

In June, the Government of British Columbia presented a "request" to the International Joint Commission challenging the legal validity of the 1942 Order. At the time of writing the Commission had asked the four governments involved for opinions on whether the Commission had **jurisdiction** to review its 1942 Order. The Canadian Government made a submission to the IJC in which the Government expressed the view that based on the wording of the 1942 Order the IJC had jurisdiction to receive and consider the British Columbia "request".

At the present time environmental issues involving Canada and the United States are wide in scope and are not restricted to dam and irrigation projects. On the Pacific and Atlantic coasts difficulties associated with the transport of oil by ships have a significant legal element. A positive step to minimize pollution threats to Canadian and United States coastal waters was undertaken in 1974 when the two countries exchanged **Notes** establishing a joint **Canada/United States** Marine Contingency Plan. The purpose of this Plan is to establish a framework whereby both countries can coordinate their responses to significant pollution threats from spills of oil and other noxious substances in waters of mutual interest. The waters to be covered in the Plan include the Great Lakes, and waters off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The Plan provides for cooperation with respect to the use of equipment and for coordination of personnel in responding to any accidents that may occur in the waters affected by the Plan. Among other things coordination of personnel involves provision for the selection of an on-scene-commander. The Plan also contains provisions relating to funding the costs of any joint response.

It is anticipated that other agreements relating to traffic management schemes and liability and compensation will be successfully negotiated in the near future. The spur behind this diplomatic activity is the intensification of tanker traffic in the Puget Sound area which will occur as a result of the transportation of North Slope oil from Alaska to the west coast of the United States.