

Supply—Public Works

would be preserved at its normal point. That is the object of the construction of the regulating dam.

Mr. MacNICOL: At what normal point?

Mr. CARDIN: I have not the figure in mind, and I would not risk a guess. However, the level of the water would be maintained by that regulating dam, even if the river is dredged between St. Johns and the boundary at the normal level of lake Champlain. At that time the International Waterways Commission as it was then called agreed to the proposal of a regulating dam between Chambly and St. Johns, provided the dam were built with openings sufficient to dispose of the high water in the spring, but which would maintain the normal flow of the Richelieu river during the navigation season.

The project was not carried on, on account of the difficulties in which the country found itself as a result of the war. All I propose at the present time is the construction of the dam which was agreed upon by the American and Canadian authorities, and approved by the International Waterways Commission as far back as 1907, or a little later.

Mr. BENNETT: Is there an order issued by the commission?

Mr. CARDIN: Yes, a resolution has been passed by the International Waterways Commission approving the construction of the dam. It was not proceeded with later on, and now we are asking that there be a confirmation of the order given in 1907 for the construction of the dam.

Strictly speaking, that does not affect the project of canalization of the whole Richelieu river. It covers more particularly the reclaiming of these low lands on Canadian territory also, to a certain extent, on United States territory.

Mr. BENNETT: Between St. Johns and the boundary?

Mr. CARDIN: Yes, between St. Johns and the boundary. Besides there is going to be an advantage even if we do not decide to reconstruct the Chambly canal. The dam is going to be built half way between Chambly and St. Johns. The present canal is between Chambly and St. Johns. The dam being built half way will reduce by half, the length of the present canal, which is going to be an advantage to navigation. Instead of having to go through a canal twelve miles long, the boats will travel through a canal only six miles long, because the dam between Chambly and St. Johns will raise the level of the water so that from Friars Island it will be open river navigation.

[Mr. Cardin.]

Mr. BENNETT: What is the distance between St. Johns and Chambly?

Mr. CARDIN: Twelve miles. This would reduce by six miles the present length of the Chambly canal, a point which is advantageous so far as navigation is concerned. I repeat, that for the present this does not commit us to the canalization of the Richelieu river. It is true the question was raised before the International Joint Commission when they studied the different projects mentioned by the hon. member. Their meeting was not organized with a view to considering the Richelieu river. They had three projects which would have left out of consideration the Richelieu river from St. Johns or from Chambly right through to the St. Lawrence.

The suggestions which were made by the United States interests were (1) for a canal entirely on American territory; (2) from St. Johns, inland, right through to Laprairie; and (3) from Chambly, at the foot of the present Chambly canal, right through to St. Lambert, in front of Montreal. A fourth proposal was suggested by Canadian representatives for study. The International Joint Commission discussed and studied more particularly the twenty-seven foot canal—

Mr. MacNICOL: Twenty-seven to thirty.

Mr. CARDIN: Yes, twenty-seven to thirty. We admit the proposal for canalization at twelve feet does not appear to interest the Americans very much. It might interest us later on, but that question is not raised at the present time. We are not now discussing the reconstruction of the Chambly canal. That would be the most expensive part of the whole project and would cost in the neighbourhood of \$8,000,000. We propose only to build a dam, in order to help reclaim the low lands, and in the second place to better the present navigation system by reducing the length of the Chambly canal by half. That will be of great advantage.

It is no argument to say that there is no traffic at the present time. When there is no railroad between two points there is no traffic. Did we wait for traffic to build our railroads? No, we built our railroads to develop traffic, and we succeeded in developing traffic where there was not one dollar's worth before. In the present condition of the canal we cannot expect to show the same results that are being shown in other sections of the country where the canals are up to date. Forty or fifty years ago when the St. Lawrence canals were the same depth as the Chambly canal—

Mr. BENNETT: That is twelve feet.