

both positive and negative in character. Modern technological development has had environmental consequences of a magnitude and complexity which were unforeseen ten years ago. Today, phenomena scarcely recognized in 1970, such as acid rain, ozone depletion and the accumulation of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, have become issues of both domestic and international concern. Hazardous waste disposal and the health effects of new chemicals have acquired increasing international significance. Traditional, although no less significant, concerns such as air and water pollution, urban growth, deforestation, and soil degradation are becoming more internationalized; these phenomena do not recognize international boundaries.

On the positive side, both the Canadian government and the international community have recognized the seriousness of these issues and are planning various measures to deal with them. Progress at both the domestic and international levels has been encouraging. Two examples come to mind in which this country has been particularly active. Canada played a major role at the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 which established the United Nations' environment programme. It also hosted an international Conference on Human Settlements, "Habitat", in Vancouver in 1976 which led to the creation of the United Nations' Commission on Human Settlements. There were a number of other successes, including the 1979 Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution.

Closer to home, the Canadian government has to work out environmental protection agreements with our neighbours. Negotiations are commencing this month with the United States for the formulation of an agreement on transboundary air pollution. A successful outcome is literally vital to Canadians. This is another issue on which the government will be vigilant in the Canadian interest.

Solutions to the problems we confront in the environmental sphere must be found although they are not easy to come by. Yet there is no question that Canada and other nations of the world have to focus now on the sort of planet we need to live in a decade or two or three away. We cannot ignore the active potential for ecological disaster that is building. We cannot, to coin a phrase, de-regulate our responsibilities.

It is significant that this House recognized those responsibilities when we recently voted unanimously to provide the authority, through amendments to the Clean Air Act, to meet our obligations to the United States vis-à-vis transboundary air pollution. We are hopeful the United States will take the same step.