

while the acid rain phenomenon has not yet had as profound a recognition generally in the United States as it has had in Canada, alert and far-sighted Americans appear to be heeding the warning signs.

I believe, also, that legislators in the United States are unlikely to fly in the face of our historical methods of resolving problems common to our two countries. Canada and the United States have developed a long tradition over the years of solving their environmental problems effectively, fairly and with careful attention to international law and responsibility. The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement is a particularly fine example of how our countries have co-operated to deal effectively with a large-scale pollution problem.

But acid rain is a serious bilateral issue because Canadians perceive that further delay in tackling the burgeoning threat of acid rain can result in further incalculable damage. Such delays would be particularly repugnant to Canadians if they were the result solely of narrow vested interests. But it is clear that legislative action is now vital if further damage is to be averted. It was in recognition of this that the Canadian House of Commons and the Senate recently voted unanimously to provide the authority -- through amendments to the Clean Air Act -- to meet our obligations towards the United States vis-à-vis trans-boundary air pollution.

In light of this legislative action, and the actions taken to begin controlling Canadian pollutant sources, Canadians now expect the United States to demonstrate the same degree of concern to address the problem. In short, we in Canada are convinced that we cannot resolve acid rain ourselves. We urgently need the co-operation of the United States.

The importance of acid rain in Canada-U.S. relations is also demonstrated by the attention it received during the visit of President Reagan to Ottawa in March. It was among the major bilateral issues discussed. I can assure you that Canada was pleased to receive the President's assurances that negotiation of an agreement to deal with the problem would proceed as planned, and that the United States wants to work co-operatively with Canada to understand and control air as well as water pollution. We regard this as an important commitment by the United States Government.

The United States' commitment to commence negotiations in June in accordance with a Memorandum of Intent was reiterated just last week by a senior State Department official. In short, we intend to press on.