

cutbacks in US environmental spending for the situation (*Globe and Mail*, July 13). The US Environmental Protection Agency had fifty percent of its budget cut by the Reagan administration (*The Citizen*, June 17). Toxic chemicals, including dioxin, are leaking into the Niagara River and Lake Ontario from old chemical waste sites in New York state (*Globe and Mail*, July 13). A "gloomy" report had been released in June based on a US congressional study into the matter. The report, said to support many of Canada's concerns, showed that "the US is finding it difficult to meet agreement commitments and that to do so will require greater focus and direction of existing efforts" (*The Citizen*, June 17).

Neil Young (NDP, Beaches) asked the House of Commons July 23 to approve a motion for the government to table a report he said had been received two weeks earlier from the US Environment Protection Agency. The report recommended the repopulation of the Love Canal neighborhood and called the area in which toxic chemicals had been found "safe." Mr. Young told the House of Commons that such a recommendation had "grave consequences for the Niagara River and Lake Ontario."

The NDP had recommended in the House of Commons June 30 that an all-party committee be established to look into toxic chemical pollution, and act as a "monitor" of Canada-US efforts to clean up the Great Lakes and Niagara River. The NDP Environment Task Force, chaired by Mr. Young, met with the New York State Environmental Conservation Ad Hoc Committee on July 22 and 23 to discuss ways and means to cleaning up the toxic chemical pollution (NDP press release, July 16).

Acid Rain: Power Sale Cancellation

A proposed sale of electricity by Ontario Hydro to General Public Utilities (GPU) of New Jersey was cancelled June 11 by the prospective purchaser. Environmentalists and some federal MPs, including Environment Minister John Roberts, had opposed the National Energy Board's (NEB) approval of the sale in April, charging that the acid rain fallout produced would surpass acceptable levels. Mr. Roberts wanted tougher acid rain emission controls. He also considered it important to apply the same standards for pollution control to Canadian plants that the government had been urging the US to adopt. The federal Cabinet had been examining its position at the time of the cancellation announcement (See "International Canada," April and May, 1982, in *International Perspectives*, July/August, 1982).

Reasons for the withdrawal given by GPU were financial. It had transpired that the contract with Ontario Hydro, which would have electricity generated at the coal-burning plant in Nanticoke and exported by a power cable under Lake Erie, would exceed estimates by one hundred million dollars. GPU alternately arranged to purchase power from old coal-fired plants on the Detroit River in Michigan. Opposition MPs in the House of Commons June 12 charged that Cabinet "dithering" had "bought time" for the New Jersey company to look into alternatives and "get out" of the contract. The Ontario Hydro sale would have created 7,000 man-years of employment and an estimated one billion dollars in power profits, resulting in a reduction of hydro rates for Ontario residents. Ontario Hydro will have to pay 2.3 million in cancellation charges to firms it had

contracted, and GPU will pay 6.1 million in similar costs. *The Citizen* reported June 12.

Environmental groups who had opposed the deal were reportedly pleased with the cancellation. According to *The Citizen* (June 12), Energy Probe official Jack Gibbons said that since the US coal-fueled plants had "scrubbers", acid rain fallout on Ontario would be less than if produced by the Ontario plant in Nanticoke. Scrubbers are large, complex machines that spray wet powdered limestone into the smoke from furnaces to remove acid gasses. Under present Ontario regulations, an estimated 90,000 tonnes of acid emissions would have resulted (*Globe and Mail*, June 12). The Ontario government had argued the contrary, saying that acid rain fallout would be greater if produced by the Michigan plants, because Ontario Hydro was adding two scrubbers to its plant. Ontario Hydro had made the commitment to reduce acid emissions by fifty percent starting in 1985.

On July 19, Ontario Hydro announced that because of the GPU cancellation, it would "defer for up to seven years" the \$240 million plan to install the scrubbers. "One of the reasons the scrubbers were there, the major reason, was for GPU," a Hydro spokesman said. Last winter, at the time of the NEB hearings into the proposed sale, Hydro spokesmen had testified that they expected that adding the scrubbers would "set an example for the utilities in the Ohio Valley." The June 19 decision came at a time when the US Senate was debating a plan to reduce acid rain and Canada-US acid rain talks were "threatening collapse," the *Globe and Mail* reported June 20.

Heavy criticism of the Ontario Hydro decision followed the announcement. Environmental groups and MP Ron Irwin (Lib., Sault Ste. Marie), Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, thought the decision would weaken arguments used by US legislators campaigning for tougher US controls — that Canada was making progress toward reducing the pollution. At the time of the NEB approval of the sale, Mr. Irwin, the chairman of the House of Commons subcommittee on acid rain, had not thought that the two proposed scrubbers would be sufficient. He told reporters July 22, "I think they (Hydro) have tried to bamboozle the public who have a very high perception of the problem, and in the process they have lost their credibility" (*The Citizen*, July 23). (See this issue, BILATERAL — US, Acid Rain: US Senate Decision.)

Acid Rain: US Senate Decision

During a period in June when acid rain reduction negotiations between Canada and the US administration were reportedly stalled, the US Senate Environment Committee announced June 22 that it unanimously approved a plan to combat the "real and significant atmospheric poisoning." The plan calls for an eight-million tonne — almost thirty percent — reduction in sulphur dioxide emissions originating in the US over twelve years (*The Citizen*, June 23).

The US Senate decision was hailed in Canada. Environment Minister John Roberts called it an "overwhelming recognition by some of the US Senate's leading and most respected members of the need to begin now to deal with acid rain" (*The Citizen*, July 23). The House of Commons unanimously approved a motion July 22, "That this House go on record as supporting the action of the Senate