

# Greenhouse gas plan a farce, groups say

By Samer Muscati (CUP)

Federal and provincial environment ministers met Feb. 20 in Toronto to hash out a new plan to reduce Canada's emission of greenhouse gases, but environmental groups call the plan a farce and say it will do nothing to curb the emissions.

The plan relies on a system of voluntary challenges to individuals and corporations to reduce emissions, and doesn't mention legislation.

Canada is on track to break an international agreement, signed by more than 150 countries in 1992, to keep emissions at 1990 levels until the year 2000.

"Canada is an environmental outlaw," says Kevin Jardine, atmosphere campaigner for Greenpeace. "We are defying an international treaty. Canada will be internationally humiliated at the upcoming Berlin conference" in April 1995.

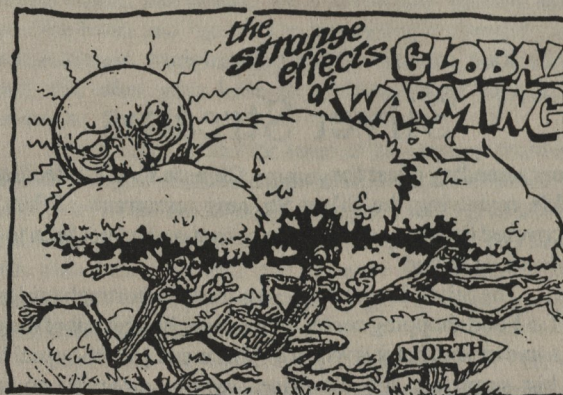
The federal government's "National Action Program" predicts Canada's greenhouse gas emissions could be 13 per cent above 1990 emissions by the year 2000.

Since 1990, Canada has added 12 power stations that use fossil fuels, adding 19.4 million tons of carbon dioxide yearly into the atmosphere. Canada's total annual emissions in 1993 were about 460 million tons.

Canada's natural gas production has also expanded by 40 per cent; production-related emissions increased by about 16 million tons of carbon dioxide.

Eighty per cent of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions are in the form of carbon dioxide, which forms a blanket around the earth's atmosphere and subsequently traps heat.

The greatest temperature change could occur in northern latitudes in about 40 years. Canada could experience



CUP graphic/ The Maritz

changing precipitation patterns, coastal flooding, extensive permafrost and iceberg thaw in the north.

Drier summers for the prairies, Ontario and southern Quebec are also possible consequences of having excess greenhouse gas in the atmosphere.

Liseanne Forand, director general of the Canadian

Council of Ministers of the Environment, says she is confident the new program will put Canada back on track.

"Not all the [provincial ministers] were happy with the draft, but everyone signed," says Forand. "It's a framework of strategic actions that will evolve."

The new plan "encourages" corporations and communities to set their own goals and choose their own initiatives.

One program in Ontario under the plan is called Green Communities Initiatives. Under the program, educational materials on climate change are provided to commercial, industrial and residential centres.

Another initiative is the National Biomass Ethanol Program, which encourages firms to invest in Canada's ethanol industry. The program will supply \$70 million in loans to build or expand on ethanol plants.

Ethanol, a type of alcohol, produces less carbon dioxide than fossil fuels when burned.

A registry will also be designed to receive and publicize what participants have done to reduce emissions.

But Greenpeace's Jardine says he's upset subsidies and tax breaks continue to be handed out to the fossil fuel industry every year.

"It's an inaction program," says Jardine. "The federal government is unwilling to provide leadership on this issue. It's time to get the oil industry off welfare."

## Dear Editor

### What a Shame

Tonight I went to see an intermural hockey game with a friend of mine. The two teams playing were Labatt's Blue and the Vet College. If I were in anyway involved in the Vet college here I would be a little more than embarrassed! The boys on the team seemed to think it was a boxing ring and not a rink. They did everything from checking from behind to slashing across the knees. I'm not saying the other team were all angels but they seemed to have a little composure. They are also just a team sponsored by Labatt and not "the Atlantic Veterinary College!"

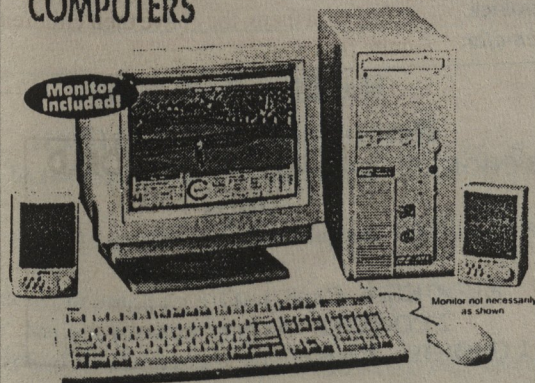
Their fans consisted of four so-called "ladies" and two dogs which barked at each other throughout the whole game. The ladies shouted profanity and laughed when one of the players on the other team was carried off the ice due to a hard slash in the knees. They continued to shout about his lack of manhood in some not so nice terms and whooped and cheered while three of their players were going after the members of the opposite team. The captain of the opposing team went to talk to the AVC player, including the slasher, and at this time another fight almost broke out. The Labatt team called off the game with about three minutes left and then skated off the ice with the ladies (and again I use the term loosely) whooping and cheering! I have never seen a hockey game quite like this and wondered if any of these reps of the Vet College were actually in the faculty. What a shame!

*A Very Surprised Spectator*

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Howdy all, hope you aren't too depressed over the fact that the last issue of the X-Press of '95 will be out on March 28. We are hoping that all of you will be able to handle it, and not suffer through too much withdrawal. If so, we are more than willing to offer counselling to anyone and everyone who does not think that he or she can live without us.