

and negotiations between the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation and the New York Central Railway which have made it possible to consider what in the mind of Canadians is, I think, a much more satisfactory alternative to the bridge over Pollys Gut. I think that perhaps I might stick more closely to a memorandum I have here on the subject and perhaps, if necessary, supplement it with a few additions.

I should like to say that after considerable negotiation, and at the request of the Canadian government, the United States Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation agreed to reroute the highway and New York Central Railway in the United States by means of twin bridge facilities at the Grass river lock and bridges over the Grass and Raquette rivers in order to provide uninterrupted facilities.

It was desirable to retain as short and direct a route as possible for highway traffic coming to the Cornwall area from the east by the south shore of the St. Lawrence and particularly to provide as short a route as possible for the St. Regis Indians living in a small section of Canadian territory on the south shore of the St. Lawrence that is entirely surrounded by United States territory. These Indians come to Cornwall for supplies, schools, hospitals, employment, et cetera.

During the current session, parliament passed an amendment to the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act to authorize the St. Lawrence seaway authority to join with the U.S. Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation in the construction of a low level highway and railway bridge over Pollys Gut, over the western end of Cornwall island and the United States mainland.

Just at this point, Mr. Chairman, I should like to interject that it was possible to build a low level bridge over Pollys Gut because no navigation was to take place in that part of the river. Hon. members who are familiar with the geography will realize that this plays an important part in the power development but no part whatever in the development of navigation facilities.

The proposed bridge was to replace the existing span of the Roosevelt bridge over the south channel of the St. Lawrence river which has to be removed so as to allow shipping to have access to the new 27-foot Long Sault canal. At that time it was understood that the New York Central Railway would not abandon its line between Ottawa and Helena, New York. As the only possible location for a combined low level highway and railway bridge was over Pollys Gut,

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the amendment to the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act was drafted in restrictive terms accordingly.

Within the last few weeks the New York Central Railway has let it be known that a large industrial corporation is interested in acquiring as a plant site some 2,000 acres of land in the vicinity of the proposed relocated highway and rail line on the United States south shore of the St. Lawrence river to the east of the Grass river lock. The industrial corporation in question objects—and I think quite understandably—to having the railway and highway pass through the plant area. The New York Central Railway, accordingly, proposes to abandon its line between Cornwall and Helena, New York, and to service the industry by a spur line from one of its other railway lines in that area.

The U.S. Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation suggested that the highway be relocated in a westerly and a southerly direction; that is to say, west of the plant area to which I have just referred. This, however, would aggravate the problem of the St. Regis Indians who would have to travel an additional six miles to Cornwall. Furthermore, it would be much more inconvenient for all traffic travelling south and east of the international boundary.

At this point, Mr. Chairman, I should like to emphasize that the proposed diversion which would have brought the highway across twin bridges at the Grass river lock on to United States territory and then crossing Pollys Gut to meet the western end of Cornwall island would have materially added to the length of the trip that Indians living in the St. Regis reservation would have to take in order to get to Cornwall, and that the proposal to which I have just referred would have added an additional six miles to a trip that was already quite long.

At this stage the St. Lawrence seaway authority, having regard to the proposals to abandon the railway line, suggested that it would be more practical and economical to build over the south channel a high level highway suspension bridge a short distance west of the site of the present bridge. This is by far the most sensible and uncomplicated approach. It is cheaper, in that the total cost to both entities would be in the neighbourhood of \$8 million against more than \$9 million for the original plan. It is more direct by far and generally follows the present north-south international highway route at Cornwall. It is best for the Indians and for the traffic coming to Cornwall from the east by the south shore of the St. Lawrence.

Obviously participation by the St. Lawrence seaway authority in the construction of this