

The Governments of Canada and the United States have been informed by the International Joint Commission, through a letter to governments dated August 5, and through meetings with the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Allan J. MacEachen, on August 6 and United States officials, on August 13, 1976 that the Commission's final report on the Garrison Diversion Project in North Dakota will not be available by October 31, 1976 as requested. The Commission now expects that copies of its final report will not be available for public distribution before June, 1977.

The Commission explains the reasons for this delay in its letter of August 5, 1976. These reasons include the need for a detailed and professional assessment of the available water quality data, including their reliability, in order to enable the Garrison Study Board to complete its report to the Commission; the time-consuming restrictions in reproducing the Board's report, with appendices, for public distribution; and the need to ensure that everyone is given ample opportunity to consider the substantial body of information in the Board's report before public hearings are held.

The Canadian and United States Governments regret the considerable delay now expected before the Commission can submit its final report to governments on the findings of its investigation into the transboundary implications of the Garrison Diversion project. The investigation is being undertaken in response to letters from governments of October 22, 1975, which asked the Commission, inter alia, to recommend what measures might be taken to assist governments in ensuring that the provisions of Article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 are honoured.