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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 17, 1975

POPLAR RIVER POWER PROJECT:
TEXTS OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN NOTES

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

Text of Note from the Department of State
to the Canadian Embassy, Washington
February 10, 1975

The Department of State wishes to inform the Embassy of Canada of the concern of the USA Government that the proposed Poplar River power project of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and its associated coal mining could result in transboundary air and water pollution, damage to USA fisheries, wildlife, and the Poplar River's aquatic ecosystem, adverse changes in the water temperature of the river, and preclude developments on the USA reach of that river. In addition, the USA Government is concerned that consumption of water by this project may exceed an equitable apportionment of the waters of the Poplar River to the detriment of uses in the USA. These concerns are based on a preliminary evaluation by USA officials of the study outline for environmental effect assessments, Poplar River Project Board on Inquiry, and outline of proposed project and environmental studies- Poplar River generating station prepared by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation.

The Department of State wishes to call to the attention of the Embassy of Canada that the project time schedule in the study outline indicates that construction of a dam and procurement of equipment for the power plant and mining operation have begun prior to the completion of environmental studies and without adequate assessment of the project's effects on the USA. The Department of State therefore suggests that federal and local officials of both

governments meet in the immediate future to examine the implications of the project for the USA. The meeting could provide a useful forum for an exchange of information on the project, allow USA technicians to indicate and further explore areas of particular concern to the USA and help assure that the project will be in consonance with mutual obligations of both countries.

Text of Note from Canadian Embassy to State Department, February 13, 1975

The Canadian Embassy presents its compliments to the Department of State and has the honour to refer to the department's Note of February 10 concerning the proposed Poplar River Power Project of the Saskatchewan Government. The Embassy wishes to assure the Department that the Canadian authorities have taken careful note of possible United States concerns in relation to this project. In this connection the Embassy can confirm that, notwithstanding the impression which may be conveyed in the study outlines of the project, the construction of the proposed dam has not yet begun.

The Embassy wishes to inform the Department that before the project proceeds to the construction stage, the Province of Saskatchewan is required to make formal application for a licence from the federal Minister of the Environment under the International Rivers Improvements Act. It is a requirement of the regulations issued under this Act that an assessment of transboundary effects be undertaken before any licence can be issued. Moreover, it is possible to include conditions in any such licence which will ensure that the project is so operated as to meet Canada's obligations under the Boundary Waters Treaty. If a licence were issued, it would be the intention of the Canadian authorities to include conditions which would be required to enable Canada's obligations to be met.

The Canadian authorities have also noted the Department's request for an early meeting between the two countries on this issue. It is understood that Saskatchewan will shortly complete its studies of the transboundary implications of the project. Accordingly, it is suggested that this meeting be arranged at a mutually convenient date once these studies are complete. The Canadian authorities will at that time suggest a specific time and place for the meeting.