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GARRISON DIVERSION UNIT

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, welcomed the signing into law today, by President Reagan, of a bill authorizing the construction of a modified Garrison Diversion Unit in North Dakota based on the December 1984 report of the Garrison Commission. The bill eliminates major elements of the old Garrison Diversion Plan which could have led to the destruction of commercial and sport fishing in the Hudson Bay drainage system. The new plan provides a high level of assurance that the Canadian environment will be protected.

"Canada is pleased that the legislation implementing the major provisions of the December 1984 Garrison Commission Report is now law. This bill effectively resolves one of the longstanding and most difficult irritants in the Canada-U.S. relationship", Mr. Clark said today.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs said that "the signing of the bill into law is welcomed by Canadians, particularly Manitobans". He noted that "the long and vigorous efforts by this government and successive Manitoba governments played a major role in reaching this conclusion which ensures the protection of the Red River and the rest of the Hudson Bay drainage basin".

The new law restricts irrigation with Missouri River water to areas in the Missouri River drainage basin. Construction of the Lonetree Dam and Reservoir, which could have posed risks to the Hudson Bay drainage basin, has been deferred indefinitely and construction cannot begin unless the U.S. Secretary of State and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency have consulted Canada and reached the conclusion that there could be no violation of the Boundary Waters Treaty.

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