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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 17, 1975

MEETING JANUARY 16 IN WASHINGTON
ON GARRISON DIVERSION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

United States, and Canadian officials met in Washington, D.C. on January 16 to discuss the Garrison Diversion Unit and the effects of the project on waters flowing into Canada. Marcel Cadieux, Ambassador to the United States of America, chaired the Canadian Delegation which included the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister of Environment Canada, Jean Lupien. The United States Delegation was co-chaired by the Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Jack Horton, and Richard Vine, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Canadian Affairs.

Ambassador Cadieux noted that the Government of Canada is firmly convinced, on the basis of studies conducted in the United States and Canada, and on the basis of information provided by the United States in response to questions raised by Canadian officials at the August 28 meeting, that the Garrison Diversion Unit, as currently envisaged, would have adverse effects on the Souris, Assiniboine and Red Rivers, and ultimately Lake Winnipeg, which would cause injury to health and property in Canada.

American officials stressed the commitment of the United States Government to Article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty which specifies that neither country shall pollute water crossing the boundary "to the injury of health or property" in the other country. American officials also reiterated their pledge that no project construction potentially affecting waters flowing into Canada would be undertaken unless it is clear that this United States' obligation under the Treaty would be met.

Officials discussed in detail the question of the effects of project return flows on waters flowing into Canada and the obligations of both nations under the Boundary Waters Treaty. Canadian officials cited injury to health and property in Canada that the project, as presently planned, would cause. They further noted that the water quality of the Souris River was already low, and that the Garrison Diversion Unit could preclude future developments on the Souris River in Canada.

United States' officials stated that construction on the Souris River was not scheduled to begin until 1981 and stressed the need for further consultation. Bureau of Reclamation officials stated that many aspects of the project would have beneficial effects on Canada, and that return flows from the project would improve the quality of Souris River stream-flows during long periods of each year, particularly when flows are low.

The United States requested further data regarding specific uses of the water in Canada for a full evaluation of return flow effects on Souris River stream-flow.

Both sides welcomed the opportunity for senior officials to have a frank exchange of views on the Garrison Diversion Unit and agreed that the dimensions of the project are now better understood within both governments. From the discussions, it became clear that further examination of the project as it affects Canada is required. Accordingly, the two sides agreed to recommend that the governments select an appropriate mechanism to undertake a joint examination of certain aspects of or adjustments to the project, to ensure that the provisions of Article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty are honoured.

The United States' Delegation was composed of members from the Department of State, the Department of the Interior, the Council on Environmental Quality, the Environmental Protection Agency and the State of North Dakota. On the Canadian side, the Department of External Affairs, Environment Canada and the Government of Manitoba were represented. Congressman Mark Andrews attended as an observer.

fully compatible with the present bilateral effort to protect the marine environment in the region. United States officials also noted that increased shortfalls of Canadian natural gas and crude oil increased requirements for tanker traffic to meet United States regional energy requirements.

Examination of technical aspects of these problems will continue between the agencies concerned. Agencies represented on the American side were the Department of State, the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Council on Environmental Quality, the Coast Guard, the Water Resources Council, the Corps of Engineers and the State of Washington. On the Canadian side the Departments of External Affairs, Environment, Energy, Mines and Resources, and Finance, and the Province of British Columbia were represented.