

I.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1927-28.

1. *From the Secretary of State of the United States, Washington, to the Minister of the Dominion of Canada, Washington.*

April 13, 1927.

SIR,—For more than one hundred years, the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River have furnished a common highway and transportation outlet for the population in the interior of the continent in both the United States and Canada. The waterway has been the subject of several treaties and conventions between the two countries. Its development has been a matter of continuous effort on the part of both countries.

Pursuant to reference made to the International Joint Commission by both governments under authority of the treaty of January 11, 1909, that commission made investigation of the feasibility of improving navigational facilities of the St. Lawrence River between Montreal and Lake Ontario so as to transform that section into an ocean shipway. The Commission submitted its report, signed on December 19, 1921, to your Government and to the Government of the United States after taking into consideration the existing characteristics of the waterway and its projected development, as well as the essential economic factors. It earnestly recommended to both governments the making of a treaty for a scheme of shipway improvement of the river between Montreal and Lake Ontario. It suggested, however, that before final decision be made the engineering features should receive further consideration and study. Delays naturally ensued due to the problems of reconstruction resulting from the war.

On March 14, 1924, the President of the United States appointed the St. Lawrence River Commission under the chairmanship of the Honourable Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce, to consider the whole project in its economic and national aspects and to express an opinion as to whether the project should be undertaken, and the Government of Canada, on May 7, 1924, appointed a national advisory committee under the chairmanship of the Honourable George Perry Graham, Minister of Railways and Canals. Through the arrangements brought about by these committees the two governments by exchange of notes dated February 4 and March 17, 1925, gave instructions to a Joint Board of Engineers designated by them to review and extend the engineering plans as recommended by the International Joint Commission in 1921.

This Joint Engineering Board made an elaborate resurvey of the lake and river systems both as to navigation and power, and filed with each government an exhaustive report upon all its engineering aspects. The representatives of the two countries differed as to a few details but from the report it clearly appears that the improvement of the waterway for navigation and power purposes is both feasible and advisable.

The St. Lawrence River Commission appointed by the President to advise this Government on the subject recently undertook an examination of all of the economic as well as engineering facts bearing upon the proposed development and has made a complete report covering all aspects. It concluded that the construction of the shipway at proper depths would relieve the interior of the continent, especially agriculture, from the economic handicaps of adverse transport-