

1983 had aroused deep concerns if not suspicions in the minds of many Canadians that the United States intended to proceed with construction in advance of consultations.

Against the background of these considerations, Canada presented the United States with two alternatives: either to resolve to manage jointly the Garrison issue in a manner that reflected the two nations' mutual commitments to the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty and to recommendations of the International Joint Commission, or to allow matters to devolve along separate tracks, with the risk that the inevitable environmental and political consequences would dominate the issue, undermine Canada-U.S.A. efforts to manage our joint tenancy of North America, and make a solution to the Garrison issue even more difficult.

It was evident at the November consultations that both countries preferred the first course of action to the second. The technical-consultative mechanism they agreed to comprises a senior officials' consultative group with representatives from the Canadian, Manitoban, American, and North Dakotan Governments, and the Garrison Joint Technical Committee of technical experts from these respective Governments. The United States readily supported the establishment of a technical committee, in particular, which hopefully could move the Garrison issue from the arena of political rhetoric to the domain of disinterested professionals of impartial judgement. To ensure that the technical committee did not work in total isolation from the policy and political process, the technical committee was made accountable to the senior officials' consultative group, which would next meet in April and, as the Hon. Member knows, it did meet at that time.

The Garrison Joint Technical Committee has been mandated by the consultative group to carry out two prime functions. The first function is to examine Canada's immediate phase I technical concerns, which were communicated formally to the United States in Canada's diplomatic note 473 of October 3, 1983. These are recapitulated, item by item, in the technical committee's terms of reference. To this end, the committee is tasked with obtaining all relevant technical information, project plans, specifications, construction schedules, secondary source material and information from on-site inspections in order to assess Canada's concerns and American-proposed solutions. The second and longer term function is to act as an early warning signal to alert the federal and Manitoban Governments should it appear that phase II construction might proceed. Specifically,