



Proceedings and Addresses  
GREAT WATERWAYS CONFERENCE  
Windsor, Ontario

18th and 19th November, 1919

THE opening session convened at 3 p. m. when the Chairman, Mr F. A. Nancekivell, opened the proceedings with the following introductory remarks:

Opening Address - Chairman, F. A. Nancekivell:

Gentlemen,

It is scarcely necessary for me to go into detail as to the reason for the calling of this Conference. The general views of our Committee have been placed before you in correspondence exchanged. However, might I just touch very briefly upon a few of the basic ideas behind this movement:

The opinion is expressed on every hand that these are serious times for this country, and, indeed, for the whole civilized world. Never was there more urgent necessity for the greatest foresight and wisdom in the planning of our commercial future. The world's markets are being realigned; and if we are to have prosperity, we must reach out for foreign trade both in our natural and manufactured products. And, if we are to compete with other countries for world trade, we must keep down our costs of production and delivery.

Transportation charges on raw material and finished products constitute quite a large percentage of the cost to the ultimate consumer. Therefore, any saving effected in such charges will yield big results in both foreign and domestic trade.

Water Transportation, as everyone knows, is much cheaper than rail transportation; and, when we consider what a wonderful natural system of inland waterways is the joint heritage of Canada and the United States, and how comparatively little it is necessary to do in addition to that already done, to give us a deep waterway from the Atlantic Tidewater to the head of the Great Lakes, then, surely, now is the time to get behind the project and push it through.

In addition to the actual savings in transportation costs of goods inward and outward, the development of electrical energy possible in connection with the work would most desirably offset the present and anticipated coal shortage; and, if sold at a reasonable price, would go far to finance the project.

The particular features with figures and estimates of this proposed work will be dealt with by different speakers today and tomorrow who, I believe, will prove to you that, not only is the project most desirable, but, that it should be actually considered as an emergency of the most urgent kind.