

son Diversion project. American protests were being voiced about an Ontario plan for a large new coal-fire power-plant that was to be situated across the border from a Minnesota wilderness-park area.

Prime Minister Trudeau and President Carter publicly disagreed during a NATO meeting on the nature of the situation in Africa, and, even more ominous, the bilateral boundary and fisheries negotiations were abruptly broken off and long-standing arrangements for mutual access to fishing-zones were cancelled by both countries. Meanwhile those much disputed West Coast

tankers had quietly begun plying B.C. waters — making a major oil-spill and a bilateral brawl simply a matter of time and the laws of probability. The inevitable battles were beginning over the spoils — in terms of jobs and material — from the northern gas pipeline. Voices were again being raised about the inequities of the 1965 Auto Pact. And so on. . . .

Almost in spite of the formidable presence of the PQ, and in spite of the rhetoric about a new spirit of co-operation, the hard realities of Canadian-American relations seem to be reasserting themselves.

Canadian-American relations

Water, water everywhere — but shortages are coming

By Robert James McGavin

Water is our most valuable resource; it sustains life. There is no substitute; it cannot be replaced. Yet it is one of the most abused and threatened of our resources. Last summer, as the energy problems of a harsh winter abated slightly and stocked grocery shelves and full granaries belied impending worldwide food-shortages, drought in the United States West and Midwest focused North American attention on water. Should such water-shortages continue to occur, water could soon occupy centre stage among U.S. domestic problems. If Canada does not examine and satisfactorily explain its water-resource situation and adequately state its position concerning this resource, water-supply problems could have a bad effect on Canadian relations with the United States.

Canada and the United States share many large river-basins that supply water for drinking, irrigation, industry and power. Slightly less than half the Canada-U.S. border lies along or across bodies of water; about two-thirds of Canada's people live within boundary-water basins. The Great Lakes/St Lawrence basin, which alone produces one-sixth of the national income of the United States, contains one-seventh of the U.S. population and four of the largest U.S. cities (Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and Milwaukee). The Canadian part of the basin constitutes about 13 per cent of the land area of Canada; however, one-thirteenth of the basin, or 1 per cent of Canada's total

area, contains more than three-quarters of the country's industrial activity, two-thirds of its population and about one-third of the dollar value of Canadian agricultural production.

Co-operation

To date, co-operation between Canada and the United States on their common water problems has been exemplary. The cornerstone of this bilateral relation is the International Joint Commission, which was established under the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. Basically, the IJC guarantees the water rights for both countries and imposes obligations with respect to water-use with a potential for transboundary damage. Its approval is required for any use, obstruction or diversion of boundary waters in one country that will affect the natural level or flow of the other's boundary waters, rivers flowing across the boundary or waters flowing from boundary waters. The IJC is also empowered to investigate and report on matters referred to it by either government.

Guarantees water rights and imposes obligations

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