

## THE PROPOSED FLOODING OF THE SKAGIT VALLEY

The Government of Canada is of the view that the Canadian portion of the Skagit Valley should not be flooded. This view is reinforced by a unanimous resolution passed by the Canadian House of Commons on November 2, 1973 opposing the flooding. This unanimity of purpose encompasses, of course, all political parties in the Federal Parliament and all regions of the country.

Canada did not object to the proposal to flood the Skagit Valley during the International Joint Commission's (IJC) hearings of 1941, but the circumstances then were very different from those of today. The population of British Columbia was about one-quarter of what it is now; economic development was at a much lower level, and there was little concern about the need to preserve wilderness areas.

Even in 1967, when B.C. signed the compensation agreement with the City of Seattle called for by the IJC's Order of Approval issued in 1942, public awareness of wilderness values was not widespread. But since then there has been a fundamental change. The public attitude towards resources and environment is now one that demands balance and restraint in their development. The Canadian Government questions whether, in view of the fundamental change in social values, the IJC would in fact, approve in 1974 a proposal that would involve flooding the Skagit Valley as it did in 1942.

In Canada, as in other developed countries concern over the scale and extent of development is today accompanied by an equal and sometimes greater concern over the quality of development or, more precisely, the way in which such development may affect the quality of