

During that two-year period the two countries established a bilateral research consultative group to co-ordinate the research programs under way in both our countries to improve our understanding of the long-range transportation of air pollution.

**Memorandum  
of Intent**

The two annual reports produced by that group demonstrated clearly that acid rain was by far the most pressing and serious of the transboundary air pollution problems. Not surprisingly therefore, acid rain is emphasized in the Memorandum of Intent. Specifically, the Memorandum of Intent did three things: First, it committed the two countries to begin formal negotiations on a bilateral air-quality agreement by June 1, 1981. Second, it established five joint Canada/U.S. working groups designed to develop a common information base for both countries to use in the negotiations. Third, it called upon both countries to undertake interim control actions under existing authorities to reduce transboundary air pollution pending the conclusion of a bilateral agreement.

The first interim reports of the work groups have been completed and are now available to the public. Further and more refined reports should be available this summer.

Despite their preliminary character, the interim reports demonstrate very clearly that our concerns about acid rain have not been misplaced. The problem is real, it's widespread and its effects are worsening.

It's superficially logical to argue, as the thermal power companies and smelters in both our countries have, that we should have precise cause-and-effect and cost-benefit analysis before spending one penny on control. The self-serving character of that argument becomes clear when we recognize the unfeasibility of meeting that request within a time frame during which much of the damage could be prevented.

**Interim action  
by Canada**

Moreover, any reasonable person can see that if the environment is being seriously overloaded, large reductions in acid-causing pollutants will be necessary, to approach a natural equilibrium. The sooner the controls are instituted, the more damage will be prevented. The recognition of this fact underlay the inclusion in the Memorandum of Intent of the call for interim-control action. In Canada we've begun to move in response to the call for interim action. The allowable daily emissions of sulphur dioxide from the huge Inco smelter in Sudbury, Ontario, already at 50 per cent of uncontrolled levels, have been dropped further from 3,600 tons a day to 2,500 tons a day, and they'll drop again to 1,950 tons next year. We have in place a special federal/provincial task force examining ways of bringing those emissions down even more, probably below 1,000 tons a day. That would represent close to 90 per cent control. A new copper smelter under construction in Timmins, Ontario will have 97 per cent removal of SO<sub>2</sub>.

Under a regulation just issued, total sulphur dioxide emissions from Ontario's thermal power stations are to be reduced by 43 per cent during this decade, despite an expected growth in demand.

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