

The interrelationships between environmental factors and health are highly complex ones. This results in appreciable uncertainty on many issues on which judgments and decisions are required. It is important, therefore, that any regulatory actions be followed up by monitoring and surveys to determine if these actions have indeed achieved the desired effect. This may involve analysis to determine the quantities of toxic agents present in the environment, and much is already done by the Department of the Environment to provide just this type of information.

In some cases it may be preferable to assess the health status of target populations either by intensive studies in high risk groups or by more general surveys such as the Canada Health Survey. In conjunction with the provinces, this type of investigation is now well established in the Health Protection Branch's programs. It seems to me that many of the matters proposed for an institute of human environmental studies are already dealt with in the Environmental Health Directorate of the Health Protection Branch of the Department of National Health and Welfare.

Co-operation with the provinces is being achieved through consultative mechanisms that are in place; a number of joint investigations have already resulted from these arrangements. Other aspects, inferred in the motion, are already addressed by ongoing programs of the Department of the Environment and by other federal agencies. Again, consultative mechanisms, formal and informal, exist to ensure co-ordination of programs.

● (1640)

In summary, the scientific and medical expertise already exists within the federal and provincial governments to achieve the aims suggested for the proposed institute, and while there is always room for improvement in the co-ordination or development of existing programs I find it difficult to persuade myself that we need yet another structure when there are existing structures in place.

Mr. F. A. Philbrook (Halton): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to join the debate today on motion No. 5 which proposes the establishment of an institute of human environmental studies.

I should like to congratulate the hon. member for Malpeque (Mr. MacLean) for bringing forward this motion. The subject is a noble one. It harks back to the more idealistic concepts of the sixties and the stress which was laid then on education, culture, science, and the preservation of the environment. It is certainly a contrast to many of the more hard-nosed subjects with which we seem to be preoccupied in the seventies—economics, law and order, and so on.

We have already heard about the government's role in environmental concerns. Some age old problems have been brought under control in countries like Canada although not in many less advanced countries, problems such as poor sanitation, inadequate and unsafe water supplies, poor or non-existent waste disposal systems, communicable diseases, insect and animal reservoirs and vectors of disease. These have recently been replaced, however, by other environmental hazards of modern industrial society—heavy metal poisoning often involving mercury or lead, and our leisurely, sedentary lifestyle. The latter is

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being attacked by the federal department of health through a modern approach which may prove more economical as well as more effective than health care.

Research and control programs are being conducted with respect to many chemical and physical agents in our surroundings which might affect our health, agents in the air, the soil and in the water. But there is a further approach apart from the considerable and fine work which is going on in government. I became aware of this other approach to the environment in 1974, and indeed I became involved in it.

I should like to refer to some correspondence. The subject involves the concept of a United Nations university with headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, and departments scattered around the world. Perhaps there will be one in Canada. There is a certain interest in having a department of the environment in the UN university in Canada, perhaps in Toronto.

On February 4, 1975, I received a letter from Professor Alfred P. Bernhart, Chairman, Environmental Health, University of Toronto. It read:

Dear Dr. Philbrook:

The United Nations General Assembly, as you probably know, has passed a resolution to form a United Nations University. Japan has taken the initiative to secure the United Nations University headquarters in Japan, yet several centres will be spread throughout the world.

As Toronto citizens, we feel strongly that Canada, and Toronto in particular, should be the location of the centre for environmental problems.

We feel that in Toronto there are many of the intellectual resources which are needed for such a centre and we feel that the support of such an undertaking would fall very well into Canada's external aid program.

The Mayor of the City of Toronto has set up a committee under the chairmanship of Alderman David P. Smith and this committee has reported to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

We respectfully request at this time that you support this endeavour in discussions with the Hon. Allan J. MacEachen, Secretary of State for External Affairs.

A little later, on March 31, 1975, I received a second letter from Professor Bernhart as follows:

Dear Dr. Philbrook:

Thank you for your encouraging response to our request to support the United Nations University concept in discussions with the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan MacEachen.

I am sorry that it took us so long to answer, but there were some important developments during the last two months, which clarified matters relating to the head office of the United Nations.

The Secretary General of the United Nations, after receiving advice from a selection committee, has appointed Dr. James Hester (President New York University) to be rector of the United Nations University effective September 1975 for a 5 year term, once renewable. Also appointed were 24 members of the governing council of the United Nations University, the council then elected Dr. Roger Gaudry (Rector University of Montreal) their chairman.

The rector will establish the United Nations headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. Japan has pledged an endowment fund of \$100 million. The fund will be payable in 5 yearly installments, but only if that amount is less than 25 per cent of money given to the United Nations by all countries. In other words, they expect other countries to allocate \$300 million. Only one country has so far responded: Senegal with \$23,000.00.

In its charter, the United Nations University states as objectives the betterment of mankind's conditions, co-existence, human rights, social justice, quality of life environment and resources. The charter outlines a head office (now decided to be in Tokyo) and several (ten to twelve) centers located in various countries of the world, each for one "Mission" (for Canada we suggest the environmental center).