

Renewable Resources

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: On division.

Bill reported.

Hon. Pierre De Bané (for Mr. Chrétien) moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I indicated earlier to hon. members that if Bill C-117 were completed before four o'clock, it might be the wish of hon. members to call it four o'clock and to proceed to private members' hour. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Is the idea then that private members' hour would terminate at approximately seven minutes to five o'clock?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The hon. member is correct.

It being four o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business, as listed on today's Order Paper, namely, public bills, notices of motions and private bills.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

All items preceding No. 61 allowed to stand by unanimous consent.

RESOURCES AND TECHNICAL SURVEYS ACT

AMENDMENT RESPECTING RENEWABLE ENERGY STATISTICS AND SURVEYS

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin) moved that Bill C-261, to amend the Resources and Technical Surveys Act (renewable energy), be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the session started some time ago and having had a long-term interest in the renewable energy field, I placed before the House some ten private members' bills which would foster the whole field of renewable energy. Many of these bills are very simple in their content and would not cost the government any money. They would encourage the various departments and officials within those departments to pay more particular attention to the potential of renewable energy in Canada.

The Resources and Technical Surveys Act was passed in the House in 1966-67. At that time not many people in the country were concerned about the price of energy. Under the legislation the minister was made responsible for co-ordinating, promoting and recommending national policies and programs with respect to energy, mines, minerals, water and other resources, and for carrying out surveys on Canada lands in conjunction with the provinces, those surveys to determine the potential for minerals, oil, natural gas, electric generation and so forth.

At that time renewable energies were not included in the act. As a result, information and technical data, which are essential if we are to know what we have in the nation as far as potential is concerned, were not in effect surveyed. Of course, some of the figures are useful for those who wish to go through the charts to determine whether in fact there is potential in their area for an aquifer of water, geothermal energy or a biomass potential of some sort. But that information has not been gathered in the same way as information concerning mining or other potentials.

The major thrust of this bill is very simple. It is to change the perspective on the part of the department and its officials, so that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources will come to see the renewable potential in the country as a realistic and viable source of energy. As I said, the amendments are simple. All they really do is to insert into a number of sections of the Resource and Technical Surveys Act the term "renewable energy". If we look at the definitions contained in the original bill, the term "minerals" does not include the renewable resources sector. This is the difficulty to which I am referring.

At the present time there is still a tremendous emphasis upon oil and natural gas. Given the difficulties inherent in the development of that potential due to the fact that much of it is offshore and very expensive, we are importing over 300,000 barrels of imported oil per day. There is now much more emphasis being placed upon renewable energies by ordinary citizens of the nation. The government has responded in some ways. For example, last year approximately \$150 million was spent on renewable and off-oil technology and programs by the federal government. A similar amount was spent by the provinces. We have programs such as FIRE, the Forest Industry Renewable Energy project, under which it is intended to spend some \$288 million on grants for projects over the next number of years. We have the biomass loan guarantee program and the ENFOR program, or the energy from forests program. Under that program some \$30 million is to be spent over five years to help heat industries and homes with wood furnaces. Also we have the PUSH program wherein governments are putting renewable sources of energy in their buildings and projects. Then there is the PASEM program which provides grants to various industries across the nation to help