

April 1988

THE TORONTO ECONOMIC SUMMIT
7. ANCILLARY ISSUES

Subjects as important as protection of the environment, science and technology, narcotic drug abuse, AIDS, and education have been addressed by Summit leaders in the past. It is not yet clear whether or how these issues will be addressed at the Toronto Summit in view of the desire of leaders to focus on the major economic issues of the hour. Among these many issues the following may be of particular interest to Summit leaders this year.

Environment - Summit leaders at the Venice Summit in 1987 reaffirmed their shared responsibility for protecting the natural environment. This has been reflected in the activities of Summit countries in multilateral and UN agencies dealing with such problems as the control of hazardous substances, ozone layer depletion, long-range transport of air pollution (acid rain), and other air and water pollution questions. In September 1987, the Montreal Protocol on Protection of the Ozone Layer was signed.

The report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Report) was released in April 1987 and multilateral institutions and United Nations organizations are considering how its recommendations can be followed-up in relevant fora. The report makes wide ranging recommendations, centered on the achievement of "sustainable development" through the integration of environmental considerations into economic and social decision-making, and protecting common environmental assets for future generations.

Science and technology - Science and technology have been featured on the Economic Summit agenda in various ways for the past five years. This reflects both the growing importance of technology in economic affairs as well as the increasing internationalization of science and technology.

At the 1983 Summit, Japan proposed an annual conference of independent "wise men" on the ethical implications of progress in the life sciences, and this April the Fifth Summit Conference on Bioethics will be held in Italy.

Health issues such as cancer (1985) and AIDS (1987) have preoccupied Summit Leaders in the past and continue to do so. They strongly support multilateral cooperation on health issues, notably through the World Health Organization.