Environment: Suzuki Says Put Environment Before Free Trade

RICHMOND (CUP) – Free Trade and the Meech Lake accord will be irrelevant if Canada doesn't address crucial environmental questions for the future, says internationally reknowned scientist, Dr. David Suzuki.

Suzuki says Canadians value their environment and are willing to support it. But he pointed out that "environment ministries are not high priority areas" in the government budget.

The University of British Columbia genetic scientist, and host of CBC's the Nature of Things, was promoting his book, "Metamorphosis - Stages in the Life."

Suzuki predicts the Meech Lake accord and the Free Trade pact will dominate the next election, pushing environmental issues to the back burner.

But he warned of drastic effects if damage to the environment isn't stopped.

"In 30 years there will be no wilderness left on the entire planet," he said, "and only a few parks and reserves. In 150 years, 50 per cent of the world's plant and animal life will be extinct, and in 200 years that will increase to 80 per cent."

He says as a species we've gone out of control. "We're the most numerous mammal on the planet; 50 of us are born every minute and overpopulation is putting the remaining species in danger of extinction."

"The future aim for the human species must be for negative growth, and we shouldn't accept anything less."

Suzuki says that "all life on the planet is falling before us and we are too stupid to see we're poisoning the air, the water, and the soil that we live on."

He also had strong arguments against free trade, and believes Canada is a third world country, because "we sell our raw resources and buy our technology back."

He believes Americans want the agreement not because they want Canadian products, but because they want our resources.

"They see vast amounts of energy and theirs is running out...they have no fresh water. They're not dumb, those Americans."

Canada doesn't have tough environmental protection laws like the U.S. and Americans are willing to pay us to let them dump their toxic waste, he said. "Boy are we smart. That's what free trade means."

Suzuki plans to donate all proceeds from his book to the redress committee of the Japanese Canadian Citizens Association.

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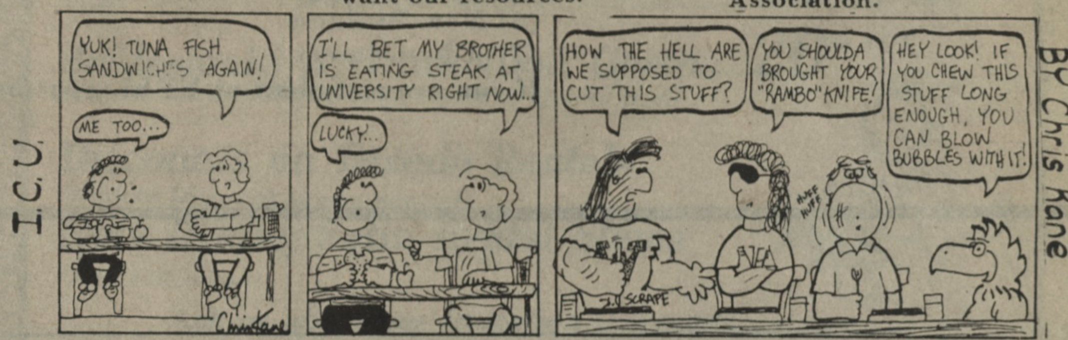
that house, so too is aborting a single cell that becomes a grown person comparable to destroying that person.

Think about it. Would anyone in his right mind destroy a brick that could grow into a beautiful and unique house? Apparently human beings – beautiful and unique people – are worth less than brick houses.

Hank van der Breggen

Undergraduate Philosophy student

University of Calgary



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