

and that we could depend upon Canadian officials to enforce the new laws. To this I reply, we can depend upon nobody, and should depend upon nobody but our own officials, in regard to matters of such importance.

The navigation of the St. Lawrence and its canals, and of the Great Lakes and the rivers and canals connecting them, free from let or hindrance, and from tolls which discriminate against our commerce, is a matter of the gravest importance. England has never admitted us to such privileges as a matter of right. She contends and has always contended, that a State lying on both sides of a navigable river next to the sea, has a right in accordance with the unbroken practice of nations, to prohibit States lying above them from using the river at all, if it has the power to enforce its prohibition. In pursuance of this contention she has permitted us to use the St. Lawrence only in accordance with treaty stipulations, and while those stipulations, have generally been fair and liberal—indeed I may say—strictly reciprocal in terms, it is a matter of notoriety that Canada has continually discriminated against commerce intended for American cities and ports, and in favor of that intended for Canadian cities and ports. And to make the matter worse, Sir John A. McDonald, the Canadian Premier contends that there is no injustice in such discrimination.

When it became known in 1802 that Spain had retroceded Louisiana to France and thereby given to the latter power, the control of the Mississippi River, and the ability to cancel our right of deposit at New Orleans, Mr. Jefferson who was then President, wrote a remarkable letter to Chancellor Livingston our minister to France, in which he set forth in clear and unmistakable terms, that the transfer of that vast region and its great river, from a weak power, such as Spain then was, to a strong one such as France was then becoming, if persisted in, must be regarded by us as an event which would "completely reverse all the political relations of the United States," and form "a new epoch in our political affairs." He pointed