



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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AN OECD IMPERATIVE: CONSULTATION AND CO-OPERATION

A Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, on June 8, 1971, to the OECD Ministerial Meeting in Paris.

We meet at a time of considerable economic difficulty for many, if not most, of the members of our Organization. Problems of unemployment and inflation continue to plague us. The recent crisis in the international monetary system and its longer-term implications call for study and action by member governments if we are to bring about greater stability in the financial environment. Seeking solutions for continuing difficulties and new problems is the first responsibility of the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), and it has shown itself capable of doing so. Canada gives its full support to the aims and activities of the Organization and will continue to contribute to the efforts of the various committees and working parties active within the broad context of economic policies and prospects. I am very interested in the report the Secretary-General circulated to us on environment policies. Nowhere are the complexities of modern industrial societies more apparent, and more fundamentally important, than in this general context of "quality of life". We fully support the work of the OECD on environmental problems. In particular, we believe that continuing investigations on the basis of sectors such as air and water management, urban management and unintended occurrence of chemicals in the environment are essential underpinnings to the wider task of apprehending environmental problems in an economic and trade context. Some of the work being undertaken on an ad hoc basis, such as that on pollution by the pulp-and-paper industry, is, I need hardly remind you, of particular interest to Canada. The rectoral groups are in themselves "early warning systems", which can identify the problem areas that need urgent and concerted attention.

The same can be said of the procedure for notification and consultation on measures for control of substances affecting man and his environment, which can perhaps be expanded and broadened in the future as the Organization develops further experience in such matters.

We find in the documents before us that the rate of growth in the OECD areas as a whole in 1970, at 2.5 per cent, was only one-half of the 1969 rate and of the average in the Sixties. The 4 percent forecast for the current year is a more acceptable rate of growth, and will bring our collective output closer to the objectives of this Organization and its members. While the revival of the