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REFERENCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 28, 1974

MEETING OF UNITED STATES AND CANADIAN OFFICIALS  
ON THE GARRISON DIVERSION UNIT

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

The Department of External Affairs announced today that United States and Canadian officials met in Ottawa on August 28, 1974, to discuss the Garrison Diversion Unit. These discussions were forecast in an exchange of Notes between Canada and the United States in late 1973 and early 1974. In the exchange of Notes, Canada stressed its concern about the effect of return flows from the North Dakota irrigation project on water quality in the Souris and Red Rivers in Manitoba. The United States, in the exchange, stressed its commitment to Article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 which specifies that neither country shall pollute water crossing the boundary "to the injury of health or property" in the other country.

At the August 28 meeting the two sides discussed in some detail a recent report from the U.S. Department of the Interior entitled "Irrigation Return Flows to the Souris River and Canada", as well as other technical aspects of the project which could affect Canadian rights and interests. The U.S. officials described the project and its proposed implementation schedule and explained the data and conclusions which had been provided to Canada earlier.

The Canadian officials outlined questions raised by the U.S. Department of the Interior report. Some questions were answered at the meeting and the U.S. side undertook to provide answers to others in the near future. Based upon its analysis of the U.S. data,

the Canadian side then outlined how it anticipated the implementation of the Garrison project as envisaged at present would pollute the Souris to the injury of health and property in Canada. The U.S. side re-affirmed its commitment to the obligations described in Article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 and the Canadian side welcomed this re-affirmation.

Both sides welcomed the opportunity to have a full discussion concerning the Garrison project and agreed that the dimensions of the problem are now better understood within both Governments. From the discussion, it became clear that a further examination of some technical aspects of the project is required and both sides undertook to pursue these in detail. In consequence, it was agreed that there will be a further meeting late in the year to continue the discussions and to seek a satisfactory resolution to the question of the Garrison Diversion Unit.

The United States side was led by Mr. William M. Johnson, Jr., Minister-Counsellor at the United States Embassy in Ottawa and consisted of representatives of the Department of State, the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Council on Environmental Quality and the Government of North Dakota. On the Canadian side, the Department of External Affairs, Department of the Environment, and the Department of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management of the Government of Manitoba were represented.