

The committee would be composed of 20 members, five of whom would constitute a quorum, and to which would be referred, if there were a motion to that effect, bills, messages, petitions, inquiries, papers and other matters referring to natural resources and the environment, including (1) renewable energy supplies as well as petroleum, mineral and water resources; (2) exploration for and development of energy, plus its pricing, export, conservation, supply, and the technology required to ensure supply; (3) transmission of energy by pipelines or otherwise; (4) wild life, forestry and fisheries; (5) air, water or soil pollution; (6) acid rain fallout and its effect upon life, and on our land, air and water—the implications of which are tremendous.

I noted in the *Globe and Mail* of Friday, April 18, 1980, that Ontario Hydro's proposal to sell huge amounts of coal-generated electricity to parts of the northeastern United States appears to be coming up against stiff opposition in the Ontario cabinet. Ontario's Minister of the Environment is quoted as saying, in an interview regarding this proposal, that the increased acid rainfall that would result from coal burned in producing power is unacceptable. He also goes on to mention a recent announcement by the United States government to the effect that it will greatly increase its coal-fired electrical production.

Honourable senators, knowing that the prevailing winds over much of North America are from the west, any indication of an increase in the use of coal to the west of us for electrical generation or for any other reason becomes a matter of extreme concern which, I submit, should have thorough consideration by a standing committee such as I have proposed.

We now know something of the effects of acid rain precipitation on our lakes and inland fresh waters. Detailed studies are required to ascertain what effect this fallout can have on fresh water spawning areas of many species of fish that are so vital to the future of Canada's fishery potential.

Honourable senators, every possible step must be taken to gather information, seek solutions and inform the public as to the seriousness and magnitude of environmental matters affecting our natural resources and agriculture. The very security of our food production is at stake.

I live on my farm. I am the fifth generation there. I can see changes that have taken place in my time more rapidly, I submit, than the changes that took place during the time of the four generations preceding me. My sons are on the farm now. If my grandsons, the seventh generation, are to farm those lands, it will be as a consequence of action taken now.

● (2130)

Again, honourable senators, I think of the application of the Pittson Company for approval to locate a 250,000-barrel-per-day refinery and marine terminal at Eastport, Maine. Consider the possible effects oil spills would have on a major fishery resort and the resulting threat posed to the livelihood and lifestyle of the people of the southwest part of New Brunswick, the Bay of Fundy coastline of the province of Nova Scotia, and the state of Maine. It is fair to say, honourable senators, that

these are examples of matters that could appropriately come before a committee on natural resources and the environment.

Honourable senators, although this is my maiden speech in this chamber, I am not a stranger to our parliamentary institutions. I had the great privilege of representing the people of King's County, New Brunswick, in the legislature of my province for 22 years. I served for eight years as the Minister of Agriculture in the government of Premier Hugh John Flemming and for two years in the government of Premier Richard Hatfield.

I am delighted to find, in the Senate, so many of my former colleagues and friendly rivals in the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick. I had the pleasure of serving with two Senator Fourniers. My sponsor, Senator Edgar Fournier, was a former colleague in the New Brunswick government. I also had the pleasure of serving with Senator Riley, Senator Thériault and, of course, with Senator Robichaud, a former premier, whom I faced for six years when I was Leader of the Opposition. I greet Senator McGrand who left the New Brunswick scene after long service as a physician, councillor, legislator and a member of the government before being summoned here. He left our legislature at about the time I entered it. I also greet Senator McElman who too was associated with New Brunswick politics and our legislature. Senator Anderson is New Brunswick's lady representative here. I served with her father, the late Stafford Anderson, a former member of the Legislative Assembly and of the Government of New Brunswick. I extend condolences to Senator Anderson on the recent passing of her mother and father and, through her, to the members of her family.

I hope that my experience in politics and in the Government of New Brunswick will enable me to make a contribution here as a representative of my province, and as one who is dedicated to the progress and advancement of our country. In particular, I hope my experience as an active farmer and as Minister of Agriculture will enable me to help the Senate and the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture appreciate some of the problems faced by farmers, and especially eastern agriculture, which I know best. Certainly, there are many problems to be resolved, problems which the federal government has a responsibility to address.

Finally, I want to say how honoured I am to be a member of the Senate, and to have been named to this chamber on the advice of our former Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Joe Clark. He led a government that brought honesty and responsibility to the conduct of our affairs; a government that had the courage to make difficult decisions in the national interest. As has been said before, those decisions will be vindicated as time goes on, and I am confident that the people of Canada will once again turn to a leader whose retirement from office is temporary.

Hon. Frederick W. Rowe: Honourable senators, I do not propose to speak for very long. In fact, there are only a couple of topics on which I want to make some comment. First of all, I should like to extend my congratulations to all officers of the Senate who have either resumed their former offices, or are