

Construction of sewage and drainage works at Welland, Crowland and Thorold, Ontario; request for federal assistance

23. The Minister of Transport reported that the city of Welland and the townships of Crowland and Thorold, Ontario, had requested a contribution from the Department of Transport towards the cost of constructing works designed to improve the collection and disposal of sewage, storm drainage and surface water run-off. This request was based on the claim that the Welland ship canal had interfered with the natural drainage of the areas concerned and that, if there had been no canal, the proposed construction would not be necessary. The municipalities concerned had also proposed that the Department of National Health and Welfare and the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario make contributions to these works.

In a report prepared by consulting engineers retained by Welland, Crowland and Thorold, it had been suggested that the cost of these works be apportioned as follows:

Ontario Hydro-Electric Commission -----	\$	224,172	(6%)
Department of Transport -----		1,106,178	(30%)
Municipalities -----		2,008,746	(54%)
Department of National Health & Welfare --		361,211	(10%)
Total		\$	3,700,307

The cost of the project had been studied by the Superintending Engineer of Welland Canals. He had estimated that the additional cost of the proposed works attributable to the existence of the ship canal would be \$150,300, whereas the contribution requested was in excess of \$1.1 million. As, however, the Superintending Engineer and the other members of the engineering staff of the Department of Transport had no extensive experience in drainage or sewage matters and their report was based only on general knowledge, the estimate of \$150,300 might be unduly low.

Counsel had advised that the Department had fulfilled its obligations by the construction of remedial sewer and water facilities made necessary by the building of the canal, and that there was no legal obligation for the Department, because of the existence of the canal, to assume or share the cost to the municipalities either of improving the facilities constructed by the Department or of providing new facilities made necessary by the growth in population and industry.

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