

The importance of the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Canadian economy has been recognized by Canadians throughout the last century. The grain crops of our Western Prairies move to market by that route, just as raw and finished materials from the lower St. Lawrence and from abroad move into Central and Western Canada in the other direction.

The first improvements to the Seaway date back over a full century. The first canal system provided for nine-foot navigation. This was followed by canals and locks allowing fourteen-foot draft. Later the waterway above the International Section was improved for twenty-seven foot draft by the construction of the new Welland Canal below Lake Erie. The river below Montreal has been improved to provide a channel to the ocean having a minimum width of 600 feet and a depth of thirty-five feet. The bottle-neck in the Seaway -- fourteen-foot navigation in the International Rapids Section -- would have been removed by Canada long since had your Government extended the necessary co-operation.

It should be noted at this point that the St. Lawrence Seaway is, and always has been, a Canadian Seaway. Every important improvement has been built and paid for by Canada, from Lake Erie down. The cost of operating and maintaining the Seaway is paid wholly by Canada. Nevertheless, ships of every nation may use the Seaway without payment of tolls. An international treaty provides that, if and when tolls on shipping are imposed, they will bear equally on Canadian and foreign flag ships. Canada proposes to pay, on a self-liquidating basis, for improvements in the International Rapids Section. Why then, should your country withhold its co-operation and thus delay completion of this vital Canadian transportation outlet? I must confess that I do not know the answer.

The drop of the river in the International Rapids Section makes possible the development of a large block of low cost hydro-electric power, to be shared equally by our two countries. Economy dictates that this hydro power be developed either prior to, or as part of, the Seaway development. Canada is ready and anxious to develop its share. It is known that the State of New York would like to develop your share, but necessary Federal permission has not been granted either to New York State or to some other competent agency. Canada can and will proceed to remove the bottle-neck in her twenty-seven foot navigation channel from Lake Erie to the ocean as soon as competent authorities are authorized to build the power developments.

Proposals are now being advanced that the United States should build the new canal in the International Rapids Section. It seems to me that such a proposal can only complicate the present situation. Ownership by the United States of a short section of a very long Seaway would not only add to the overall construction cost but would complicate problems of maintenance and operation of the canal system. It seem obvious to me that continued ownership by one national authority of the entire Seaway represents the most efficient procedure. There are critical channels between the Upper Lakes that will require deepening to twenty-seven feet at some stage. By assuming responsibility for such deepening, your country can assume a much more logical and valuable role by making twenty-seven-foot navigation