

# RAHALL

## Weekly Report

CANADA IS THE ECONOMIC  
BENEFICIARY OF ACID RAIN

HON. NICK JOE RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 10, 1982*

● Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, recently, information has come to my attention which casts a shadow over much of the Canadian Government's efforts to see that an acid rain control program is initiated in this country. Ever since the Congress began work on the reauthorization of the Clean Air Act, my office has been bombarded with reports, studies, and letters from Canadian Government officials outlining environmental horrors of acid rain and calling for mitigating actions.

However, these entreaties are suspect, and I am beginning to believe they are founded in economic rather than environmental concerns.

A number of electric utilities in New England are continuing with efforts to reduce oil consumption in keeping with the national goal of increasing energy independence from foreign suppliers. Many of the utilities are considering converting oil boilers to coal produced in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky. Indeed, Consolidated Edison of New York is in the process of trying to convert its Arthur Kill 2 and 3 and Ravenswood 3 units to coal. United Illuminating Co. is on schedule in the conversion of its Bridgeport Harbor 3 unit to coal. Central Maine Power Co. is considering plans to convert three small units to coal, and Boston Edison is contemplating a number of coal conversions to name a few.

Yet some of these same utilities, under the threat of new and costly controls aimed at reducing acid rain, are now studying the feasibility of purchasing power from Canada. A number of coal conversion plans have been dropped and a few of these utilities may be forced to buy Canadian power.

The chief economic beneficiary of an acid rain control program would be Hydro-Quebec's James Bay Hydro Complex now under construction in Canada. It is my understanding that this project of approximately 5,000 megawatts would have excess capacity and the firm is aggressively marketing this capacity in the Northeastern region of the United States.

Boston Edison, for one, may consider the purchase of Canadian hydro power as a means to reduce oil consumption. The United Illuminating Co. is also expressing an interest in Canadian power. And, it is my understanding that the Maine Public Utility Commission is giving favorable response to a New England Power Pool purchase agreement for 690 mw of Canadian power from Hydro Quebec. Central Main Power Co. would receive a portion of this imported power.

Mr. Speaker, while these activities are taking place there is evidence that at least one major source of pollution in Canada, Ontario Hydro, is backing away from plans to install acid rain controls. According to a report sent to my office by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Acid Rain in the Canadian House of Commons in September 1981, entitled "Still Waters: The Chilling Reality of Acid Rain," emissions from Ontario Hydro can produce acid rain in parts of the United States. The subcommittee in its report applauded "the decision by the corporation to effect an emission reduction of more than 40 percent by 1990. We believe, however, that even greater reductions in emissions are feasible and affordable." Nonetheless, according to a statement made in the Canadian House of Commons by a Member from Hillsborough on July 22, 1982: "Earlier this week Ontario Hydro announced that it is going to shelve plans to install acid rain controls on its plants in Ontario."

This information in my mind undermines the concerns of the Canadians over the impacts of acid rain for environmental reasons. There is more to the acid rain story, Mr. Speaker, than the Canadians are telling us. ●