

Mr. REGAN: I think it would be helpful because I find that people do say this commission does very little. Mr. Cadieux has aired the matter somewhat and I think a brief review of the work that is done would be helpful to the members of this committee.

Mr. RICHARD: It would be very useful, in my opinion. It is quite easy for anyone to say they are underworked but such may not be the case at all.

Mr. CHOQUETTE: How long has it been in existence?

Mr. CADIEUX: Since 1909.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps it would be more orderly if the members would ask questions one at a time. I think there are three or four questions which have been thrown up here.

Mr. REGAN: I would like Mr. Carter to give us a brief explanation of the work that is done and the volume that is involved.

Mr. HARRY CARTER (*Head of United States of America Division of Department of External Affairs*): Mr. Chairman, I cannot pose as an expert on the work of the International Joint Commission. As the members know, the chairman of the Canadian section of the I.J.C. is Mr. Arnold Heeney. Mr. Heeney is assisted by two other Canadian commissioners together with a staff of a secretary, a legal adviser and an engineering adviser. On the United States side there is a corresponding section.

The Boundary Waters Treaty set up the Commission and it was later provided that they would hold semi-annual meetings in April in Washington and in October in Ottawa. At these meetings the six Commissioners, with the chairman of the section of the host country presiding, review outstanding "references", as they are called, which have been the subject of the Commission's activities in the past. These references are normally referred to the Commission as joint references in agreement between the two governments. After normal diplomatic consultations the two governments agree it would be a good thing to ask the commission to study a subject and together they draw up a reference.

An example is the question of constructing a waterway in the Richelieu-Champlain area. Now, the Commission then entertains the reference and sets up boards of experts to gather data and report back to the Commission. These experts are themselves not full-time employees of the commission; they are usually civil servants, like members of our Department of Transport, Public Works, and so on. It is on the basis of these people's reports that the commissioners then evaluate the situation, ask for more data and so on. Eventually they make recommendations back to the governments.

The actual volume of the commission's work is difficult to estimate but I would certainly think that any of us in External Affairs who have been at all familiar with the work of the Commission would think they had a pretty active agenda at the present time.

Mr. CHOQUETTE: Have they settled anything up to now?

Mr. CARTER: I do not think that it is really the function of the commission to settle things in that respect. The commission's task is primarily to make recommendations to the governments. Then the subsequent action on their recommendations, of course, is the responsibility of the two governments. I believe they have served a very useful purpose.

Mr. CHOQUETTE: Are you aware of some of their recommendations that have been followed recently?

Mr. FAIRWEATHER: I can think of three in New Brunswick.

Mr. BREWIN: Mr. Chairman, it is unfortunate we do not have Mr. Herridge with us because he generally has a lot of recommendations about what we should do in respect of the Columbia river.