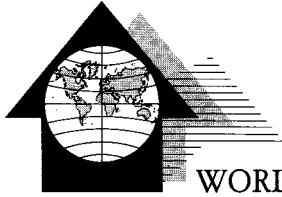


OTTAWA PUBLIC HEARINGS

EVENING SESSION

May 28, 1986

Tapes 1 to 3



WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC HEARINGS
OF THE
WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
WITH
U.S. NGOs

Evening Session
May 28, 1986
Ottawa, Canada

U.S. NGOs Present

Barbara Bramble, National Wildlife Federation
Fred Pinkum, Population Crisis Committee
Bill Nagle, US NGO Steering Group
Tom Stoel, Global Tomorrow Coalition
Don Lesh, Global Tomorrow Coalition
David Runnalls, International Institute for Environment
and Development

US NGOs PUBLIC HEARINGS

May 28, 1987

Evening Session

TAPE 1 - SIDE 1

Gro Harlem Brundtland

We welcome the US NGOs that have given us the opportunity to have this special session during our meetings, and the way we will deal with these issues tonight may make it appropriate to say that we are having a kind of environmental jam session.

First, we are listening to the Global Tomorrow Coalition. We are very happy to have received your well-prepared paper. But we also are looking forward to having your introductions to this evening's discussion. But we have around here people who are also

here in this open discussion, people from Canada listening to this evening's discussion and they can also get into the discussion in addition to the Commissioners, of course. I now pass the floor to Don Lesh of the Global Tomorrow Coalition.

DON LESH: Madam Chairman and distinguished members of the Commission. I'm really delighted and I feel privileged that we are able to join you for this evening. We understand all too well the terrible time pressures under which the Commission must operate and the very important period of private time which had been set aside for these closing days of your Canadian visit and it's doubly a concession and doubly pleasant for us to be able to join you for a couple of hours and make a little window for some representations from the United States. There are several of us here from the Global Tomorrow Coalition. I should stress that our members are other organizations so virtually everyone who you may meet tonight or may hear from will be wearing at least two hats, their own plus some participation in the Global Tomorrow Coalition. Let me just quickly name some of these and ask them if they would tell you who they are and what they're doing in regard to the issues of interest to the World Commission on Environment and Development. First of all, Barbara Bramble of the National Wildlife Federation, a member of our steering committee.

BARBARA BRAMBLE: Good evening, I'm Barbara Bramble. I'm the director of international programs of the National Wildlife Federation. The Federation is the largest conservation education organization in the United States, probably around the world. It has about four and a half million, more or less, members and supporters. We are working on many issues of natural resource

conservation, but in the international field particularly the interface of environment and development which is your work here. I have been concentrating on the impacts of the developed world upon the developing world particularly through the aid and trade situation that is causing at the moment a very serious debt problem in third world countries. I'm here as a supporter of the paper which has been prepared by the Global Tomorrow Coalition and I would be happy to answer any of your questions and discuss these issues with you this evening. Thank you.

DON LESH: I might say that I will arbitrarily leave three introductions to the end because we will have three presentations and I will ask each one of them to make their own introductions. Is Dr. Fred Pinkum who is President of the Population Crisis Committee here?

FRED PINKUM: Thank you Don. Good evening, everyone. I'm Dr. Fred Pinkum, President of the Population Crisis Committee in Washington, D.C. It is a fully private organization without federal support of any kind. We work very closely with less developed country governments and organizations in those countries on their population and related problems. We also work closely with the U.S. government in a NGO capacity and belong to and support a number of coalitions such as the Global Tomorrow Coalition. There are about 75 major NGO's working in the population field in the United States, another 150 if you add universities and foundations. The number of coalitions now appearing in the United States combining population, resources, environment and related global issues as those issues and conditions become more evident to everyone. For these organizations I implore the Commission to consider population growth, especially where it's burgeoning and exacerbating other problems, as

an equal if not more than equal condition needing attention along with water, toxic waste, and other problems before you. It's a major world problem threatening better life everywhere for everyone on the globe. Yet I find it's often left out in the considerations of groups such as this but I'm pleased to find that the population is in the report of the Global Tomorrow Coalition, it better be, and the, in other documents that have come before the Commission. I and heads of other NGO's in the United States in the population field stand ready to assist you any way we can any time, just call on us.

DON LESH: I think it's worthy of note that in fact Fred, even long before there was a Global Tomorrow Coalition paper, the population was specifically and categorically identified in the mandate for change document which governed the deliberations of the WCED. There are two other colleagues from the United States who took part in the media seminar this afternoon who I will not ask to speak but I'd just like to call attention to the fact that they're with us. One is Dr. George Woodwell from the Woods Oceanographic Institution who spoke this afternoon on CO₂ as I understand it and climatic change. The second is David Worth, staff attorney from the Natural Resources Defence Council, who gave a presentation on the role of the multilateral development banks and environment. There are three documents which will be presented to the Commission at this time. The first of those will be presented to you by William Nagel, a senior associate of the World Resources Institute. Bill is not formally a member of the Global Tomorrow Coalition steering committee, but I'm happy to say frequently attends our meetings and always takes an active role. I will let him describe the World Resources Institute and the holistic inter-disciplinary impulse that led to the paper called Making Common Cause which he will present.

WILLIAM NAGEL: Thank you Don. Madam Chairman, members of the Commission. I'm here this evening not in my capacity with the World Resources Intitute, but rather than Chair of a U.S. NGO steering committee on environment development and population. Just a word of background on how that came to be. Many of you are aware that the Environmental Liaison Centre with some financial assistance from the United Nations Environment Program had an important international meeting in February of 1985. It was the first time, on at least a significant international level, that environment and development NGO's were brought together to discuss what common agreement they might be able to come to on sustainable development and how indeed these two NGO communities could cooperate better together. When the U.S. delegates to that conference came back, there was a meeting in New York about a month later that established a steering committee which I indicated I've been chairing for the past 15 months or so now, the steering committee was charged with finding ways to see if these two communities, first of all, the environment and development communities, could come to some common agreement, some common statement of principle, and then a common agreed on action plan. We worked on that for a number of months and then we decided it would be an inadequate statement at best if we did not include the very significant population and family planning NGO community in the United States. And so, the statement you have before you is the product of about 15 months work of basically of consensus building. The basic statement is only four pages and those of you are as old or older than I, will appreciate the fact that it's in very large type. But that statement which was argued and fought over for those many months does constitute a significant consensus of a significant number of the leadership of those three NGO communities. Now, why should this be presented to you tonight, to this World Commission? I think the only justification to

present a U.S. NGO statement like this is because we are certain it does have applicability to the wider NGO communities in the world, especially those focussed on the third world and on the dire problems of poverty in the third world. I want to share with you one paragraph from the preface to the statement and two or three paragraphs from the statement itself. From the preface, it reads: Over the past few months, representatives of the three NGO communities have dealt candidly with the various perceptions and prejudices that have kept them from jointly addressing the problems of the poor and developing countries. Some international development workers said they had often perceived environmentalists as elitists, more concerned with rare birds and virgin landscapes than with poor people. A few environmentalists saw development assistance specialists in the cloak of their old U.S. domestic antagonist, the economic developer. So most claim not so much a negative as a fuzzy image of their compatriots involved with developing countries. And some representatives of both these two communities criticized the population specialists as too single minded. Some population specialists in turn saw development and environment specialists as acknowledging population growth as a problem, and then treating it as an external variable that can be brushed aside especially when controversial. Therefore, with that background, and I think it would be fair to say it would be the background one would find in Canada, in Europe, indeed throughout the world. With that background, we did try to come to some common agreement, and the important essence of that agreement is in its most essential way an ethical statement and an ethical agreement. Let me just read very briefly from that.

A communications gap has kept environmental population and development assistance groups apart for too long, preventing us from being aware of our

common interest and realizing our combined power. Fortunately, the gap is closing. We now know that what unites us is vastly more important than what divides us. What unites us, we have a common goal in striving for a more livable, non violent planet, we share a deep concern for the world's poor, we affirm both the integrity, stability and beauty of the ecosystem and the imperative of social justice, we recognize that poverty, environmental degradation and population growth are inextricably related and that none of these fundamental problems can be successfully addressed in isolation. We will succeed or fail together. We realize that to accept a shared destiny with the rest of creation, and we really think if I can interject, we really think that this statement can probably just as easily be a statement, Madam Chairman, of your Commission. We realize that to accept a shared destiny with the rest of creation is to accept the reality of reciprocal interdependence and co-evolution. We agree with the late Barbara Ward, herself a bridge builder, that the great insights of the 1972 UN conference on the human development, human environment at Stockholm, were inter-connectedness and a sense of shared stewardship for our common planetary home. We regret that our own governmental leaders, and here we are talking about U.S. governmental leaders, today often seem to be denying yesterday's lesson. We are all passengers in the same spaceship or Madam Chairman, we think that the NGO communities in the United States have a particular role at this time in giving some kind of world leadership to our own governmental leaders and to the other people who are interested or focussed on foreign affairs, national security, development problems in general. And indeed we think that NGO's have a particular role to play in that throughout the world and that the indigenous NGO's in the third world countries themselves have a particular role and it is because of that that this same U.S. steering committee joined a

few weeks ago with their Canadian NGO colleagues in urging the planners of the conference that's opening this Saturday here in Ottawa, the World Conservation Strategy Conference, to hold a particular session on the role of NGO's, particularly indigenous NGO's in this case, the role of NGO's in the planning and implementation in the planning and implementation of national conservation strategies. We are convinced that the time has come for the NGO's to exert that kind of leadership, that that kind of leadership is most needed not only in the United States but indeed around the world. And so we are particularly eager to join with our Canadian colleagues in that effort and at the meeting itself, most importantly, to join with the NGO representatives from third world countries that will be there. I'll be happy after if there is any discussion of Tom Stole's and the Global Tomorrow Coalition's presentation on the sustainable development paper if you have any questions or observations about this effort, I'll be happy to respond to them. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

DON LESH: The next person I would like, Madam Chairman, to introduce is one of those who wears multiple hats. He may have the record for the evening. David Runnels as many of you know is Canadian, he's here partially representing the U.S. Global Tomorrow Coalition but he also is vice president of an international organization, the International Institute for Environment and Development, and directs its office in Washington, D.C. He is to present to your attention an extremely important new report called World Resources - 1986.

DAVID RUNNELS: Madam Chairman, member of the Commission. I'll be very, very brief. I'm partly under the steely eyes of some of my own board members on

the Commission. I'm as Don said, I suppose the ultimate chameleon on this meeting. I'm a Canadian and I direct the North American office of an international NGO. We, together with Mr. Nagel's organization, the World Resources Institute, have spent the past year and a half, a considerable sum of money and a considerable heartache in producing what we think could be a helpful document to the members of the Commission and to the staff, and that is this thing, the World Resources Report - 1986. I won't go into much detail because in fact my institute has previously testified before you in your first session I believe in Oslo, by colleague Richard Sandbrook appeared, and Gus Speth, the president of WRI has appeared before you I believe at your meetings in Brazil. I don't think it's fair for any organization no matter how many chameleons are in to take up that much of your time. I would briefly say that this is an attempt by us to set out as objectively as we can the pulse of the world's environment and natural resources. It is divided into four sections. I think the principal ones of interest to you would be section 2, which is conditions and trends, in which we attempt to try and assess conditions and trends in a series of fairly predictable, fairly familiar categories, food and agriculture, forests and range lands, population. Part 4, which are the statistical data tables at the back, which will be relatively familiar to those of you who have experience with the World Bank's World Development Report, is our best attempt to assemble as much reliable, relevant data on a whole range of environmental indicators as we can manage to do. We think that as NGO's one of the things we can do with part 4 particularly is to identify for the community at large how bad the information actually is in a whole range of areas. So you will find in part 4 a series of fairly professional statistical notations of the type that one finds at the bottom of OECD documents and UN documents. You will also find from us as many caustic comments as we could

get by our own statisticians about our real genuine lack of knowledge of a whole range of these issues. So I hope this thing will begin to start a trend. We are going to produce it on an annual basis. We know that it will only be really usable after four or five years when one can begin to identify trends, and begin to identify real choices for decision makers, but it's a first cut. We present it to you with some humility and some pride, and if we can make it of use to you and to your colleagues in your deliberations, we are more than happy to do so. Thank you.

DON LESH: The third document and the one in which we believe that we would lay greatest weight during the course of our discussion this evening, although we would welcome open discussion and questions on all these, is the paper on sustainable development and how to achieve it which was coordinated by the Global Tomorrow Coalition and will be presented by the principal author of the first draft, Tom Stole, who heads the international program of the Natural Resources Defence Council and is also president of Global Tomorrow Coalition. Before urging Tom to start, however, I wanted just to point out that I would suggest you not see these as separate documents. They represent in many cases an integrated approach, in particular the paper Making Common Cause was the product over the 15 months that Bill Nagel mentioned of a great many sessions, working sessions, steering committee sessions, which included many of the people you see here representing the Global Tomorrow Coalition or wearing a different hat. That paper as you may notice when you have time to read, suggests that it is very difficult to define the concept of sustainable development. Our paper, the Global Tomorrow Coalition coordinated paper, is an attempt to further the dialogue on what sustainable development means. We didn't work on it 15 months. It stemmed in large part from a conversation

with one of your own Commissioners, Bill Ruckelshaus, in December of last year. As part of his function as Commissioner of the WCED, he has asked several points of contact in the United States to assist him in liaison and circulation of information and papers, and had asked the Coalition who were very pleased to serve as a contact with a non governmental organization community. In our discussions, he suggested and I hope you don't mind my explaining all this, Bill, that central to the deliberations of the WCED is this concept of which we so easily speak of so glibly, sustainable development, but so rarely attempt to define. We realize that the paper that we have produced is a first crack. It has gone through many hands. Tom will also describe the process we try to go through in the coordination. It has faults, it has been criticized by members of our own NGO community, by some as being too broad, too inclusive, raising too many issues that are peripheral in their view to the development process. But I would have to say that the position of the Global Tomorrow Coalition could be described as determinedly unrepentant. We believe that the discussion of development in the past been far too narrow and in fact if we have erred on the side of opening the discussion more widely to new issues, new concepts, then we feel we've made some contribution. With that being said, I'll turn it over to Tom to describe in more detail how the paper came to be and what it contains.

TOM STOLE: Madam Chairman and members of the Commission. I'd like to join my colleague Don Lesh in expressing my deep appreciation for the opportunity to engage in this discussion with you. The paper we have submitted is entitled Sustainable Development and How to Achieve It. As Don mentioned, and as Bill Ruckelshaus suggested this morning, I thought I'd explain a little about how the paper came to be. After Bill requested that we prepare it, we put

together a draft toward the end of January which was then circulated to a number of NGO's in the United States and abroad. We received a total of about 40 comments, a number of them rather lengthy and very thoughtful. Then the draft was considerably revised in light of those comments. Thus far, seven NGO's listed on the cover have fully endorsed the paper. Their combined memberships total over 5 million people. As requested by Bill Ruckelshaus, the paper is a conceptual analysis, it explores the relationship between environment and development, not attempt to catalogue all the actions needed to achieve sustainable development. We'll leave that to you in your report. The paper begins by setting forth four requirements which we believe

TAPE 2 - SIDE 1

US NGOs Meeting
May 28, 1986
Evening

(Cont. of Stoel's statement)

are fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development.

The first of these requirements is the satisfaction of human needs especially the basic needs, such as food, clean water, health care and education.

The second requirement is freedom from unwanted dependence on the part of both individuals and nations. We feel very deeply that development must fulfill the aspirations of peoples themselves and not those imposed on them by others.

The third fundamental requirement is control of population growth which in some nations is causing human numbers to double in less than a generation. Obviously this cannot be a sustainable situation.

The fourth requirement is maintenance of natural and life support systems. In many places in the world, environmental deterioration is already making development unsustainable. The paper then goes on to set forth some of the actions needed to achieve these requirements.

These recommendations reflect our view that in general the main need is not for additional technical breakthrough but for proper application of knowledge the world already possesses.

The time available tonight does not permit even a summary of all of our many recommendations. So I will present just a few of the most important. If you find any missing or if on reading the paper you encounter others, we would be happy to answer questions about them during the discussion period.

With respect to production of material goods and energy we recommend that far more emphasise should be placed on methods of production which are small scale, decentralised and community based. We believe that this sort of emphasise will promote both public participation and development decision and environmental protection.

We also believe that there is a need to utilise the power of market forces to bring about efficiencies in both production and consumption of goods and energy. To this end, we call for elimination of pricing policies, governmental subsidies and other barriers to efficient production and consumption.

In keeping with our fundamental requirements, we recommend a number of actions to ensure that people are able to participate in development decisions which affect them. These actions include the adoption of freedom of information policies by both governments and aid agencies so that people are able to have access to documents involved in development planning and that they take part in that planning.

We also recommend informative efforts by governments and aid agencies to involve local people, NGOs, women and minorities in development decisions and in the implementation of development projects.

We recommend actions to control rapid population growth. Chief among these is strong support by governments and international agencies for systematic efforts to encourage family planning and facilitate choices for small families together with actions to reduce childhood mortality and ensure broader opportunities for women.

We recommend a number of actions to protect the environment and the natural resource base. They include strong environmental protection standards and very importantly institutions capable of enforcing them.

We recommend requirement that polluters not only pay the full cost of prevention and clean up of pollution but also pay the cost incurred by government in regulating and controlling pollution.

We recommend requirements that publicly available environmental impact assessments be prepared and considered before governments or aid agencies take actions which might harm the environment.

We recommend that important of hazardous substances be informed of the hazards and give their consent before export or import is permitted.

We recommend increased international cooperation including cooperative actions to address such key problems as acid rain, depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer and global warming due to build up of carbon dioxide and other gases.

We further recommend in this area of international cooperation the negotiation of treaties requiring assessment and consultations before nations take actions which might harm the environments of other nations and a treaty promoting international assistance to prevent extinction of wildlife species.

Finally, we recommend actions to ensure that the international economic system supports rather than defeats sustainable development. These actions include major changes in the policies of multilateral and bilateral aid agencies to ensure that they promote sustainable development. They include increased assistance to enable developing countries to protect their own environments and natural resources.

We recommend forgiveness of debt owed by the poorest nations and I was very interested to read in the paper this morning that Canada has in fact seems to have gone a long way in this direction yesterday in the United Nations.

Finally we recommend the re-direction to the purposes of sustainable development of a significant part of the resources now wasted on arms around the world.

That concludes a very brief summary of our paper. There are many other recommendations. You will find a fuller explanation in the executive summary and a very full explanation in the paper itself. We would be very happy to responde any questions and welcome the chance for this discussion with you.

Mrs Brundtland

Thank you to all of you. And it is indeed a very comprehensive document in relatively few pages. So I am personally impressed by what you have done. I have seen earlier drafts and they are really improving consistently from one draft to the other. I wish to say that this is a very good background and very helpful indeed to our own work. But I want to leave the floor open now to the Commissioners to pose questions and make comments to what you have presented. We have had an earlier draft, all of us, we have been looking through it before this meeting.

Mr. Ruckelshaus

I don't have any questions, Madam Chairman, I would like to commend the Global Tomorrow Coalition, Don Lesh, Tom Stoel, who made a major presentation and who did a lot of drafting on the paper. When I asked them several months ago if they would take a crack at this, why they were more than eager to do so.

They have wrestled with the complex concepts of environment and development just as this Commission is and have, I think, come up with a very successful document. As they have acknowledged any document of this kind is bound to stir some controversy even within the NGO ranks in the US. They are continuing to circulate the document and try to refine it further to get a stronger consensus behind it and I think it does help all of us in trying to understand what the sustainable development means, because as we have acknowledged I think from the outset this is a central concept of what we are attempting to do. And I would like to personally thank both of them and their Coalition for the all the work they have done.

Mrs. Brundtland

Janez, if nobody is asking for the floor I would ask you to repeat what you said earlier today in the meeting about this document, because it was beautifully said at that time and you can certainly repeat it to all these people as well.

Mr. Stanounik

You, Madam, know that I could fill anytime available. I would certainly like very much to congratulate the presentors of the report which I admire in very many respects. You know that this concept of sustainable development is one of the corner stones on which we try to build our own report and we therefore so much more appreciate your own efforts.

As you, Madam, although you have pulled my leg, I would of course like to repeat what I said at the Commission's session, namely I was particularly pleased in seeing that you have also come across with the difficulty which I have experienced with the so-called interdependence concept. And I rather therefore talk of interrelationship than interdependence. I sense that you feel that independence while with all the qualifications is one of the necessities of human rights which have to be also built into a healthy process of development.

Namely we have development, it must not be only development for people but also by people and of the people. And therefore independency or the state of not being as you say in a state of unwanted dependence is in my view extremely important to create the right kind of psychological and sociological atmosphere in which you could have the best creative forces of any society put to the best use.

Now, as a matter of fact, while I have the floor, I would like to ask one or two questions. I feel that economically one of the basic prerequisites for sustainable development is that the society in question creates certain surplus which it could ... back and thus increase productive capacities because development must also be growth. It is not growth, but development cannot be a state of stagnation as Adam Smith as said, stagnation is dull, progress is healthy, retrogration is moribund.

So I think if you are in a healthy state of society, then you must have growth. And to have growth, you must have surplus. Therefore we must probably build into the concept of sustainable development the capacity of the society not only to reproduce itself but also to create surplus from which it could then go towards progress.

Another aspect which I find rather important in the light of more recent experience is that society must have certain dynamic sources for development within itself. The so-called doctrine growth through trades which has dominated the minds for almost a decade, has brought too many particularly small nations in a state where they have not really been masters of their own will not because somebody was evil, but because the global trends have too much influenced their own national destinies.

Therefore, I think that one of the problems which we will face will be exactly this balance in between the not inward lookingness but in between the autochthonous societal forces and the support of international environment.

So I would like, because you have taken, I think on various international issues, very courageous stands, like on debt, like on the question of disarmament, I would like to see whether you, I of course anticipate that it is so, look at this particularly international environment for healthy national development in any way which you would like to convey to us.

Ambassador Sahnoun

Madam Chairman, I would like also to commend the US NGOs for their excellent work, papers produced, especially the one on which my good friend Janez has just elaborated, that is the one of sustainable development. I have actually just one or two questions that are more indicative of the answer which will be given on the way the NGOs act on specific issues.

The first question which is related to the first paper Making Common Cause. We have heard since we came to Canada elaboration about a number of problems, especially on an ecosystem which Canadian and yourselves share on the Great Lakes, and especially mention was made on the pollution on the Niagara River. Knowing that there is an important environmental regulation in the US such as the Clean Water Act or the Safe Drinking Water Act, how much the NGOs have been able to, on the basis of these regulations, undertake some specific action in coordination or cooperation with the Canadian colleagues.

The second question relates to the paper on sustainable development and there is important aspect in the question of trade, that is trade on hazardous exports. Mentioning the fact that products such as pesticides which are often imported from the North and which are causing widespread harm to human health

and to the environment in the South. Here again, if there is any action, it will be interesting to find out from our US NGO friends how they have been approaching this problem and what was the result they achieved

The third point which relates to the third document The World Resources 1986, I see that there is an indication that regional banks or the World Bank has begun to more or less act on the environment although timidly and the regional banks have practically done very little. This is rather less a question than a sharing of thought that it will be also important if there is some action on this because these regional banks have as members of their board the Government of the US and other governments from the developed countries. Therefore, there again, an action can be undertaken by the NGOs.

Istvan Lang

Thank you, Madam Chairman. During the last meeting of the Commission in Brazil, I raised a question in the discussion concerning the concept of sustainable development that we need some documents, some material, where the concept is summarised and different points of views are written because I think it is, or it was, a big lack in the good understanding of the philosophy of the sustainable development.

I told to my fellow Commissioners that I hate very much this word, sustainable development, because I never can say it correctly in English, and the second thing is that it is impossible to translate it into several foreign languages. I tried to make a translation in Hungarian, it couldn't happen, but what to do ? Anyhow this conception has many common things with our thinking also and I started to like better the sustainable development conception.

I am very glad, now thgt we have a document here. And we can discuss this document. And we can exchange different points and

approaches to this document. Perhaps we have no common agreement on the full text of that. But, anyhow we have many things which are common in this philosophy. First of all I would like to underline that unfortunately it was a too short time for me to study it very carefully. But anyhow I have some points and I will just tell to you, take it as my first impression after reading this document.

I appreciate very much that the authors of this document are thinking that sustainable development is a process of change, not a jump. It is not so that today unsustainable development, tonight we make a big jump and tomorrow will be a sustainable development. No, it is a long process and you need time for this process.

Secondly, I appreciate very much the concept that according to the authors, during this process we should meet the basic human needs. What does it mean. It means that for people who are not meeting their basic human needs we have to find all possible facilities to meet these human needs. It means that the world should not stay as it is now, a world of rich and a world of poor, but some equilibrium should be made and their basic needs should be met.

The third is that I appreciate very much that it is a very clear position on the problems of the disarmament. And I think it is very necessary and very useful, and I appreciate very much.

What is my problem, let me tell you very frankly. I think in this document there are some extreme points or views on the small scale, on the decentralisation and on the community-based decision support making systems. They are very necessary, but I cannot agree that which is small is sustainable. I think it reflects some extreme points and approaches and don't think everything should be decentralised and it will be better or only the small scale agricultural production and the small scale industry is the model for the future. On page 12 what is

written on agriculture and industry is a bit poor for me. I think it should be redrafted, ameliorated on a small food production system, nothing more.

I appreciate very much the community based decision making systems. In our conditions, in the conditions of socialist countries, we give a very high importance to this process. To us the community how they are thinking on the development of the settlements where they are living, on the regional developments, on the decision processes and so on. But I can't accept such a concept which is completely against any governments, any administrations, any high level structures.

May be I am overvaluating which is written here. But I think it is a bit extremist. You see, let us take as a joke, of course I cannot say as a joke again that may be it is a criticism against the socialist governments. But anyhow, as a basis for further discussion I think it is very good and very useful and I would be ready to translate it into Hungarian and to distribute it to our experts to be acquainted with these views, I don't know how we can solve the copyright problem, but I hope we can do it.

I would like again to express my satisfaction and my thanks at this paper on the table because it gives real basis for further discussions in this respect and I think there are more common things here than different points and different approaches. Thank you Madam.

Maurice Strong

Thank you, Madam Chairman. I think it is a very fine piece of work. And particularly when I see it bears the imprimatur of a group of organisations of the caliber that have done this and I realise that it is not easy to get an agreement amongst a group like this, anymore than is in our Commission or within the United Nations. I think it is absolutely first grade.

I have a couple of questions however, because we are dealing with a US perspective, and I have only been able to look over this lightly, like some of my colleagues, we have only just received it, and I may have missed it. But I really am looking for and would like to get verbal response to the question of the degree to which what you say here about sustainable development applies in the United States.

You seem to be using the term development in the context that most people use it, as if all development and all expectations about development were related to the Third World. Well, the industrialised countries are still developing, a very large portion of global development in the period from the year 2000 and beyond, which we're dealing with will still take place in the industrialized countries.

And what I want to ask is the US on a sustainable development path? What changes do you perceive in the year 2000 and beyond in US society? Do some of these the same things like participation, decentralization, participation of people in industrialization making? I know it exists, some of you people have made it exists in the US. But I see, may be it's my superficial reading, I see a kind of economy here you invoke

END OF TAPE 2 - SIDE 1

US NGOs Meeting

May 28, 1986

US NGOs PUBLIC HEARINGS

May 28, 1987

Evening Session

TAPE 2 - SIDE 2

Cont. of Strong's intervention

and its possible applicability to the Third World. But in fact I have seen very little about sustainable development in the U.S. Is development sustainable on the basis of sucking in billions of dollars a year from outside, and what will sustainable development in the U.S. mean to the possibilities of sustainable development elsewhere?

I think I can understand what you said about what is likely to be, because my agreement was so much of what you said here, but I would like to here a lot more from the NGO community in the U.S. about sustainable development in the US and the degree these things you think apply, or should apply. Related to that the whole question of better distribution of industrial capacity around the world which implies very significant changes in US perceptions and if the market systems were allowed to work on a worldwide basis, a lot of US industry would be phased out by the US.

US itself would become far more interdependent. Is the US ready for real interdependence? It would mean that it gets its steel from Korea and Japan and Brazil; it gets its vehicles from other sources; and on and on. Is the US ready for the operation of the market system on a global basis? I don't know, I just wonder.

Also, just related with the discussions we were having today, there is certainly an important reference in your paper to the need for equity and justice and fairness but not as much recognition as we have had in our own discussions about the tremendous degree to which the environment issue provides a rationale for giving the highest priority to the eradication of poverty. Poverty and environmental degradation are self re-enforcing. Poverty leads to degradation, degradation leads to the perpetuation of poverty. And that vicious cycle provides a new, more than just a moral, practical set of reasons for making the eradication of poverty a tremendous objective. Your facts on that for our guidance would be useful. Thank you.

Volker Hauff

I would like to pick up the point that Janez Stanovnik made when he mentioned that sustainable development means development and that means economic development. And as a matter of fact, the developing countries are capital-exporting countries in most cases today. Which means that there is no economic development possible with the consequence that they are trying to minimise their imports, to maximise their exports and the international banking system is telling them that they have to establish some austerity program.

Which also means that there is no development. The situation must be changed. Anybody who is looking on this problem from pure economic point of view comes to the end to the opinion that there is no solution and that we may present very interesting papers about very nice things but without any economic basis. Now, solving this problem is difficult, everybody agrees. Obviously, there is no simple solution to the problem, but it is quite clear whatever you are choosing in order to solve the problem, the consequences are very hard for the industrialised countries like mine but above all for the US. Did you take any action to prepare the public opinion in the US, what this means if there will be real reform of the debt crisis?

Mrs Marino de Botero

Thank you, Madam Chairman. I think around the table I am the nearest developing country you can find from the US, but just around the table. First I would like to congratulate David Runnalls. This looks like a tremendous directory of knowledge and certainly we will make use of it and try to come back to you with some feedback. It looks like a fantastic trouble and work you went through. From me also it is very difficult to analyse, to feedback through this paper because I did not have much time to look through it. But I certainly find that there are significant differences from the point of view in the presentation of the document.

We are tackling in the Commission the same issues, of course, and we do appreciate the tremendous effort of this document and I would recommend that we take a very good look at it because I know the formidable task you are doing in the US and certainly are allies of the environmental thought around the world. But despite those differences of approaches, I think two major items run through the work of what we could call the environmental resistance.

One is the fact that I think we all agree, we are all fighting against, the superstructures that are repeated in the national context, so it is not a question only of superpower, it is a question of the mentality of this enormous power, too much power perhaps for the wrong people.

And the other thing that is very important is that I agree completely in your second, let us say, issue that runs through the broad of this thing which is the local power. The decentralisation, the right to participate, the absolute right of people to join a democratic work, the democratic distribution and I think that that is really the major point that is the common ground between what we think it is the way to handle our own environment. To promote the decentralisation does not mean I think to impoverish the decision of the nations.

On the contrary, it means to grow together in a more rational way in which things that are different and communities that have different approaches can build together a more equitable and just nation. That is a very important point that you made here and to ensure that the people are able to participate in decisions, also coming down to people with legal input and empowering the people who have to take the decisions on their own grounds.

All these social efforts will be the only way that we think in the South, at least in our part of the world, that the community will be built up to defend its wealth as a nation and would continually more and more become really independent and free. I would like to discuss over this perhaps with some people of the Commission, but I really think that you have achieved a very good document and thank you for the presentation.

Emil Salim

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Three questions. One has to do with page 6: the freedom from unwanted dependence. Does it mean that unwanted independence is acceptable? This morning we discussed that the interrelation is growing and therefore some possible interdependence will be forthcoming. The question therefore is when you stress freedom from unwanted dependence, does it mean that you are in favour, or can be in favour of, unwanted dependent relationship?

Question No 2 has to do with decentralised small scale community based development and the second document of this Making Common Cause on the sustainable development, p. 3, I have the impression that the sustainable development in this document gives room with large scale economic development projects. But if it is not the case as in your other document.

What happens if the nature of development requires large scale development projects, hydro dams, road development and so on. And that goes into the third question mentioned at page 30; and that environment cannot be quantified as you mention here, and yet decisions and economic prices need quantification. You propose to have a dialogue with local people as a substitution of this quantification. I fail to see the operational value of this because in the final analysis we have to come up with a certain quantification of environmental values. Thank you.

Ma Shijun

Thank you Madam. I have received statements, plans. I have also received publications in China from some of the NGOs in the US. The thing of the development, environment and publishing, I would like to know how do you work in the US and how do you work with the foreign NGOs. And I would like also to know how do you influence your government and also the other governments and promote them to take action?

Mrs Brundtland

May be you would like to give some replies to all these statements.

D. Lesh

I was struck by the fact that some questions come like spears cast to the single mark. Mr. Stanovnik's comes like a barrage from which one must only seek refuge, not give reply.

But I think there is a wealth of questions which we can address and I hope many of those sitting here will help. I will simply try to answer some easy ones to start with. Maurice Strong asked the easiest of all, is the US on a completely sustainable course of economic development? No.

Time will demand equal time. In any case, Tom, you were keeping notes as I was, would you like to start with Mr. Stanovnik's comments and then others may wish to answer. Barbara, I know, would have a special interest in questions of Third World debt.

Tom Stoel

Well, two questions were raised, I think one was about the need for growth. I think this is a very interesting question especially as applied to the industrialised countries.

I think a lot of people in the US are emphasizing more the question of qualitative kinds of growth including things like recreational opportunities and so on as most of the material needs of people are met in the industrialised societies, that is to say one might have a growth in the quality of life without necessarily having a growth in the quality of material consumption. I think in fact this is what is occurring with the so-called information economy and other developments.

On the other hand I think there is no room for any such ambiguity as respects most of the developing countries, particularly since populations are growing so fast, just to meet basic needs and get beyond that. You are going to have to have material growth and after all these countries are the great majority of the population of the world, so on a global basis we are certainly going to need a growth in material consumption. We rustle a little bit with the question of the industrialised societies, we don't get into it in depth.

Maybe I could turn Maurice Strong's question on that which was very interesting. I would say that we did intend the prescriptions in the paper to apply to US. We haven't worked out fully how, and the paper obviously doesn't go into enough detail. It might be interesting however to know that in 1983-84 a major US environmental organisation engaged in an exercise of this kind which produced a report of about 100 pages called

"America's Economic Future", environmentalists broaden the industrial policy debate and we did try to get into a number of these issues in a specifically US context, I'll be happy to send copy of that to you and to the Commission.

Frankly we went into a great deal of political flak, you might call it, in the US. The day after our report came out, there was a meeting of the AFL CIO industrial unions department of the heads of those unions and our report was not greeted with great enthusiasm there. And there was a great deal of negotiating that had to be done with some of our allies in the labour movement. And I am sure it is true here in Canada too there are very difficult issues involved with the industrialised in the US which is in fact going on and has been going on, but it is not an easy issue politically and the protectionist forces in the US are very strong. We do come out against protectionism in this paper and I think you'll see more in the other paper.

US NGO

I hope we were not guilty of the policy of self-exclusion. I think that is the greatest pitfall we could find in our paper, that all the issues that are raised in this paper and in the work of WCED are applicable as far as we are concerned to every society, industrial, non-industrial, North, South. They are at the heart of a great deal of what is going on in the US today and in Canada and other societies. And I think that while much of the dialogue in this paper is couched in terms of North and South and foreign assistance and so on, the issues are essentially those that we live with in our country today.

There was also the question that Ambassador Sahnoun raised about the question of the Great Lakes and the Niagara River pollution. Would anyone of you here try to address that? That was one of the topics in fact which one of our colleagues in

the Canadian NGO's brought to my attention as an area in which they felt a lack of support on the side of American NGOs. I can't speak to that with authority myself.

Barbara Bramble

All of the groups that we are working with in Global Tomorrow Coalition are involved in coordination with other NGOs on various things. But I think it is fair to say that the coordination on really close problems such as US-Canadian difficulties with the Great Lakes and the Niagara River are the least addressed of all the things we are going to be discussing today.

And as I understand it, I did not attend the Great Lakes meeting which was just a few days ago, but the head of my organisation did, and I know at least one NGO representative from the Environment Liaison Center in Nairobi said that he thought it might be the beginning of the kind of coordination which is needed in that area. I think the answer is that not much is going on. The need is felt on both sides, probably it has been expressed better from Canada, and it is something that our groups will be working more and more on.

You asked two other questions about coordination and it would make sense if I could go on to those right now. I have been working quite a lot on the issues of hazardous exports, particularly pesticides. And as you may know there is a network from around the world called the Pesticide Action Network, specifically dealing with the problems of pesticide exports and imports.

It was started in Malaysia at an international meeting; so the impetus for it came from the developing world, which I think is extremely important in its success. It now has almost 300 organisations around the world. It meets through regional representatives once every year and a half or two years. Our

next meeting will be this week end here in Ottawa because of the confluence of so much international meetings here in the next few days. The results of the coming together of all these groups I think would be interesting for you.

Most of these organisations are perhaps environmental organisations in the traditional sense, but many are labour, health and consumer groups. And of course in developing countries, they don't feel the same kind of policy influence of power that the NGOs do in Canada or US. It has been very valuable to them to be able to say that they belong to this network of hundreds of other groups working on the same issues.

And through the coordination with this whole network, several actions have been taken that I think have been steps towards what we are aiming at. The first was just to organise in regional networks so that they can communicate with each other and pass information back and forth. That came from the first international meeting.

The second was to declare a dirty dozen campaign of pesticides that were of international significance, pesticides which were causing I guess extreme harm is the phrase, in developing countries particularly, most of those were no longer in use in developed countries and yet were continuing to be produced and exported from many developed countries although not all. And this dirty dozen campaign was announced last June 5 on World Environment Day.

Since that time, the actions which have been sparked by governments in various different parts of the world have been rather interesting. Some regulatory actions that were in the works seemed to suddenly be kicked out of the system in several different countries. Studies were undertaken in various countries by governments, different studies were undertaken by NGOs, there was a continuing round of press conferences and pressure on governments about these chemicals, but not these alone. The dirty dozen was meant almost to be a publicity ploy

to focus attention on hazardous chemicals which could not be appropriately used in developing countries.

There are many more than twelve obviously. Picking twelve was an extremely difficult six month long task. Now what we have done over the last year is to produce a research document on alternatives to those pesticides for different kinds of uses, agriculture versus urban home uses and uses in very different ways in which pesticides are applied. That will be released on June 5 again here in Ottawa at a press conference that will be somewhere in town.

And a second thing that will be produced this year is a statement by a number of well known agricultural interrelated scientists on the problem of chemical dependence and the need to move towards appropriate alternatives for agriculture and other uses for which pesticides are now used. I think it is fair to say that the feeling of making a difference of many small NGOs has been increased a lot by the actions of this group.

The pesticide action was also sponsored continuing representation in the negotiations of the FAO on the code of conduct for export of pesticides and the United Nations Environment Programme of guidelines on information exchange for potentially hazardous chemicals including pesticides. I have been the representative at a couple of those negotiations and other people within the network go to others of the negotiations. So I think it has been a rather remarkable ...coordination that has been very helpful.

The third thing has to do with the multilateral banks in US about the actions that we have been undertaking as a group regarding the regional banks. It is fair to say that the initiative to bring attention to the effects of multilateral bank activities started perhaps in the US but it has really grown and gone much farther than that.

I have been working specifically with colleagues here, with the Natural Resources Defence Council and the Environmental Defence Fund and several other organisations have joined within the US. Each of us when we travel or attend international meetings have made a point to explain the issues to NGO representatives that we meet from both a donor country and a borrowing country

First it was important to get the pressure to equalise not just beyond the US government on all of the donor countries. And we now have a situation in which quite a number of European countries have NGOs working on the same thing. We have met on the subject on a number of occasions, the US Treasury Department has been persuaded to make the sole issue part of its own policy and has directed the Executive Directors representing the US on all of the banks boards, including the regional banks to work specifically at the moment on the donor country colleagues, their other executive directors.

And we know from our contacts with NGOs that in fact this is beginning to happen and that the US executive directors are bringing up natural resources issues and I would emphasise one important point: what we have asked for is not just different projects or better projects, but consultation with local people, with NGOs, and to open up the process of deciding what kinds of developments would be undertaken.

That is very tough for institutions like the banks that have considered themselves almost governments or involved in tricky negotiations with the borrowing countries and it's even tougher for many of the borrowing countries who do have a history of dialogue with their own NGOs. But what we are building I think is a consensus among the donor countries first and then among the borrowing countries eventually that the NGOs have to be a vital part of the decision making, identification of projects, assessment of projects, implementation of projects.

And, as I said, I think the donor countries are beginning to feel that, and I was just the last few days in New York at the

special session of the UN, a number of NGOs from Africa that were here before that, and a lot of this is still news to them, but we keep passing out the US legislation on the subject, Treasury Department Policy statements on the subject, recommendations from different parts of the US Congress on the subject, so that they can see that it is now an acceptable demand that NGOs should be involved in the development process and through this means, I think we will have more and more NGOs from developing countries aware of what should be their rights in this process. Thanks.

Nitin Desai

I work with the World Commission, but I am speaking now not so much in my capacity in the World Commission as development planner from the Third World. This has been an interesting document, a very useful document. But from the point of view of planning in the Third World, somebody is involved in economic activity in the Third World, much of this is not being convincing.

It sounds often as if I'm on a bicycle and somebody would just pass me on a motorcar and tells me : look how terrible motorcars are, don't try and get them at all. I don't think any description of sustainable assessment will ever be complete unless the essential issue of sustainable development on a global scale is addressed. And that central issue is that of the impact of activities in the industrial countries on what is happening at a global level. I do not see that the basic things that you put on what must be done are really the central issues as far as this aspect is concerned.

I do think that there's much more what is needed. I am not sure that decentralised community based development, strengthening of institutions, etc. that these are hardly the central issues as far the developed countries, the industrial countries are concerned. I also note that even under this most of your suggestions

END OF TAPE 2 - SIDE 2

TAPE 3 - SIDE 1

US NGOs
Evening Session
May 28, 1986

Cont. of Desai's intervention

essentially to the South. For instance when you talk of ensuring that investment is sustainable, you talk essentially of sustainability assessments of investments in the South. But there is a real problem that we face today, it is the sustainability of the investments which are taking place in the North, the environmental risks which arise, the hazards which arise from those investments.

There is very little, in this description of sustainable development which goes into this class of issues. And that I personally find that it has not tackled the issues of environmental risk. I could go on.

I find this a very useful document but I do believe that it will remain incomplete as long as you do not also go into what needs to be done to promote sustainable development in the industrial countries and also what needs to be done, it has to be something which is consistent with at least a long-term objective of global equality of standards of living. Higher standards of consumption, lifestyle sustainable in the industrial, not sustainable in the sense that if I were to multiply them by a potential global population of 10 billion, the world could sustain that standard of consumption. If it not, then presumably by then to the 21st century one would have to run down these standards of consumption if that at all is feasible.

Can we talk of sustainable development without going into this class of issues or do we merely take refuge in the possibility that the whole process of growth and development will somehow become less material intensive, less energy intensive, etc? This is not a question, it is more a comment. I know you wish to and intend to go into this, but I think this is the major gap that I see in this paper.

Don Lesh

I'll take some of these easy questions which have been raised. Points were raised about the recommendations concerning small scale decentralised approaches to development. This is clearly the part of our paper that received the most criticism, parts of it were revised and we would be happy to receive further comments, but as presently informed we do stand behind what we say.

In answer to Emil Salim's point, no, we do not believe that the decentralised small scale approach is the only approach that has to apply. Every place that there is no room for large scale development, in fact we indicate that we are not at all certain how this approach can apply to cities or to industries. We have some experts in the room on energy production, such as David Brooks who might be able to talk about the need for large hydro projects, but that is certainly another open question.

Another general question that was raised is the question of our views on dependence. We indicate in the paper that this is a subject of lively discussion in the NGO community. I think the majority of view would be what you might call wanted dependence is permissible if countries can meet their own basic needs in the sense of security, they certainly, a lot of our view could trade with other nations for things that they want and in that sense be dependent. The kind of dependence however that many Southern nations have on the North that may be partly

manifested by the debt crisis seems to us to be the kind of things that is clearly not desirable and that needs to be changed.

I'll make a quick comment to the very interesting points that were raised about the impacts of activities in industrialised nations. I do not think we have all the answers. I would say that what I think is probably one of our more controversial recommendations and one kept some of our fellow NGOs in the US from endorsing this report, we do recommend an assessment of technologies before they go into large scale production to try to obviate some of the risks that it has proven in the past that various technologies have caused.

As to the question about whether it would be sustainable for the patterns of consumption, some of the industrialized nations to be attained by the whole world, we wrestled with that and frankly we just did not know how to address it. Obviously, in a temporal context in a hundred years a great many things can change. One looks at the situation in the world 100 years ago and now there have been many changes that were hard to predict and we just could not figure out the answer. Frankly, if the Commission can, we would be very grateful to work with you on it.

Mrs Brundtland

Would anyone from the audience like to enter into the discussion?

Sally Whishgilt

Thank you Madam Chairman for the opportunity to say a few words. And thank you also very much to your Commission for being here and for your work which is really very important on the global scale. I would like to put a few words to this topic

of sustainable development and especially to what you mentioned before about the need to see that in the broadest scope.

I am speaking as a physician who is interested in prevention and from this point of view I would like to put here two things which are of growing concern and this is the effect of our changing environment on human health, especially two issues.

The first one being the effect of the modern environment filled with the chemicals in our food, in our water, in our atmosphere on the developing brain of the unborn children; and the second the carcinogenic potential of the chemicals which, as the animal experiments show, can actually spread not only to the individual who is affected but also to the future generations of such person.

I would like first to mention a few things about the first issue and this is the effect of modern environment on the brain of youngest generations. Man has been on this planet almost 2 million years and it is only in the past few decades when we have changed our environment so drastically.

It has brought a lot of benefits from the economical point of view and only now we start to realise through the new sciences like behaviour toxicology, peri-natal(?), immunotoxicology, behavior toxicology, that these changes are actually affecting the most vulnerable organ of our body and this is the human brain.

It has been documented from animals but also from direct observations that the chemicals can accumulate and do accumulate in the brain of the unborn children and that they do have a negative effect on the ability to learn, to concentrate and also on the behavior. Actually, the term behavior toxicology reflects that the first toxic changes can be reflected in the change

Mrs Brundtland

Sorry to interrupt you. But I do it for two reasons. First of all, we listened to your intervention at the public hearings yesterday and you were given ten minutes to explain your points. Today we are discussing first of all the documents made by the Global Tomorrow Coalition and our NGO friends from the United States. The Commission has already heard your points. So if you could just briefly sum up your statement, it is really a little outside of the discussion that we are having here to night and we have to stop in 15 minutes our whole session. So, I am sorry, I have to do this.

Sally Whishgilt

Yes, excuse me please. The problems as I said are two: brain and cancer. The question is: what to do about that? There is the need to reduce the chemicals. How to do so? One of the priority issue could be our reducing the amount of lead in our environment which is one of the most toxic thing. Reducing that by avoidance of the lead in the gasoline on international level.

On international level because it is spread globally as it has been an evidence which is again cumulating. The second thing has to do about reducing the risk of cancer. Apart from other measures, it would be reducing the amount of dioxine in our environment which is the question of the pesticides. And these are two things which I wanted to mention. Thank you for the opportunity.

Magda Renner

One thing is to plan, one thing is to happen. We, from Brazil, are actively engaged in fighting against agrottoxics called pesticides. Even before, since 78, we have been actively working on the dirty dozen. I must say here that it was even

more than a frustration because consciousness has been awakened; but facts are even worse.

We have denounced the thing now in Brazil, are even worse as far as the forcing of use of pesticides is concerned. Same thing with the projects. We talk a lot about natural resources, but what happens is terribly different. NGOs are aware of what they want to happen, of their rights, but I think we don't get much until now, and we are still fighting. This is why you are here. We are fighting but things are not better.

The dirty dozen, we have been working on it for a year. We had feedback from everywhere. Now I have to denounce that things are even worse. The bank does not only force us to buy pesticides if you have the money, but they go to the place to see that it is used beforehand. Until last year you had to buy but you were not forced to use. Now you have to buy and to use it. That is a reality in ..., the major import of agrotoxics in Brazil is one of the major import in the world. Thank you.

Speaker on the floor

Madam Chairman, I would like to ask three or four questions to our American colleagues with reference to the sustainable development; to answer the question of Dr. Khalid who is asking why he should ride a bicycle when we ride in a Cadillac air-conditioned and complain about it. This is one of my favourite topics. I want it clearly understood that my words are sometimes clumsy and I don't want them to be mistaken as implying criticism of the present system which is almost ideal.

I want to ask my American colleagues if they have heard the same three speeches I have heard 3 years in a row from our distinguished Justice Thomas Berger who said our North-American industrial system is so inefficient in the use of energy, so wasteful and consumption of resources, so destructive of the environment that it must be completely changed. And he says,

you will be pleased to note, that the people in West-Eastern block, the other side of the Soviet line, they use identically the same kind of system and theirs has to be changed too. There is no difference between the two basic industrial systems.

I have heard David Suzuki say to us at the University of Manitoba : "Science and technology is almost completely out of control". We spend almost 50% of all energy making weapons to make war on people and to make war on nature. The rest of the main chunk of our money is used to produce things that make money, whether there is any real net essential benefit to the community or destructive on environment does not go into the assessment.

Who is this gentleman that said we should have a session on technology before it is adopted? A very worthy objective.

I have heard Maurice Strong in a letter that he has quoted in writing and is written in the United Nations bulletin of Canada in 1982, I believe, it said that the morals and ethics of business are receiving the last trial they will get by the general public to see whether their destruction of the environment is going to be accepted by the general public and if they continue to destroy the environment as badly as modern industry does, it may not be accepted.

Now that is not to be twisted around to imply that there is criticism of the present system. But, do you have any research in the United States similar to the research that we have produced by eminent scholars both in the Government and in the NGO organisations to prove that monoculture chemical-intensive agriculture is destroying our farm land and destroying our farmers financially?

And that there are organisations all across the farming ecological agriculture and organic farming associations for protection of the land and protection of farmers and they are succeeding in a small scale. They get no help from the Government or from the establishment.

And we have, parallel to our agricultural system being self-destructed, we have our forest system particularly in B.C., is being self-destructed. We have 5000 square miles of improperly-seeded clear cut forestry. Just identically to what they are doing in Brazil. But we would like to talk about the Brazilians which are further away. We don't like to talk about the failure of our system. And our forestry system has to be completely modified to be acceptable if we are going to survive even one generation.

I believe that the 5 million dollar grand terminal they built in Prince Rupert, in ten years will be as empty as the Clarabel airport they have at North of Montreal. Because we are so destructing our farm land, we will have to cut our grain exports to almost zero. But our previous Federal Government just issued a rule one day, when they were short of money, and said we are going to double the exports of wheat 50%, because we need the money. And we are already destroying our farm land with the level of exports we have now.

Now what we are advocating is that we have a radical departure and introduce competitive technology and the free enterprise system. Have competition and a free enterprise system and allow an alternative system of agriculture and alter the system of forestry, sustainable development, organic farming, selective tree harvesting of forestry, what should be called soft energy path, I think Mr. Brooks has used those words once. And so is Emery Hunterlobins (?) in my presence. And we want a soft water path. That doesn't produce new water projects for taking the water that people are polluting and wasting now and clean it up and use it and recycle it and don't waste it. And so how much does that sound by sustainable development? So what we are saying is that more of us should be riding bicycles. So what we are basically doing is exporting our coca-colas, our junk agriculture, our junk food to try and make money out of destroying your world as fast as we are destroying ours.

Mrs Brundtland

I would like to turn the floor back to the panel of our introductions today.

Don Lesh

Madam Chairman, I would like to express a deep concern for a scarce and endangered resource which is the vitality, indeed the survival of the members of the World Commission on Environment and Development. I am concerned about the impacts on your eyes, your ears, your brains and other critical portions of your anatomy. In the course of these long hearings, we would be happy to go on discussing these issues at length, but I feel that we are imposing on your time. So, please, if you feel the time has come, perhaps we should end the discussion.

Mrs Brundtland

We scheduled this evening to stop between 9 and 9.30 and it is closing now to 9.30 and I think we have to look at the fact that we are starting early in the morning and going on day after day. But it has been indeed a very constructive and helpful discussion for all of us and first of all your documentation and your own work on it has been a great help to us and you have heard several Commissioners make those remarks.

And I just want to repeat them and thank you all for having gone through all this work. I know you do it because you believe as we do in the importance of it. And this is why also it was such a good idea that we were able to meet here in North America and having also the US people coming, meeting us in Ottawa. We thank you for this.

END OF US NGOS PUBLIC HEARINGS
OTTAWA, CANADA
May 28, 1986
Evening Session

END OF TAPE 3 - SIDE 1