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## A Note From the Editor

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#### A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Occasionally there are environmental developments which cry out for comment. Usually we can resist making such comment because other loud voices make our opinion unnecessary. The S.S.T. controversy, however, does seem to be an issue that begs for our comment even if only for analysis of the complicated issues which over-emotionalism tends to simplify or hide. The environmental effects of the S.S.T. are not certain. We know that it will generate noise and air pollutants; but we know that all air travel has these effects. Is the S.S.T. so much worse, or is it just the straw breaking the camel's back? The E.P.A. will not suggest an answer to this question, but there are several points we would like to make.

The foreign-subsidized S.S.T. will likely have a harmful economic effect on American air carriers currently operating on a marginal basis. Will the United States government be forced to subsidize the non-competitive American carriers? This must be considered.

It is interesting that the United States government can grant approval of the relatively inefficient S.S.T. for flights to the United States, and still establish economy standards of 27.5 miles per gallon for automobile fleets produced by 1985 (the Energy Policy and Conservation Act [42 U.S.C. 6201]). It is amusing to this writer that the Ford Administration can argue so vehemently for allowing the S.S.T. flights, which have only more speed and less efficiency than conventional aircraft to recommend them. Yet that same Ford Administration has sincerely advocated a reduced national speed limit of fifty-five miles per hour in order to conserve fuel. The irony is irresistible. The answer to the apparent ironic situation is, of course, not to be found by analysis of environmental or economic considerations. As is so often the case today, decisions cannot be based solely upon what is or is not environmentally sound, or by weighing economic against environmental considerations. The issues are so complex that simplistic slogans or answers to apparent environmental dilemmas will not carry the day. The answer to Secretary Coleman's S.S.T. decision must be read in foreign policy terms, not as a pure environmental or economic determination. Environmentalists as well as others would be well advised not to view their particular concerns as the only factors to consider in any decision-making process. A recognition of the interrelationship of considerations will ultimately make us more effective advocates in promoting our environmental concerns.