

Letter to the editor: The Gazette March 24, 2007.

Re: The Environment, The Economy and Sustainable Development: The Flavour of the Day.

Dear Editor,

Many politicians place the economy and the environment on the same pedestal as if they were coequals. They are not.

Dr. David Suzuki reminds us that the environment is our house and the economy is the management or mismanagement of such. Humans and other living things create an ecological footprint within this fragile vessel called Earth.

"Sustainability" is the new buzzword describing economic development. It is used to soften the hard edged consequences of economic activity like the loss of natural spaces and habitat, extinction of species, pollution, acid rain, and the production of excess greenhouse gases. Disappearing fish stocks, honey bees and frogs are the proverbial canaries in the mine and may portend severe food shortages in the future.

"Sustainable Development" is an oxymoron. There is nothing sustainable about it. It is an Orwellian illusion like "clean coal", "half pregnant", "pragmatic idealism", or "the living dead". It implies the existence of infinite, plentiful and affordable resources and the use of environmentally friendly technologies like solar, geothermal and rail.

Unfortunately, our narcissistic, self-focused lives are more important than the necessity of a sustainable and nurturing environment. Midas would be proud!

Yours Sincerely,

Avrom David Shtern,
Cote St. Luc, QC,