

GOVERNMENT



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The Department of External Affairs announced today that a group of United States officials came to Ottawa, at the invitation of the Canadian Government, for exploratory talks on March 6 and 7, with the Canadian Interdepartmental Committee on the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project.

The discussions were held as a result of a meeting between the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States on September 28, 1951, which resulted in an exchange of Notes on January 11, 1952 (External Affairs Press Release of January 28, 1952). In these Notes the two Governments reaffirmed their preference for undertaking the Project jointly under the 1941 Agreement, but also agreed to co-operate in the event it becomes necessary for Canada to proceed with the all-Canadian project because of inability of the United States to proceed jointly with Canada.

The Canadian Parliament has already passed legislation providing for power and for navigation works in Canadian territory if this should prove necessary. The joint meeting examined in an exploratory manner the problems which would arise in connection with the all-Canadian seaway and sub-committees to consider engineering and legal matters were appointed.

The United States group, an Inter-Agency Committee established to work out with Canadian officials the problems related to the alternative Canadian plan, is headed by Mr. Jack Gorrie, Chairman of the National Security Resources Board. Mr. N.A. Robertson, Secretary to the Cabinet, is Chairman of the Canadian Committee. Another meeting of the joint group will be held in Washington in the near future.