

The Chicago Diversion

THE 86th Congress of the United States, on the first day of its session on January 6, 1959, had introduced before it a Bill, entitled HR1, which would have authorized a temporary increase in the amount of water which the Chicago Sanitary District would be permitted to divert from Lake Michigan into the Mississippi River Basin. Since this water would be lost to the Great Lakes Basin, the Canadian Government registered its objections to any such authorization in a number of Notes to the United States Government.

Following are the texts of the exchanges which took place between the two Governments on this matter between January 6, 1959 and September 1, 1959. The complete exchange during this period includes:

An Aide-Memoire delivered to the Department of External Affairs on February 9, 1959.

An Aide-Memoire delivered by the Department on February 20, 1959.

Note Number 184 delivered by the Canadian Embassy in Washington on April 9, 1959*.

Note delivered to the Canadian Embassy in Washington on June 12, 1959.

Note Number 368 delivered by the Canadian Embassy in Washington on June 22, 1959.

Note Number 530 delivered by the Canadian Embassy in Washington on August 20, 1959.

Aide-Mémoire of February 9, 1959

The Canadian Government has on various occasions in the past furnished the Department of State with the Canadian views on proposed United States legislation aimed at increasing the diversion from Lake Michigan into the Illinois Waterway. The most recent comments of this nature were contained in an Aide-Mémoire received on January 6, 1958, from the Canadian Embassy in Washington.

Once again this year, as in recent years, a considerable volume of legislation looking to increased diversion from Lake Michigan at Chicago has been introduced in the 86th Congress. Some of this legislation is similar to former legislation with regard to which Canadian views have previously been expressed. A number of other pending Bills, however, such as H.R. 1, a copy of which is enclosed, call for a one-year additional diversion period to be made as part of a three-year study of the effect on Lake Michigan and on the Illinois Waterway of such an increased diversion.

Congressional hearings on this legislation are scheduled to begin in the near future. During the course of these hearings it is anticipated that the Department of State will be asked to submit a statement as to the present Canadian views. It is hoped, therefore, that the Canadian Government will be able to transmit to the Embassy at an early date its views with respect to that proposed legislation which would authorize an additional 1,000 cubic feet of water per second to be diverted from Lake Michigan into the Illinois Waterway, for a period of one year as part of a three-year study.

Embassy of the United States of America,
Ottawa, February 9, 1959.

*Note — No 184 appeared in the June issue of "External Affairs".