

GOVERNMENT



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DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS TODAY RECALLED THAT SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, WILL BE THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE BOUNDARY WATERS TREATY WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

MR. SMITH SAID THAT THE PRINCIPLES EMBODIED IN THE TREATY WITH RESPECT TO THE USE OF WATERS ALONG THE COMMON BOUNDARY HAD CONTRIBUTED IN LARGE MEASURE TO THE AVOIDANCE OF SERIOUS DISPUTES, AND IN CONSEQUENCE TO THE HAPPY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.

IT IS UNDER THE BOUNDARY WATERS TREATY THAT THE INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION WAS ESTABLISHED. ITS PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE AN INTERNATIONAL QUASI-JUDICIAL BODY TO IMPLEMENT THE PRINCIPLES SET FORTH IN THE TREATY AND TO EXAMINE INTO AND REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS ON ANY QUESTIONS REFERRED TO IT BY THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

MR. SMITH SAID THAT MUCH OF THE SUCCESS OF THE COMMISSION HAS BEEN DUE TO THE HIGH CALIBRE OF THE MEN WHO HAVE SERVED ON IT OVER THE YEARS. "THEIR FAIR AND IMPARTIAL DECISIONS AND REPORTS HAVE COMMENDED THEMSELVES TO GOVERNMENTS, PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS AND CORPORATIONS ALIKE", HE SAID.

THE MINISTER REFERRED TO A STATEMENT BY UNITED STATES COMMISSIONER TAWNEY IN 1914 WHO HAD EMPHASIZED THAT IT WAS UNIQUE TO HAVE A TRIBUNAL "COMPOSED OF CITIZENS OF TWO INDEPENDENT SOVEREIGNTIES...." "ALTHOUGH I AM A CITIZEN OF BUT ONE NATION, I AM CONSTITUTED A JUDGE FOR BOTH." HE QUOTED COMMISSIONER TAWNEY FURTHER:

"IT MUST BE APPARENT TO ANYONE THAT WITH A BOUNDARY BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES ALMOST 4,000 MILES IN EXTENT...DIFFERENCES AND CONFLICTS BETWEEN THEM WILL ARISE...THE NECESSITY, THEREFORE, FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THIS COURT, OR OF SOME SIMILAR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION IS NOT