

## ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The Committee was established on 23 May 1980 and we recognized at the beginning of the investigation that our order of reference required some interpretation. We decided that *alternative energy* would refer to those energy sources, energy technologies and fuels (energy currencies or carriers) not presently exploited in Canada to any significant degree. Coal liquefaction, for example, is a commercial enterprise in South Africa but it is not a technology developed in this country and thus represented a legitimate area for study. Initially the following subjects were selected for consideration: biomass, coal conversion, co-generation, district heating, fluidized bed combustion, fuel cells, fusion energy, geothermal energy, heat pumps, hydrogen, nonconventionally-powered vehicles, ocean, solar and wind energy. This list underwent some modification as the study progressed and the subjects were accorded varying degrees of importance.

The order of reference made no mention of Canada's conventional energy sources: crude oil, natural gas, coal, hydro-electricity and nuclear-electricity. Neither did it mention the subject of energy conservation. It soon became apparent, however, that one cannot study the potential contribution of alternative energy to Canada's energy system without considering the manner in which the conventional mix will evolve. Similarly, one cannot discuss the evolution of a complex energy system without referring to the impact of conservation. In other words, although we were not directed to look beyond the area of alternative energy, we had no choice but to touch upon many elements of Canada's energy affairs. The Committee was therefore presented with an immense task and, notwithstanding the extension of its reporting deadline from 19 December 1980 to 15 May 1981, time has been the overwhelming constraint on its operation.

In approaching this task the Committee called upon the services of the Library of Parliament. Eight Research Officers from the Research Branch of the Library, trained in the fields of science and economics, assisted in the Committee's investigation. Six of these people worked with the Committee from the beginning to the end of its mandate.

On 25 June 1980, the Committee opened its first round of public hearings in Ottawa. Concerned with exploring the range of the mandate, these hearings laid the groundwork for more detailed investigation. This phase of the Committee's operation carried through to the end of July and included 16 public sessions.

In advertisements carried in mid-July in most daily newspapers and in a number of weeklies across Canada, the Committee next invited public submissions relating to its mandate. Some 150 individuals and organizations corresponded with the Committee in response to this advertising, the majority submitting briefs of varying length and complexity. Following the analysis of these submissions in late August, the Committee held public hearings across Canada in the month of September. The domestic travel allowed us to hear representative presentations drawn from the public response to our advertising, to meet with government officials in every Province and in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, and to see facilities of interest in various parts of the country. The Committee visited the cities of Quebec, Montreal, Toronto, Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Regina, Winnipeg, Yellowknife, Whitehorse, Hay River, St. John's, Halifax, Charlottetown and Fredericton.

In October the Committee turned its attention to the international scene. Dividing into subcommittees, members and staff visited the United States, Brazil, France, West Germany, Italy, Ireland, Sweden and Iceland. Meeting with government officials and representatives of the private sector and visiting selected energy facilities, we learned much about the alternative energy programs in those countries.