

January 10, 1934

[St. Lawrence Thursday]

FDR Speech File

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

From the desk of—
Miss LeHand

Draft

*Original of
the President's Message
to the Senate on
the St. Lawrence
U.N. Treaty S.E.*

Jan 10 1934

Senate.
TO THE ~~Senate~~

I request the consideration of ratification by the Senate of the so-called St. Lawrence Treaty with ~~Canada~~. ^{Canada} Consideration on a Broad national ~~basis~~ ^{27th March} lead me, without hesitation, to advocate the Treaty. There are two main considerations, navigation and power.

Canada and the United States are possessed of a natural flow of water from near the center of the continent to the ocean---a flow which throughout the greater part of its length is today available for navigation by large size vessels. A system of locks at the eastern end of Lake Superior, a dredged channel between Lake Huron and Lake Erie, and another series of great locks between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario provide free and adequate navigation to a point well down the St. Lawrence River. From there, a series of three rapids, all of them within a distance of 120 miles, now impede navigation by ocean-going vessels; but a Canadian canal ^{now} already provides facilities for smaller ships. This Canadian canal is ~~already~~ ^{now} used substantially up to its capacity.

Two of the three rapids are wholly in Canadian territory; the other is in the so-called international section. A great power development at the Beauharnois rapids in Canada is already nearing completion and locks for ocean-going ships have been planned for and could readily be built at a low cost ⁶² ~~one~~ part of the plan. This means that only two additional series of locks are required for a complete and continuous seaway from Duluth to Salt Water. I call your attention to the simple fact that Canada alone can, if desired, build locks at the Lachine rapids and at the international sector and thus, provide a seaway wholly within Canadian control without treaty participation by the United States. This, however, would be a reversal of the policy of cooperation which the United States and Canada have continuously maintained for generations.

I want to make it very clear that this great international highway for shipping is without any question going to be completed in the near future

and that this completion should be carried out by both Nations instead of by one.

I am sending you herewith a summary of data prepared at my request by governmental agencies. This summary, in its relation to the economic aspects of the seaway, shows ~~that~~ from the broad national point of view, first, that commerce and transportation will be greatly benefitted and, secondly, ~~that~~ local fears of economic harm to special localities or to special interests are grossly exaggerated. It is, I believe, a historic fact that every great improvement directed to better commercial communications, whether in the case of railroads into new territory, or the deepening of great rivers, ^{or} the building of canals, or even ~~the~~ the cutting of the Isthmus of Panama, ~~and~~ have all been subjected to opposition on the part of local interests which conjure up imaginary fears and fail to realize that improved transportation results in increased ~~commerce~~ *commerce benefiting directly, or indirectly,*

all sections
For example, I am convinced ~~that~~ that the building of the St. Lawrence seaway will not ~~injure~~ injure the railroads or throw their employees out of work, ~~that~~ that it will not in any way interfere with the proper ^{use} ~~use~~ of the Mississippi River or the Missouri River for navigation. Let us be wholly frank in saying that it is better economics to send grain or other raw materials from ^{the} ~~the~~ Northwest to Europe via the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence than it is to send them around three sides of a square ---via Texas ports or the Mississippi, thence, through the Gulf of Mexico and thence, from the southern end of the north Atlantic to its northern end. In this illustration, it is well to remember that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points.

I am satisfied that the treaty contains adequate provision for ^{the} needs of the Chicago ² Drainage District and for navigation between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River. A special report from the Chief of Engineers of the War Dept. covers this subject.

Invent-A.

~~An incomparable source~~
~~This ^{Power} is Lawrence~~
is a source of incomparably
cheap power located in
proximity to a great
industrial and **rural** market
and within transmission
distance of millions of
domestic consumers -

On the affirmative side, I subscribe to the definite belief that the completion of the seaway will greatly serve the economic and transportation needs of a vast area of the United States and should, therefore, be ^{seriously} considered from the national point of view.

The other great objective provided for in the treaty relates to the development of ^{electric} power. As you know, I have advocated the development of four great power areas in the United States, ^{each} ~~each~~ to serve as a yardstick and each to be controlled by government or governmental agencies. The Tennessee Valley plants and projects in the southeast, the Boulder Dam on the Colorado River in the southwest, the Columbia River projects in the northwest are already under construction. The St. Lawrence development in the northeast calls for action. ^(Insert A) The legislature of the State of New York ~~has already passed~~ ~~by~~ ^{the State} ~~unanimous vote~~ set up the necessary State machinery during my term as Governor of New York and stands ready to cooperate with the Federal Government ^{in the} ~~and~~ distribution of power in accordance with what I believe is today a definite national policy. ^H Power in the international sector of the St. Lawrence cannot be developed without a treaty between the United States and Canada. On the other hand, Canada can develop a huge block of new power at the two other rapids which lie wholly within Canadian territory. Here again, as in the case of navigation, it is better in every way that we should maintain the historic principle of accord with Canada in the mutual development of the two Nations.

I have not stressed the fact that the starting of this great work will put thousands of unemployed to work. I have preferred to stress the great future advantages ^{to} our country and especially the fact that all of us should view this treaty in the light of the benefits which it confers on the people of the United States as a whole.

F. D. R.

TO THE SENATE:

I request the consideration of ratification by the Senate of the so-called St. Lawrence Treaty with Canada. Broad national reasons lead me, without hesitation, to advocate the Treaty. There are two main considerations, navigation and power.

Canada and the United States are possessed of a natural flow of water from near the center of the continent to the ocean -- a flow which throughout the greater part of its length is today available for navigation by large size vessels. A system of locks at the eastern end of Lake Superior, a dredged channel between Lake Huron and Lake Erie, and another series of great locks between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario provide free and adequate navigation to a point well down the St. Lawrence River. From there, a series of three rapids, all of them within a distance of 120 miles, now impede navigation by ocean-going vessels; but a Canadian canal already provides facilities for smaller ships. This Canadian canal now is used substantially up to its capacity.

Two of the three rapids are wholly in Canadian territory; the other is in the so-called international section. A great power development at the Beauharnois Rapids in Canada is already nearing completion and locks for ocean-going ships have been planned for and could readily be built at a low cost as part of the plan. This means that only two additional series of locks are required for a complete and continuous seaway from Duluth to salt water. I call your attention to the simple fact that Canada alone can, if desired, build locks at the Lachine Rapids and at the international sector and thus provide a seaway wholly within Canadian control without treaty participation by the United States. This, however, would be a reversal of the policy of cooperation which the United States and Canada have continuously maintained for generations.

I want to make it very clear that this great international highway for shipping is without any question going to be completed in the near future and that this completion should be carried out by both Nations instead of by one.

I am sending you herewith a summary of data prepared at my request by governmental agencies. This summary, in its relation to the economic aspects of the seaway, shows from the broad national point of view, first, that commerce and transportation will be greatly benefited and, secondly, local fears of economic harm to special localities or to special interests are grossly exaggerated. It is, I believe, a historic fact that every great improvement directed to better commercial communications, whether in the case of railroads into new territory, or the deepening of great rivers, or the building of canals, or even the cutting of the Isthmus of Panama, have all been subjected to opposition on the part of local interests which conjure up imaginary fears and fail to realize that improved transportation results in increased commerce benefiting directly or indirectly all sections.

For example, I am convinced that the building of the St. Lawrence Seaway will not injure the railroads or throw their employees out of work; that it will not in any way interfere with the proper use of the Mississippi River or the Missouri River for navigation. Let us be wholly frank in saying that it is better economics to send grain or other raw materials from our Northwest to Europe via the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence than it is to send them around three sides of a square -- via Texas ports or the Mississippi, thence, through the Gulf of Mexico and thence, from the southern end of the North Atlantic to its northern end. In this illustration, it is well to remember that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points.

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The other great objective provided for in the treaty relates to the development of electric power. As you know, I have advocated the development of four great power areas in the United States, each to serve as a yardstick and each to be controlled by government or governmental agencies. The Tennessee Valley plants and projects in the Southeast, the Boulder Dam on the Colorado River in the Southwest, the Columbia River projects in the Northwest are already under construction. The St. Lawrence development in the Northeast calls for action. This river is a source of incomparably cheap power located in proximity to a great industrial and rural market and within transmission distance of millions of domestic consumers.

The legislature of the State of New York by unanimous vote set up the necessary State machinery during my term as Governor of New York and the State stands ready to cooperate with the Federal Government in the distribution of power in accordance with what I believe is today a definite national policy.

Power in the international sector of the St. Lawrence cannot be developed without a treaty between the United States and Canada. On the other hand, Canada can develop a huge block of new power at the two other rapids which lie wholly within Canadian territory. Here again, as in the case of navigation, it is better in every way that we should maintain the historic principle of accord with Canada in the mutual development of the two Nations.

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FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE

January 10, 1934.