

responsibility, have an opportunity to digest and appreciate the work of that committee.

I know that Senator Sparrow would like me to include in this reference the names of the others of his colleagues who are members of that committee, and I will certainly do so with pleasure now. They comprise: Senator Bielish, Senator Hays, Senator Le Moyne, Senator McGrand, Senator Perrault, Senator Phillips, Senator Robertson, Senator Thériault, Senator Thompson and Senator Watt, and Senator MacEachen and I have the privilege of joining the committee as and when we can.

Senator Marshall: And Senator Marshall!

Senator Roblin: Senator Marshall, you have good cause for complaint, because your name does not appear on this list of members of the committee, so I crave your indulgence.

I have to add that I think we would all agree that Senator Sparrow, as the chairman of the committee, has been the moving force in the close attention the committee has given to the subject matter before them. While he would not claim to be the sole author, I think I could safely describe him as being the principal author of the volume, "Soil at Risk," which the committee produced.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Roblin: Senator Sparrow, your efforts reflect credit not only to yourself but to the Senate, and to all of us here, and in the name of us all I am happy to congratulate you on this important and splendid recognition that you received from the United Nations.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I should like to join with the Leader of the Government in the Senate in congratulating Senator Sparrow on receiving this United Nations medal. As we know, the medal was bestowed upon him on the day chosen to commemorate World Environment Day. I believe it is noteworthy that the United Nations itself took notice of the work of Senator Sparrow, as chairman of this committee, which has done so much to improve Canadian understanding of the necessity of soil conservation.

The United Nations has had a very deep interest in environmental questions, and I am personally pleased that it is pursuing that interest by drawing attention to the work of individuals like Senator Sparrow. It may be of interest to honourable senators to know that a number of other institutions and individuals were honoured on the same occasion because of their work. For example, David Suzuki of Canada was honoured for his efforts in educating the public on environmental issues. Among the youth oriented organizations honoured were the California Conservation Corps and Katimavik of Canada. I think that the other institutions and individuals recognized on that day add additional significance to the importance of the event and additional lustre to the medal which Senator Sparrow has so richly deserved.

Hon. Len Marchand: Honourable senators, perhaps some of you might be a bit surprised to see me rise on this issue, but I

think I am the only senator in this chamber who can write the letters "P.Ag." after his or her name, which means that I am a member of the Agricultural Institute of Canada and the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists which in short terms means that I am entitled to claim that I am a professional agriculturalist.

I want to say to Senator Sparrow that I have had occasion to meet a number of my professional colleagues in the science of agriculture over the last little while and the praise for your work is widespread. I want to add a word of thanks and congratulations on behalf of those professionals as well for the good work that you and your committee did on this grave and serious problem relating to the soil of Canada.

Hon. H. A. Olson: Honourable senators, I should like to join with the Leader of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition and others in expressing congratulations and recognition of the honour that Senator Sparrow has so fittingly been awarded recently. The reason I do so is that about six months ago I had the privilege, with some other parliamentarians from Canada, to attend a conference on the United Nations Environmental Program which has its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. At that time there was a great deal of attention given to the problems associated with conserving and rehabilitating the soil in a number of countries in Africa where they have had so much difficulty in the past few years. The publication "Soil at Risk" was very much in the forefront of the leading documentation respecting the consideration given to the risk of our soils. It was also recognized again that of all the assets that nations have, soil is the greatest.

One other factor that came up at that time is that North America about 50 years ago went through a period of drought when there was a great deal of damage done to the soil in the central part of North America, both in Canada and the United States. Senator Sparrow and his committee did draw to some extent upon the experience and the rehabilitation that followed when the weather changed a little, and they did this in such an important way that the publication "Soil at Risk" is a highly regarded reference work on this subject all over the world.

Hon. Hazen Argue: Honourable senators, I too should like to join with the Leader of the Government in the Senate and the Leader of the Opposition and others in extending congratulations to our colleague from Saskatchewan, Senator Sparrow, for the great honour that has been bestowed upon him—an honour that is richly deserved.

As has already been said by others, our soil is one of our greatest assets. Conservation is something that we need to work at all the time.

The work envisaged in the report "Soil at Risk" will continue. I believe even today there is continued work in the Senate Committee on Agriculture on this very question.

The danger of losing our topsoil was brought home vividly to many of us last week when, for two or three days, the soils on the prairies were in motion—in many particular aspects. When the soil is on the move, it is on the move because individual fields on individual farms are blowing and drifting. It seems to