

*St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act*

I want to emphasize that phrase.

The only work required to complete the deep waterway through the Welland ship canal is the deepening of certain parts to 27 feet. The total estimated cost to provide this depth of 27 feet throughout the Welland ship canal is \$2 million.

That estimate was confirmed in the committee of supply in the estimates of the Department of Transport on July 22, 1955. At page 6610 of *Hansard* of that date the then minister of transport, the Hon. George C. Marler, is reported as having said:

—deepening of Welland canal, \$2 million.

To the extent I have been able to conduct research that is the complete record of estimates and disclosures to parliament. I pause only to mention that it is a revelation to a Canadian parliamentarian to observe the detail which appears in congressional documents. There is no comparison whatever between the amount of information provided to the congress of the United States and that provided to parliament. This applies at all stages of the seaway planning and construction. Our seaway authority and our Department of Transport could take many lessons from their United States counterparts in the matter of reporting to their legislative authorities. In any event that is the record of the estimates and disclosures made to this house and to this country. That is the basis upon which plans for the seaway were undertaken.

What of the records of the contracts which were let? In public documents I have been able to find a record of eight contracts let. I think those contracts ought to be put upon the record. On December 3, 1955, a contract for the enlargement of the channel between lock No. 1 and lock No. 2 was awarded to McNamara Construction Company Limited for \$359,755. On the same date, a contract for the enlargement of the channel between lock No. 2 and lock 3 was awarded to the Swansea Construction Company Limited for \$698,260. On the same date also a contract for the enlargement of the channel between lock No. 3 and lock No. 4 was awarded to Aiken and MacLachlan for \$104,000. Consequently, on December 3, 1955, three contracts for a very small part of the work were let, totalling \$1,161,000, or already in excess of the original estimate for the complete work. Therefore, already as far back as December, 1955 the seaway authority and the minister of transport had reason to be put on the alert with respect to the ultimate cost. I am unable to find a whisper of this problem having been communicated to parliament.

The fourth contract was awarded on July 13, 1956, jointly to Canadian Dredge and

House of Representatives, 81st Congress, second session on house joint resolution No. 271. At page 129 there appears a letter from Lieutenant-General R. A. Wheeler, chief of engineers, to Senator Alexander Wiley, dated December 7, 1948, to which is appended the estimate of costs as provided by the Canadian Department of Transport. The cost there set forth for a 27-foot project channel is \$1,157,000. In order that there may be no misunderstanding about the depth let me quote a note at page 134 which states:

For channels of 27 and 30-foot depth—

I draw attention to those words: 30-foot depth—

—in the Welland Canal only normal dredging operations would be necessary, as a controlling depth of 30 feet is provided over the sills of the existing locks.

Thus the first estimate of the cost of providing for deepening of the Welland canal adequate to the needs of the seaway was \$1,157,000, a figure which I hope the committee will bear in mind as I go along.

The next estimate of which I am aware also comes from a United States source and I refer to the hearings of the committee on public works of the House of Representatives, 82nd congress, 1st session, meeting on various house joint resolutions. At page 214 of the evidence of Major-General Lewis Pick, chief of engineers, United States army, given on February 26, 1951, the estimate of the cost as prepared by the Canadian Department of Transport is shown as \$1,302,000. That estimate is stated to be at December 1950 cost levels and that fact may indicate the change from the earlier estimate.

In any event it was this estimate which was used in this house on December 11, 1951, in the committee stage of the bill to create the St. Lawrence seaway authority. I quote from *Hansard* of that date at page 1787, the words of the then minister of transport, now the hon. member for Laurier:

—and in the Welland ship canal, \$1,302,000.

I am unable to find any change in this estimate until February 15, 1955. On that date the then president of the St. Lawrence seaway authority, now the hon. member for Laurier, spoke to a luncheon of the annual convention of the Canadian lumbermen's association in Montreal. May I say that I am quoting his words from a secondary source. I have not been able to find the actual original. If the hon. member takes any exception at all to the quotation, I must, of course, immediately withdraw. This is the quotation as I have taken it from a secondary source:

The only work—