

Garrison Diversion

Canadian federal and Manitoba officials, the draft plan did not appear specifically to consider the transboundary effects of the project which were detailed by the International Joint Commission. Canada again made it clear to the United States that the risk of transfer of foreign biota to the Hudson Bay drainage basin had not been eliminated or significantly reduced by the draft revised plan. The plan indeed anticipated the transfer of such biota to the Red River via the Sheyenne River. The International Joint Commission had characterized the need to prevent biota transfer as "overriding everything else".

Canada again requested that these observations be passed to all relevant agencies of the United States government and that they be provided to Congress which had expressed concerns regarding the international effects of the project during earlier consideration.

Over the summer of 1978, Congress discussions took place and they seemed to ensure that Canadian concerns were fully recognized and respected. Canada expected that the U.S. Department of the Interior would take into consideration all these matters.

We were therefore deeply concerned by indications that the recommended plan of the Department of the Interior would, in fact, provide for transfers of water, and hence foreign biota, from the Missouri to the Hudson Bay drainage basin.

Accordingly, in March, 1979, the Government of Canada advised the U.S. government that it would consider the submission to Congress for authorization of any new Garrison diversion plan involving interbasin transfers before the U.S.A. had the benefit of formal consultations on it with Canada as contrary to the spirit of U.S. assurances and the recommendations of the International Joint Commission. These assurances have been recognized by the Congress, and the need for such consultations has been identified by the International Joint Commission and acknowledged by U.S. authorities.

● (1730)

At that time Canada requested consultations on any new Garrison diversion plan before such a plan was submitted to Congress. We also requested an assurance that a final plan would not be espoused by the United States administration unless it could be demonstrated that U.S. treaty obligations and commitments to Canada could be met, with full consideration given to the recommendations of the International Joint Commission.

Consultations were held in March, 1979, at which time Canada reiterated its clear and unchanging position, and the United States once more renewed its assurance to honour its obligations under the Boundary Waters Treaty.

The Government of Canada was therefore seriously concerned when, in June, 1979, the U.S. Congress appropriated an additional \$9.7 million for work on the Garrison diversion project. This appropriation took place in spite of vociferous Canadian objections, including a strong diplomatic note of June 18, 1980, and vigorous efforts on the part of the federal and Manitoba governments, individual Members of Parlia-

ment, and private citizens' organizations. While the directive accompanying the appropriations bill specified that the funds not be spent on project features that would directly affect Canada, it was disturbing to note that the funds were appropriated for use on the currently authorized 250,000 acre plan, and not a modified plan, which we had understood to be under consideration.

In a diplomatic note dated October 1, 1980, Canada pointed out that in the absence of any significant project re-design new construction would appear to be leading inexorably toward completion of features that would ultimately result in violation of the Boundary Waters Treaty. We pointed out our understanding that satisfactory resolution of the serious bilateral implications of the project would precede any further decisions which would allow new construction to begin.

The authorization of new funds under a plan that has not been modified in any way to take into account Canadian views or the conclusions and recommendations of the International Joint Commission is a cause of deep concern to us.

By diplomatic note of December 1, 1980, Canada received from the United States an outline of just how this new appropriation would be spent. The expenditure of some of the funds, we were told, would be deferred until after consultations between the two governments. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has since required that the funds be spent; however, we have been assured that the funds will be expended only in the West Oakes test area, which does not affect Canada.

We now stand at a critical point in bilateral consideration of this issue. The United States has proposed that a process of bilateral consultation commence in March of this year. Canadian scientific and technical experts have been briefed on the latest U.S. technical developments in order that consultations can be based on a firm understanding of the technical issues involved. Such a process will certainly be approached with caution, but we should not overlook the potential for favourable resolution of this issue, which is perhaps greater now than before.

The stage is set for consideration of the issue on a basis more suitable to mutual agreement, in that the State Department has proposed that the upcoming consultations will be centred on possible design modifications to the reduced 96,300 acre plan. The State Department has also agreed that consultations will be based on the recommendations of the International Joint Commission and will deal with the Canadian objection to any inter-basin transfer of water. In other words, Canada's basic and often repeated concerns have been accepted as the basis for consultation. The stage is finally set for constructive discussion of those issues which are crucial to Canada.

This meeting would appear to incorporate the hon. member's suggestion as put forward in the notice of motion for the convening of a joint meeting between provincial, state and federal authorities affected by the Garrison project. The bilateral consultations proposed will provide ample opportunity for affected parties to make their views known. The Government