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from the depredations of acid rain. Preservation lies in the reduction and elimination of acid rain, rather than in further research. Further research is, after all, only an interim measure. It is a proxy goal. It is not something we can speak of in terms of a solution. Those who say, as does the President of the United States, that they would like to have this problem taken off the bilateral agenda, perhaps believe that longevity will continue to break all previous records. I do not think that this topic could, should, or even can be removed from the bilateral agenda until well in the next century.

On December 16, before the Special Committee on Acid Rain, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan) stated: "The report will have to be judged by the standard of how it addresses the main source of acid rain-causing emissions in the United States. If it talks about research, modernization, and technology, it will be transparently superficial".

There stands the condemnation from the mouth of a Government Minister. I do not want to interpret that in too harsh a fashion, or be too critical. I simply say that in view of those words everyone in the House and in the Government must be very conscious of the degree to which progress must still be made, and very conscious of the degree to which that which has been reached is no milestone in this struggle, but a mere hiccup in the progress of the anti-acid rain fight.

On March 11, 1981, the President of the United States said: "We want to continue to work co-operatively to understand and control the air and water pollution that respects no borders". Those are the words to which the Government must attempt to hold the President of the United States and his administration.

In rising to address this topic I do not seek to speak out against the United States because I am well aware of the commitments and sincere and determined efforts which are being made at several levels in the United States in the cause of preservation of the environment against the depredations of acid rain.

Congressman Henry Waxman, head of a House of Representatives committee responsible for considering that sort of legislation, has some very real criticisms of the Prime Minister's (Mr. Mulroney) celebration of this agreement. He feels that it may undercut the efforts which Congress has been making over the last five years to get real measures, real research, and real cut-backs in the pollution levels as they presently stand.

We note that there are interests in the United States which are against any measures to control acid rain, or would only support those measures which are so obvious and so economical as to be virtually derisory in their effect, both on the debate and on the problem itself. Apparently the head of the United States National Coal Association likened environmental activists to terrorists from the Middle East and said that a deal will be good because it gives the Prime Minister a pay-off for his friendliness toward the United States.

That sort of attitude cannot be allowed to continue. It is the sort of attitude which will continue to create problems in

bilateral relationships. If the Prime Minister cannot overcome the patronizing and paternalistic attitude of people, even those who have no place in the United States Government, obviously Canada will continue to have problems with acid rain in the future.

Before he was elected President, the President of the United States dismissed environmental concerns by saying that trees pollute more than cars. He may have been talking about the nocturnal emissions of carbon dioxide, but even so, that is the sort of statement which, very unfortunately, sticks in the public mind and was likely to convince people that all is well when in fact we have an incipient environmental disaster affecting, not only eastern and northeastern Canada, but the New England states where, in addition to American-based environmental pollution, Canadian-based pollution crosses the border and affects their environment.

Canadians owe it to themselves and to the Americans whom we are seeking to influence, to acknowledge that Canada is a major contributor to its own acid rain problem. We owe it to ourselves to ensure that we not only take action on the bilateral front, but also on those problems which are entirely within our own jurisdiction and which we are entirely capable of handling on our own.

I will conclude by saying that to celebrate what was agreed on last week is, at worst, totally unrealistic and, at best, highly premature. We stand on the road of a problem which will stretch a great distance into the future before a real solution can be reached. I believe that we owe it to all Canadians to recognize the little progress which we have made on that road to date, and to bend the efforts of everyone in the country to further progress toward solutions of these very serious environmental problems.

Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I hope my remarks today will not have to be overly lengthy, but I do want to make some comments. Along with others in this House, I have been engaged in the battle to end acid rain for a good many years. Some of my friends on the other side will remember that I had the responsibility, as Minister of the Environment under the Government of the Right Hon. Joe Clark, to enter into the first high level discussions with the Government of the United States and the administration of then President Carter. Those discussions led to the presentation of the memorandum of intent which was eventually entered into between President Carter, in the last weeks of his administration, and the then Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Trudeau.

Remarks have been made today about what happened after that. All Hon. Members know what happened after that. Certain advisers to the President and his Cabinet took the position that there was no acid rain problem, or, if there was one, it came from natural causes, or, if there was some problem from other than natural causes, it was not doing any damage, or, even if it was doing damage, we did not know enough to do anything about it.