

. . . [T]here needs at least to be a dialogue—I don't see any problem with that—even informal dialogue, so that we are meshing together our energies and our efforts and our resources to do the best we can to overcome environmental degradation. I think that way Canada can make a much better contribution to the saving of this planet, and can set strong leadership. Let's not go off in different directions; let's work together at doing this. . .

. . . It is an absurd way to go about using our resources most efficiently and effectively on any issue, not just on the environment but on a lot of other issues as well that cross over the borders between the different levels of government.³¹

2.27 It is therefore clear to the Committee that the “status quo” that is widely supported (para. 1.23) is far from being a “static quo”. Powers in regard to the environment are widely shared at present, among federal, provincial and municipal governments, the private sector and individual Canadians. The prospect of significant powers being exercised by aboriginal groups seems imminent. Concurrency is already a reality, even if in a different form to that in which the term is normally used by constitutional lawyers. Mechanisms are evolving or being strengthened to develop partnership and cooperation among those who share this power. Additional mechanisms for dialogue and concerted action are demanded and are likely to be needed during the 1990s.

2.28 It is this sense of creative dynamism that causes the Committee to avoid recommending at this time significant changes in the formal division of powers in regard to the environment. Growing recognition of the complexities imposed by ecosystem relationships, the global character of so many environmental problems, and the logical consequences of a sustainable development approach all point towards a very wide diffusion of environmental power, and to growing cooperation among the diverse holders of that power. Echoing Mr. MacMillan (para. 1.22 above) we can anticipate that what is happening in 1991 may be unrecognizable a decade from now, “so different at that point will the world be in the context of the environment”.

D. Environmental Union: The Integration of Environment and Economy in Sustainable Development

2.29 It appears to the Committee that this sense of dynamism and of the need to provide for the integration of environmental concerns throughout Canadian economy and society is inadequately recognized in the Government's proposals in *Shaping Canada's Future Together*. This has evidently given rise to concern among some of the witnesses who appeared before us, especially in regard to the proposals on the economic union. For example, witnesses from the Rawson Academy for Aquatic Science and the Canadian Bar Association both argued, from their different perspectives, that if the economic union needs a strengthened role for the federal government, the same is true for what they regard as the environmental union that is also Canada.

[E]nvironmental and economic policy are inextricably intertwined. Thus, Canada cannot have an effective economic union if environmental rules are balkanized. . .

³¹ Issue 14, pp. 20-21.