

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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THE GREAT LAKES - ST LAWRENCE SEAWAY

An address by the President of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, Mr. Lionel Chevrier, to the Edmonton Canadian Club, September 6, 1955.

Projects to improve the natural waterway of the St. Lawrence River have been before the public for over 100 years. During the last 50 years they have been the subject of negotiations between Canada and the United States. No subject has been more thoroughly discussed, none more carefully studied. All of these studies culminated in first, The Treaty of Washington signed between our two countries in 1932, but unratified by the United States Senate; next the Agreement of 1941 covering a deep waterway from Montreal to the head of the lakes, which while it was never rejected by the Congress of the United States, was never approved and resulted in Canada withdrawing from it. Another 10 years passed without action. In 1952 a new approach was adopted. By agreement with the United States a joint application was made to the International Joint Commission, a body established by treaty composed of three Americans and three Canadians, for the development of power in the International Rapids Section and Canada agreed to build all the navigation facilities on the Canadian side from Montreal to Lake Erie. The application for power was approved. Meanwhile, Congress decided to participate in the Seaway. Early in 1954 it passed an Act authorizing an American agency to build all the navigation facilities in the International Rapids Section in American territory.

In July and August of 1954 representatives of our two countries met in Ottawa. The result: the United States is building a canal opposite Barnhart Island in the International Section and Canada is building a canal near Iroquois in the same section.

So much for the general historical background. Now for the project itself -

The St. Lawrence Seaway is a twelve-hundred mile channel, 27 feet in depth, extending from the head of the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. It will provide navigation facilities to permit Great Lakes freighters to come down to Montreal and, conversely, to allow 25 foot craft to carry their cargoes through the St. Lawrence River up to the Great Lakes.

Coupled with this is a development of 2,200,000 horsepower of electrical energy on a joint basis in the International Section of the St. Lawrence River, with the power equally divided between the two countries.