
Environmental

Canada and the U.S. both attach a high priority to maintaining the quality of the natural environment and during the year they continued to work together to manage transboundary environmental issues in a responsible and creative manner.

There were a number of such matters of continuing concern to Canada—for example, the prospect of increased tanker traffic along the west coast of Canada, the Garrison Diversion project in North Dakota, and a proposed oil refinery at Eastport, Maine. Discussions took place during the year between officials of the two countries on these and other environmental issues.

The prospect of the transport of Alaskan oil by supertanker to U.S. refineries in the Puget Sound area remained a priority subject. Early in 1974 Ottawa proposed discussions with Washington to explore both the feasibility of various alternative supply routes to the area and of agreements on marine safety, oil spill contingency plans, legal compensation and liability, and co-operative research programs. Some progress was made in these fields.

Canada continued to press its contention that the Garrison Diversion project in North Dakota would injure health and property in Canada if proceeded with in its proposed form. A U.S. note of February 5 replying to a Canadian note reaffirmed U.S. obligations under the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 not to pollute water crossing the boundary "to the injury of health or property" in Canada and promised that no construction potentially affecting Canada would be undertaken unless it were clear that this obligation could be met. Officials of the two governments met in August and in the light of further studies by both sides a further meeting was planned for early 1975.

Canada continued to be deeply concerned about plans for a refinery at Eastport, Maine, which would be supplied

by supertankers through the Canadian territorial waters of Head Harbour Passage. In August the Canadian Government reiterated its view that environmental risks to Canadian waters made this project unacceptable. Hearings in the State of Maine on the issue were to conclude in early 1975.

An active program to clean up the Great Lakes continued to go forward on both sides of the border. At meetings in October officials of both governments expressed satisfaction that the increase in the progressive degradation of the lower lakes, particularly Lake Erie, seemed to have been halted.

Defence

As in past years Canada and the U.S. co-operated closely on defence questions. The Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD), the principal consultative mechanism, held regular meetings in 1974 and considered a broad variety of questions affecting bilateral arrangements for the defence of North America.

It was evident during the year that there was an increasing awareness of Canada and of Canadian policies in the U.S., particularly in the media. Canada's embassy in Washington and the 15 Canadian consular posts in the U.S. were heavily involved in trying to expand a knowledge and understanding of Canadian policies in key segments of the U.S. community.