

CAMPUS

Suzuki (continued...)

He said governments struggle with this issue because they worry about the immediate future, instead of the future of generations to come, he said

"When you think about it, political agenda has to be driven by the next election...it turns out, children don't vote. The political reality of it is children don't count, they're not on a political agenda."

In the last six months, global warming and the environment have been thrown on the political agenda, and now more than ever, the Canadian population, including Suzuki, is waiting to see what Prime Minister Stephen Harper will do in the coming months.

"The reason Harper is talking green now is not because he has any green bones in his body but because he's smart. He watches the news and he knows it the No.1 concern."

Suzuki's comments came the same day the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report saying global warming will have devastating results in the next century, even if drastic measures are taken.

The report, compiled by scientists from 113 countries, said climate change was very likely, caused by humans, and temperature rise could be disproportionately high in Canada, up to 10 C in the next century.

Suzuki's frustration with government is apparent throughout the interview as

he spoke of the small role the minister of environment plays in the scheme of things.

Even so, He was optimistic about how the current minister, John Baird, might have a chance to set the wheels of change in motion.

In 1997, Canada was one of 34 nations to sign onto the Kyoto Accord, which set a target for countries to reduce greenhouse gas emission 15 per cent below 1990 levels. Canada is only one of four countries in the accord who won't meet their targets.

As it stands emissions need to be 90 per cent below 1990 levels to make any great impact on temperature rise, he said

For this reason, Kyoto is no longer enough, but it is significant because it makes industrialized nations acknowledge the problem at hand, Suzuki said.

"The atmosphere is finite, and we've filled it up - we've more than filled it up - with carbon dioxide."

To create change, the world must look to their ancestors, and how they came to dominate the earth, he said. This means looking toward the future, something only humans can do, and acting quickly. Pessimism will help no one, he said.

"There's always hope. If you don't have hope, than don't say anything and get the hell out of the way because you've given up."

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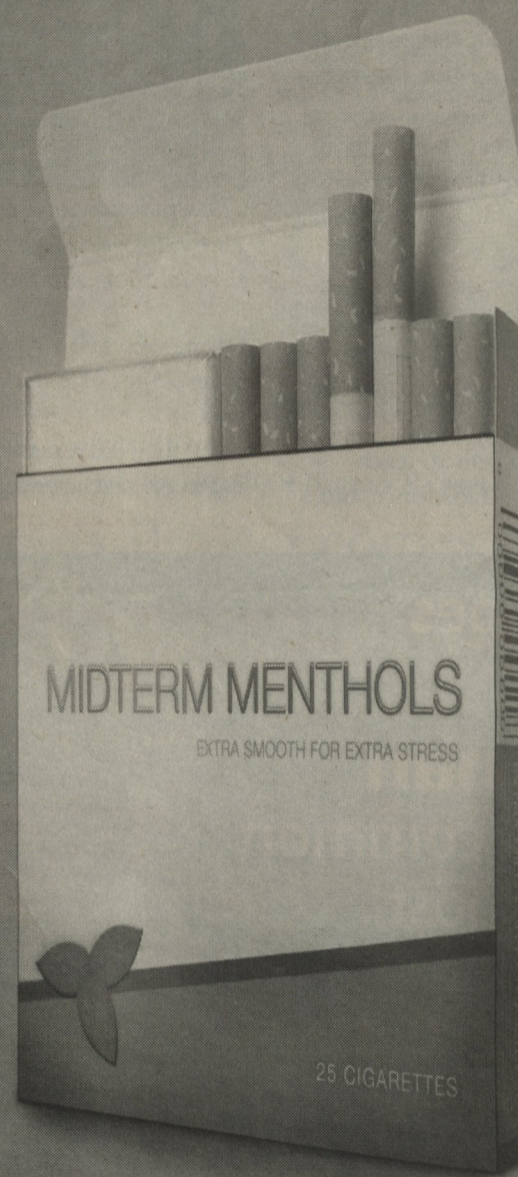
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