

New water quality agreement benefits from six years of experience

Since Canada and the U.S. signed the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement in 1972, both countries have devoted great effort and resources to the restoration and improvement of the waters, resulting in many benefits to all users.

While much remains to be done, the International Joint Commission concluded in its fifth annual report on the subject that degradation of the Lakes had been substantially checked and that the co-ordinated programs of research, surveillance and remedial measures had been a major accomplishment of both countries.

The 1978 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the culmination of six years' experience, contains the following improvements over provisions in the 1972 accord:

- revised and new water quality objectives, both general and specific;
- provisions to eliminate largely discharge of toxic substances into the Great Lakes and to establish warning systems indicating any that may become evident;
- dates set on which municipal and industrial pollution control programs must be in operation (December 31, 1982 and December 31, 1983 respectively);
- better monitoring requirements to judge the effectiveness of remedial programs;
- provisions for dealing with land pollution and for studying airborne pollutants;
- a definition of new, interim phosphorus loadings, to be reviewed after 18 months, and new plans for controlling phosphorus;
- an annual public inventory of discharges and pollution-control requirements.

Among the general objectives, are to keep the waters free from:

- sewage discharges, oil and other debris;
- materials which adversely affect colour, odour, taste or other conditions; and
- materials which produce toxic conditions or provide nutrients for the growth of algae which interfere with the beneficial uses of the Lakes.

The lengthy list of specific objectives provides that specified levels or concentrations of persistent or non-persistent chemical and physical substances not be exceeded to the injury of property or health. The specific objectives of the new accord are far more comprehensive and stringent than those of the 1972 agreement.

The new accord outlines a number of programs which are necessary to meet the objectives, including:

- the preparation of an inventory of pollution abatement requirements, expressed as effluent limitations;
- controls to be placed on the use of pest control products to limit their input into the Lakes; control of pollution from animal husbandry operations and from the hauling and disposal of liquid and solid wastes; and other measures in connection with land-use activities in an effort to reduce this significant contribution to the Lakes' pollution;
- the establishment of measures to control pollution from shipping sources, including both oil and vessel waste discharges;
- the continuation of the joint pollution contingency plan for the Lakes;
- measures for control of pollution from dredging activities and the disposal of polluted dredge sediments;
- the institution of measures for the control of pollution from onshore and offshore facilities, such as materials transportation within the Basin, and gas drilling operations;
- additional protection for pollution from hazardous polluting substances and toxic chemicals;
- the introduction of measures for the control of inputs of phosphorus and other nutrients to prevent harmful algal growth;
- a program aimed at identifying the contribution of pollutants;
- the further implementation of a co-ordinated surveillance and monitoring program to determine the extent to which the general and specific objectives are being achieved.

The International Joint Commission will continue its important role under the 1978 agreement. It will assist Governments in its implementation by tendering advice, collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data, and undertaking public information activities. The Commission will also report to Governments on progress of the general and specific objectives every other year.

tional peacekeeping than any other country." He spoke also of this country's role in NATO, in the defence of the North American continent, and of the "deep trust and confidence" in each other that flows from our long experience as close and good neighbours. Mr. Vance continued: "In addition to being each other's most important trading and travel partners, we draw from the same wellsprings to define the standards of an open and humane society. We find inspiration in each other's experience and each other's achievements."

The following day, discussions between Canadian and U.S. delegations covered international and bilateral matters, including the economic performance of both countries, the water quality agreement, which was signed at noon, and Canada's extended maritime boundaries and management of fisheries and mineral resources. They also reviewed progress and problems associated with building the natural gas pipeline from Alaska across Canadian territory to the lower 48 states. They extended these discussions to other forms of co-operation in the field of energy.

Following lunch with the Prime Minister, Mr. Vance visited the House of Commons, where he was present for a short time during Question Period, and held a meeting with Cabinet ministers. Before leaving for Washington, he and Mr. Jamieson met with members of the press.

Both ministers said that officials had been asked to complete the maritime boundaries negotiations by the end of December. Any unresolved problems were to be dealt with by the two foreign ministers.

Boundaries background

Canada, on January 1, 1977, and the United States, on March 1, 1977, extended their respective fisheries jurisdictions to 200 miles off their coasts. This reopened and enlarged the unresolved delimitation questions involving four common maritime boundaries: Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank in the Atlantic, off the Strait of Juan de Fuca and outside Dixon entrance in the Pacific, and in the Beaufort Sea in the Arctic.

The two Governments appointed special negotiators on August 1, 1977, to recommend a resolution of these issues. They reported to their Governments in October 1977 at the end of Phase I of the negotiations, recommending principles