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Mr. Anderson

PRESS RELEASE

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STATEMENT ON NIAGARA DIVERSION TREATY, BY THE
HON. L. B. PEARSON, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON FEBRUARY 27, 1950.

I should like to make a statement about the diversion of water from the Niagara River for hydro-electric power.

We have been discussing with the United States Government, at their suggestion, the possibility of amending Article V of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 with respect to the use of water from the Niagara River for the generation of hydro-electric power. In these talks we have had the valuable assistance of the Chairman of the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario and the Chairman of the Niagara Parks Commission. The discussions have resulted in a Niagara Diversion Treaty. I am able to announce that this Treaty is being signed today in Washington by the United States Secretary of State, the Honourable Dean Acheson, and the Canadian Ambassador, Mr. Hume Wrong. I should like to table copies of the treaty in English and French.

The Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 authorized the diversion by the United States of 20,000 cubic feet of water per second, and the diversion by Canada of 36,000 cubic feet per second. Although Canada was thus allowed to use more water than the United States, the power produced by the extra Canadian share has been exported to the United States. As a result each country has had the use of hydro-electric power produced by approximately half of the water made available by the 1909 Treaty.

During the Second World War additional diversions of 13,000 cubic feet per second on the Canadian side, and 12,500 cubic feet per second on the United States side were authorized on a temporary basis.

The new Niagara Treaty reserves adequate quantities of water for flow over the Falls and through the Rapids, and then authorizes the use of all remaining water for power purposes. Since this water will for the first time be divided equally between the two countries, the United States Government is being informed through our Embassy in Washington that when facilities have been constructed in the United States to use the full United States share of water, Canadian export licenses then in effect will not be renewed unless circumstances existing in Canada at that time make such a course desirable.

It is not possible to say just how much more water this Treaty will make available to Canada, since the the necessity of preserving the scenic beauty of the Falls and Rapids is the first charge on the fluctuating volume of water in the Niagara River. However it is expected that both countries will normally have the use of more water than

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