



NO. 19

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DEWATERING OF AMERICAN FALLS AND POWER DIVERSION

The Department of External Affairs announced today that the Governments of Canada and the United States had exchanged notes in Washington to authorize the dewatering of the American Falls at Niagara and the use for power purposes of the additional water thus diverted into the Cascades. The agreement results from a recommendation of the International Joint Commission that the dewatering be carried out in order to facilitate their investigation of possible measures to preserve or enhance the beauty of the American Falls.

The U.S.A. Army Corps of Engineers estimates that the necessary cofferdam can be installed across the channel above the American Falls during the current calendar year. The dam is to be removed no later than December 31, 1969.

The power benefits resulting from the temporary diversion would be divided equally between the Power Authority of the State of New York and Ontario Hydro. These authorities have agreed in return to make a substantial contribution to the cost of the cofferdam and ensuing investigation. However, the power diversion requires the approval of the United States Senate before being put into effect, since it involves a departure from the minimum flows specified in the Niagara Treaty of 1950.