

the order of the Commission assuming to grant such approval cannot be regarded by the Government of Canada as binding upon this Dominion.

The Government of the United States will readily understand that, in taking this course, the Canadian Government is actuated only by its concern for those treaties and conventions that have so happily promoted the friendly relations between the two countries, and by the belief that it is through a jealous regard for the integrity of such understandings that these fortunate relations may best be maintained.

It is with this purpose also that the Canadian Government deems it appropriate to refer here to the proposal made in the order in council of the 2nd September, 1918, that the two Governments should take immediate steps jointly to prepare and carry out a scheme looking to the most economical and comprehensive development of the waters of the St. Lawrence river in the interests of the people of both countries. Even though the utilization of only a portion of the whole capacity of the river can be immediately contemplated, yet the endeavour should be to design at the outset a complete scheme into which successive developments might be fitted from time to time as and when the occasion might demand. Without some such scheme there is always present the great danger that the ultimate possibilities of St. Lawrence navigation may be neglected or even irreparably injured; for it must be borne in mind, not only that navigation is the paramount national and international use of this great highway of commerce, but that the possibilities of the stream in this respect have been as yet by no means fully developed. On the other hand, it is certain that the subordinate and incidental but important use of these international boundary waters for power purposes can never be rendered as efficient and productive through a policy of simply permitting a haphazard series of unrelated private enterprises as through a carefully considered and comprehensive scheme of development carried out under public auspices by the two countries; and obviously it is only by agreement and concerted action between the two countries that such a development can be undertaken.

But, as already intimated, this is not all; there is, in addition to the economic advantages, the much more important consideration affecting the status of the treaties and conventions between the two countries. For the adoption of the proposed joint project as an international policy would, it is conceived, be calculated to obviate many occasions for public dissatisfaction and misunderstandings that on the one side or the other might otherwise arise from time to time in respect of private exploitations of the uses of these waters. Unquestionably, these uses are becoming more and more regarded as public uses, and it follows that the responsibility for their development should be undertaken, and the benefits of such development enjoyed, by the public. Indeed, for this reason and in view of the other considerations here adduced the Canadian Government is strongly convinced that nothing should be allowed to prejudice the chance of such a comprehensive power development of the St. Lawrence waters, and, so far as its consent may be necessary, it will, therefore, be unable to sanction further private enterprise of this nature.