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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER:RE NIAGARA BRIDGE PROJECTS

There appear to be three projects:

1. International Railway Co., owners of the wrecked Falls View Bridge - to build new bridge at the same site.

Old bridge was built under corporate powers granted by private Acts of Parliament in 1868 and 1894; plans approved by Governor in Council. The Co.'s solicitors (Robertson, Toronto, and Andrew Thompson, Ottawa) recently called at the Department, and were asked to tell us what kind of authority the Co.'s U.S. solicitors proposed to get in the U.S. It is questionable whether the Co.'s existing corporate powers cover the building of a new bridge to replace the wrecked one.

2. Province of Ontario and New York State Highway Departments: According to Mr. Hepburn's press interviews, this project would use the same site as the International Railway Co.'s.

No official information or application yet received. According to press despatches, private Acts of Parliament and Congress are contemplated.

3. Bill 15, Niagara Falls Observation Bridge Co. (Mr. Damude, Welland) - This contemplates another site. It is conditional on getting similar power from Congress or other United States competent authority.

The practical and engineering merits concern Public Works and Transport.

From External Affairs and diplomatic viewpoint, a policy of concurrent Acts of Parliament and Congress appears preferable and more certain. The recent Buffalo and Fort Erie Bridge - also over Niagara River - was covered by private Acts of Parliament (1923) and of New York legislature and of Congress (1924).

A question as to approval by International Joint Commission also arises. This was obtained in the Buffalo and Fort Erie case, in spite of the concurrent legislation.

*For original
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