

Canada and what should be done to ensure that our land resources are most effectively utilized for the benefit of the Canadian economy and the Canadian people, and, in particular, to increase both agricultural production and the incomes of those engaged in it;

2. That the said committee be composed of the Honourable Senators Barbour, Basha, Boucher, Bois, Bradette, Cameron, Crerar, Golding, Hawkins, Horner, Inman, Leger, Leonard, McDonald, McGrand, Molson, Petten, Power, Smith (Kamloops), Stambaugh, Taylor (Norfolk), Taylor (Westmorland), Tremblay, Turgeon, Vaillancourt and Wall.

3. That the committee have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical and clerical personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of the inquiry.

4. That the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records; to sit during sittings and adjournments of the Senate, and to report from time to time.

Honourable senators may recall that the Speech from the Throne contained a paragraph reading as follows:

It is proposed to recommend in the Senate the establishment of a committee to consider what should be done to make better use of land for agriculture and thus to contribute more effectively to the improvement of agricultural production and the incomes of those engaged in it.

A number of senators who have already spoken on the Speech from the Throne expressed their approval of this suggestion. I recall that the honourable senator from Montarville (Hon. Mr. Bois), who moved the Address in reply, devoted practically all his address to the subject of making better use of farm land for the purpose of increasing both production and income. When I spoke on the Speech from the Throne I referred to the fact that he is a specialist on the subject. He is a highly regarded authority throughout his own province of Quebec, especially, and in other parts of Canada.

The Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Haig), when speaking on the Speech from the Throne, welcomed the announcement that the Senate would be asked to appoint a committee to undertake a study of land use. In fact, I think I may safely say that practically all senators were pleased by the announcement.

In its infinite variety of climate and scenery Canada is a wonderful country in which to travel, work and live. However, it is our land to which I wish to make special reference, for it is a vital part of our national heritage and a veritable treasure house of resources. First there is the annual fecundity of the soil, which produces so much food stuffs and other essential products both for our own use and for sale abroad; and, beneath the soil there is a wealth of oil, gas and minerals whose extent is so great that it can only be guessed at.

We are at times inclined to take all this land and its resources for granted and to regard its productivity as unending. To my

mind, honourable senators, this is a dangerous delusion. There is no doubt that we must guard and conserve our land resources. We must keep in reasonable balance the competing pressures for land, particularly when good farm land is affected. For above all we must remember that good land is the essential resource of a sound farming economy, a resource which we in our day should carefully husband so that we can pass it on for the use of the generations who will follow us, in ever increasing numbers, and with steadily growing requirements that they will look to the land to provide.

Agriculture is and will continue to be of vital importance to the Canadian economy. At present some 800,000 persons are employed in agriculture; and, besides the great value of their products both for domestic and external trade, our agricultural workers represent a very important market for the products and services provided by their fellow citizens in non-agricultural industries. It is clear that the prosperity of farming and of farmers is of immediate concern to all of us.

Over a period of many years there has been a trend away from the farm. This in large part is the normal and natural result of the increased use of machinery in farming and the application of scientific techniques that together have quite substantially increased the yield of each acre of land, while reducing the number of workers required for the larger yield.

No one can doubt that this country owes much to those who were raised on our farms—as a number of honourable senators were—and who have left them to find other ways to make a livelihood and contribute to the building of Canada. But my concern today is not with those who have left or with those who have stayed on the farm and are doing well there, but rather with those farmers who are waging a losing battle with insufficient or worn-out land or who, for other reasons, are unable to earn a reasonable income for themselves and their families as the reward of a reasonable amount of hard work.

The Prime Minister, in a speech delivered in Toronto on November 20 last, posed this problem, to which I know he has for some time given considerable thought. After referring to the need for increased food production generally to keep pace with Canada's rapidly growing population, he said:

Now—at least in eastern Canada—the area of our arable lands cannot be substantially increased. On the contrary, there is a not unimportant portion of those lands now included in the farmed area which is quite unfit for ordinary agricultural uses and on which it is deplorable, and in this