the South the energy they will require in the future to bring their quality of life to anything near that which we enjoy, unless we can offer fusion. I know that fusion is expensive. We are perhaps \$200 billion away from the first commercial reactor. It will, however, give us an abundance of energy without the dangers of nuclear fission.

When hon. members and ministers are speaking in their ridings, I would remind them that it is very easy to forget about hydrocarbons and worry about the dangers of nuclear fusion. I would like to see balanced thinking in the future and I am sure we will achieve this.

I appreciate the opportunity to put forward a brief overview of the energy picture in the world as I see it. Where I have gone beyond the report—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. The hon. member for Regina West.

Summer Recess

Mr. McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order. About 7:30 this evening the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Dubois) raised a point of order and demanded that I tell him the exact date and hour when the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was speaking in the House and over 100 Liberals were missing—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please, the hon. member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin).

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Mr. Speaker, I rise with modesty and enthusiasm to take part in this debate. I have not had a chance to do this for several months so I find it somewhat ironic now. Usually governments want to keep us here to pass legislation and opposition parties vote against that. The government recites a long list of items on the Order Paper that it feels are important and should be dealt with. On this occasion, however, the official opposition started the fracas, saying they would not leave until the postal strike is settled, so we sat here this past week.

My hon. friend and colleague the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) today moved the adjournment of the House. The government voted against adjourning the House and so did the official opposition. It is no wonder the voters are confused by what has been going on in the past day or two. The performance of the Postmaster General (Mr. Ouellet) at ten minutes to ten last night caused—and this would take some doing—my colleague the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre to talk about reconsidering our position on recessing this Parliament. That performance last night was less than worthy of the minister, the Liberal party and the government.

We did reconsider and my colleague moved a motion today to adjourn the House. Those who want this Parliament to sit this week and the week after, or however long it takes, had only to remain in their offices until four o'clock this afternoon and Parliament would have been sitting next week. But who folded? Who was the bowl full of jelly? The Tories. They were going to keep us here "till hell freezes over", as I think one of them said. They were going to keep us here until the Post Office strike was settled, they said.

I would like to see us sit for another two or three weeks or however long it would take to get a lot of other issues debated. But who caved in, who cut and ran at 1300 hours today? It was those members who wanted us to sit until the Post Office strike is settled. They chickened out. I do not want to hear from any more Tory speakers in this debate tonight, Mr. Speaker.

● (2130)

My colleague the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has said, and I agree with him, that because of what the Postmaster General tried to pull off at ten minutes to ten last night, and again because of what he said today, puts us on the side of the official opposition. We get on the side of the official opposition and we look around at one o'clock this afternoon, but they are all gone, heading for the hills.