

If, however, real progress is to be made in freeing trade, the United States will have to give a bold lead. You have doubtless heard enough of the criticisms which other people - and many of your own people - have directed at the present level of your tariffs, the obstacles presented by your customs procedures and certain other features of your country's commercial policies. These criticisms do not reflect any lack of appreciation of the constructive efforts of the United States in many directions since the war. They reflect rather the recognition by all of us of the crucial importance of your position.

As between Canada and the United States there are special considerations. Over many years now we have built up the highest level of trade between two countries that the world has ever seen. This vast exchange of goods for the common advantage of our two peoples is a thing of utmost value. It is a fundamental part of the good relations between our countries; it underlies the welfare of our peoples and it is essential to the strength and prosperity of this continent - the bastion of the free world. It seems to us of the gravest importance that no retrograde steps be taken that would imperil this great structure and it must be seen as a whole or it can very easily be imperilled. We cannot nibble at this corner here and knock out that piece there to protect some special interest without weakening the entire fabric. That is why we in Canada, like the other free countries, so greatly hope that over the next few months your country will avoid taking any backward steps and will move rapidly as possible towards the kind of commercial policy which is required in your own interest and in that of the whole free world. Both the United States and Canada badly need strong friends and allies. To have them and to hold them requires trade policies that are those of good neighbours.

In addition to defence and trade I think I would be betraying no secrets if I intimated to you that the President and I have been talking about the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project. This of course is something mainly of North American concern and of perhaps even greater concern to Canadians than to Americans.

Although some of your compatriots may not agree with us, we are convinced that the completion of this undertaking will make a really significant contribution to the wealth and strength and hence to the security of our two countries.

All American administrations for the past 25 or 30 years have approved of the Seaway, and surely no one can justify opposition to the harnessing of the power which the bounty of Providence has placed in the St. Lawrence River.

In 1941 an agreement between our two governments was made for the joint development of the international section of the St. Lawrence waterway. Your Congress did not see fit to approve the agreement, which of course was within its constitutional right and we Canadians do not complain of that.