

Mr. Secretary, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Official visits, such as that of my friend and colleague Cy Vance, are among the visible ways in which states carry out their diplomacy. Through sessions such as we have just finished we "exchange views" on a multitude of issues which affect us directly or which are of general interest to us. Diplomacy includes ceremonies such as this one in which we sign documents which pledge agreement to certain principles and objectives, and commit ourselves to certain courses of action.

The new Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement is typical of the relationship between Canada and the United States. Throughout our history, relations between our two countries have been characterized in various ways. I believe that this Agreement is an accurate example of the way we live together. It represents the practical approach of our two peoples to resolving problems which affect us both, to which both are contributors, but neither can solve alone. We get together, roll up our sleeves and through a mixture of shared expertise, compromise and a desire to do the best we can, come up with a solution which works to our mutual benefit.

Diplomats other than those from the State Department or External Affairs were involved in the negotiation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Our officials were well coached by those who understand the scientific and technical issues. Today we should recognize those other diplomats -- the state, provincial and federal officials with responsibilities for monitoring, managing, restoring and enhancing the water quality of the Great Lakes Basin.

It is typical that these Ambassadors were not satisfied with the great amount of progress made under the 1972 Agreement. They discovered a good deal more about the Great Lakes in the past five years. In negotiating the new Agreement they set themselves even stricter objectives for the prevention of pollution and for the enhancement of water quality. These comprehensive objectives are now firmly between the covers of the Agreement we have just signed.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize and welcome to this ceremony Mrs. Barbara Blum, Deputy Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Dr. Harry Parrott, Minister of the Environment for the Province of Ontario, and officials from the Province of Quebec. It is in no small part due to the strenuous efforts of environmental and provincial officials, in co-operation with the general public and their local representatives, that substantial progress has been achieved under the 1972 Agreement.