
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

**Series 2: “ You have nothing to fear but fear itself:” FDR
and the New Deal**

File No. 1167

1938 August 18

**Dedication of the International
Thousand Island Bridge**

6

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE DEDICATION OF THE
THOUSAND ISLANDS BRIDGE

Wednesday, August 16, 1938.

Mr. Prime Minister, it has always seemed to me that the best symbol of ~~good~~ common sense was a bridge. Common sense is sometimes slow in getting into action, and perhaps that is why we took so long to build this one.

It is a particular pleasure to me to meet you here, where a boundary is a gateway and not a wall. Between these islands an international gap, never wide, has been spanned, as gaps usually are by the exercise of ability, guided by cooperative common sense. I hope all our countrymen will use it freely. I know that they will find, as I have done, a happy welcome on either shore, and forthright fellowship from neighbors who are also friends.

The St. Lawrence River is more than a cartographic line between our two countries. God so formed North America, that the waters of an inland empire drain into the Great Lakes Basin. The rain which falls in this vast area finds outlet through this

single natural funnel, above which we now stand.

Events of history have made that river a boundary, and as a result the flow of these waters can be used only by joint agreement between our two governments. Between us, we stand therefore as trustees for two countries of one of the richest natural assets provided anywhere in the world. The water which runs underneath this bridge spells unlimited power; permits access to raw materials both from this continent and from beyond the sea; and ^{enhances} ~~embraces~~ commerce and production.

When a resource of this kind is placed at our very doors, I think the plain people of both countries agree, that it is ordinary common sense to make use of it. Yet up to now the liquid wealth, which flowing water is, has run in large part unused to the sea. I really think that ~~the common sense of~~ this situation suggests that we can ~~fail to~~ agree upon some better arrangement than merely letting it contribute a microscopic fraction to the level of the North Atlantic Ocean. The bridge which we here dedicate is a tangible proof that administration by two neighbors of a job to be done in common offers no difficulty. Obviously the same process applied on the larger scale to the resource of full

sea-going navigation and of complete power development offered by the St. Lawrence River can build and maintain the necessary facilities to employ its magnificent possibilities.

I suppose it is true, as has been true of all natural resources, that a good many people would like to have the job - and the profits - of developing it for themselves. In this case, however, the river happens to be placed in the hands of our two governments, and the responsibility for getting the results lies plainly at our doors.

At various times both the people of Canada and the people of the United States have dreamed of the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes development. They have translated those ideas into plans which can easily be carried out. While there has been no difference between us as to the object, history compels me to say that we were not able to arrange matters so that both peoples have had the same idea at the same time. How would it do for a change, if, instead of each of us having the idea at alternate intervals,

we get the idea simultaneously? I think we are rapidly reaching that happy and desirable event.

I am very clear that prophets of trouble are wrong when they express the fear that the St. Lawrence Waterway will handicap our railroad systems. We know now that the effect of a waterway is not to take traffic away from railroad lines. Actually, it creates new possibilities, new businesses, new activity. Such a waterway generates more railroad traffic than it takes away.

There is today, a fourteen foot channel carrying traffic from the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence River into the Atlantic Ocean. If this were deepened - which can easily be done - to twenty-seven or thirty feet, every city on the Great Lakes, now inland, would become an ocean port. The banks of the St. Lawrence Valley would become one of the great gateways of the world and would benefit accordingly. Here all that is needed is cooperative exercise of technical skill ~~and~~ by joint use of the imagination and the vision which our two countries have. Can anyone doubt that,

when this is done, the interests of both countries — will be greatly advanced? Do we need to delay, and to deprive our peoples of the immediate employment and profit, or prevent our generation from reaping the harvest which ~~has been offered to them~~ ^{is awaiting us?}

Let me make, now, an unusual statement. I am sure you will not misunderstand. I consider that I have, myself, a particular duty in connection with St. Lawrence power. The almost unparalleled opportunity which the river affords has not gone unnoticed by some of my friends on our side of the boundary. A conception has been emerging in the United States which is not without a certain magnificence. This is no less than the conviction that if a private group could control the outlet of the Great Lakes Basin, that group would have a monopoly in the development of a territory larger than many of the great empires in history.

If you were to search the records with which my Government is familiar, you would discover that literally every development of electric power, save only the Ontario-Hydro, is allied to, if not

controlled by, a single American group, with, of course, the usual surrounding penumbra of allies, affiliates, subsidiaries and satellites. In earlier stages of development of natural resources on this continent, this was normal and usual. In recent decades, however, we have come to realize the implications to the public - to the individual men and women, to businessmen, big and little, and even to government itself, resulting from the ownership by any group of the right to dispose of wealth which was granted to us ^{covertly} by nature herself.

The development of natural resources, and the proper handling ^{of} ~~the~~ fruits, is a major problem of government. Naturally, no solution would be acceptable to either country which does not leave its government entirely master in its own house.

To put it bluntly, a group of American interests is here gradually putting itself into a position where, unless caution is exercised, they may in time be able to determine the economic fate of a large area, both in Canada and the United States.

Now it is axiomatic in Canadian-American relations that both of us scrupulously respect the right of each to determine its own affairs. For that reason, when I know that the operation of uncontrolled American economic forces is slowly producing a result on the Canadian side of the border which I know very well must eventually give American groups a great influence over Canadian development, I consider it the part of a good neighbor to discuss the question frankly. The least I can do is to call attention to the situation as I see it.

Our mutual friendship suggests this course in ^a the matter of development as great and as crucial as that of the St. Lawrence. Fortunately among friendly nations today this is increasingly being done. Frank discussion between friends and neighbors is ~~more~~ useful and ~~more~~ essential. This has long been learnt in ~~matters~~ of monetary policy, where we have discovered that cooperation is the path of friendship. It is obvious today that some economic problems are international, if only because of the sheer weight which the solutions have on the lives of

people outside, as well as inside any one country. To my mind, the development of St. Lawrence navigation and power is such a problem.

I look forward to the day when a Canadian Prime Minister and an American President can meet to dedicate, not a bridge across this water, but the very water itself, to the lasting and productive use of their respective peoples. Until that day comes, and I hope it may be soon, this bridge stands as an open door. There will be no challenge at the border, and no guard to ask a countersign. Where the boundary is crossed the only word must be, "Pass, friend."

Franklin Roosevelt

Orig. reading copy

GREETINGS FROM THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
At the Dedication of the International Thousand Islands Bridge
Near Clayton, New York
Thursday, August 16, 1934, 3:15 P.M.

MY FELLOW BRIDGE BUILDER, MR. MACKENZIE KING, AND YOU, THOUSANDS OF
YOU, WHO ARE HERE TODAY REPRESENTING MILLIONS OF OTHER BRIDGE BUILDERS
ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INTERNATIONAL LINE:

(Mr. Prime Minister) It has always seemed to me that the best symbol of common sense was a bridge. Common sense is sometimes slow in getting into action, and perhaps that is why we took so long to build this one.

It is a particular pleasure to me to meet you here, where a boundary is a gateway and not a wall. Between these islands an international gap, never wide, has been spanned, as gaps usually are, by the exercise of ability, guided by cooperative common sense. I hope that all (our) my countrymen will use it freely. And I know that they will find, as I have done today and on many other occasions, a happy welcome on (either) the Canadian shore, and forthright fellowship (from) with neighbors who are also friends.

The St. Lawrence River is more than a cartographic line between our two countries. God so formed North America that the waters of an inland empire drain into the Great Lakes Basin. The rain (which) that falls in (this) that vast area finds outlet through this single natural funnel, (above) close to which we now stand.

Events of history have made that river a boundary, and as a result the flow of these waters can be used only by joint agreement between our two governments. Between us, therefore, we stand (therefore)

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

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as trustees for two countries, trustees (of) for one of the richest natural assets provided anywhere in the world. The water (which) that runs underneath this bridge spells unlimited power; permits access to raw materials both from this continent and from beyond the seas, and enhances commerce and production.

When a resource of (this) that kind is placed at our very doors, I think the plain people of both countries agree that it is ordinary common sense to make use of it. And, yet up to now the liquid wealth, which flowing water is, has run in large part unused to the sea. I really think that this situation suggests that we can agree upon some better arrangement than merely letting (it) this water contribute a microscopic fraction to the level of the (North) Atlantic Ocean. (Applause) The bridge which we here dedicate is a tangible proof that administration by two neighbors of a job to be done in common offers no difficulty. Obviously the same process applied on the larger scale to the resource of full sea-going navigation and of complete power development offered by the St. Lawrence River can build and maintain the necessary facilities to employ its magnificent possibilities.

I suppose it is true, as it has been true of all natural resources, that a good many people would like to have the job -- and the profits -- of developing it (for) by themselves, and for themselves. In this case, however, the river happens to be placed in the hands of our two governments, and the responsibility, the trusteeship, for getting the results lies plainly at our doors.

At various times both the people of Canada and the people of the United States have dreamed of the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes

development. They have translated those ideas into plans, plans which with modern engineering skill (which) can easily and readily be carried out. While there has been no difference between us as to the object itself, history compels me to say that we (were) have not been able to arrange matters so that both peoples have had the same idea at the same time. (Laughter -- applause) I offer a suggestion: How would it do for a change, if, instead of each of us having the idea at alternate intervals, we should get the idea simultaneously. (Applause) (I think) And I am very much inclined to believe that we are rapidly (reaching) approaching that happy and desirable event. (Applause)

There are many prophets of evil. There always have been before anything was done. I am very clear, for example, that prophets of trouble are wrong when they express the fear that the St. Lawrence Waterway will handicap our railroad systems on both sides of the border. We know now that the effect of a waterway in most cases is not to take traffic away from railroad lines. Actually, it creates new possibilities, new business(es) and new activity. Such a waterway generates more railroad traffic than it takes away.

There is, as we know, there is today, a fourteen foot channel carrying traffic from the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence River into the Atlantic Ocean. If this channel were improved and deepened -- which again can easily be done -- deepened to twenty-seven or thirty feet, every city in both nations on the Great Lakes and on the whole course of navigation from the sea to the Lakes, (now inland) would become an ocean port. The banks of the St. Lawrence itself, the banks of the St. Lawrence Valley would become one of the great gateways of the world and would benefit accordingly. Here all that is needed is

cooperative exercise of technical skill by joint use of the imagination and the vision which (our two) we know both our countries have. Can anyone doubt that, when this is done, the interests of both countries will be greatly advanced? Do we need to delay, (and) do we need to deprive our peoples of the immediate employment and profit, or prevent our generation from reaping the harvest (which is awaiting us) that awaits us? (Applause)

Now, my friends, let me make (now) an unusual statement. I am sure (you will not misunderstand) that on neither side of the line will you misunderstand me. I consider that I have, myself, a particular (duty in connection with St. Lawrence power.) interest in the St. Lawrence, an interest dating back to my earliest days in the Legislature of the State of New York in 1911. And I have a particular duty as President in connection with the development of the St. Lawrence, both for navigation and for power. The almost unparalleled opportunity which the river affords has not gone unnoticed by some of my friends on (our) the American side of the (boundary) border. A conception has been emerging in the United States which is not without a certain magnificence. This is no less than the conviction that if a private group could control the outlet of the Great Lakes Basin on both sides of the border, that group would have a monopoly in the development of a territory larger than many of the great empires in history.

If you were to search the records with which my Government is familiar, you would discover that literally every development of electric power, save only the Ontario-Hydro, is allied to, if not controlled by, a single American group, with, of course, the usual surrounding penumbra of allies, affiliates, subsidiaries and satellites.

(Laughter -- applause) In earlier stages of development of natural resources on this continent, this was normal and usual. But, in recent decades (however) we have come to realize the implications to the public -- to the individual men and women, to businessmen, big and little, and even to government itself, resulting from the ownership by any group of the right to dispose of wealth which was granted to us collectively by nature herself. (Applause)

The development of natural resources, and the proper handling of their fruits, is a major problem of government. Naturally, no solution would be acceptable to either (country) nation which does not leave its government entirely master in its own house.

To put it bluntly, a group of American interests is here gradually putting itself into a position where, unless caution is exercised, they may in time be able to determine the economic and the social fate of a large area, both in Canada and the United States.

Now it is axiomatic in Canadian-American relations that both of us scrupulously respect the right of each of us to determine (its own affairs) our own internal affairs. For that reason, when I know that the operation of uncontrolled American economic forces is slowly producing a result on the Canadian side of the border, which I know very well must eventually give American groups a great influence over Canadian development, I consider it the part of a good neighbor to give my opinion out loud, to discuss the question frankly with my Canadian neighbors. Yes, the least I can do is to call attention to the situation as I see it.

Our mutual friendship suggests this course in a matter of development as great and as crucial as that of the St. Lawrence River.

(Laughter -- applause) In earlier stages of development of natural resources on this continent, this was normal and usual. But, in recent decades (however) we have come to realize the implications to the public -- to the individual men and women, to businessmen, big and little, and even to government itself, resulting from the ownership by any group of the right to dispose of wealth which was granted to us collectively by nature herself. (Applause)

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Our mutual friendship suggests this course in a matter of development as great and as crucial as that of the St. Lawrence River

and the basin tributary to it. Fortunately among friendly nations today this is increasingly being done. Frank discussion between friends and neighbors is useful and essential. It is obvious today that some economic problems are international, if only because of the sheer weight which the solutions have on the lives of people outside, as well as inside of any one country. To my mind, the development of St. Lawrence navigation and power is such a problem.

I look forward to the day when a Canadian Prime Minister and an American President can meet to dedicate, not a bridge across this water, but the very water itself, to the lasting and productive use of their respective peoples. (Applause) And until that day comes, and I hope it may be soon, this bridge, the Thousand Islands, this garden spot of nature, this bridge stands as an open door. There will be no challenge at the border, (and) there will be no guard to ask a counter-sign. Where the boundary is crossed the only word must be, "Pass, friend." (Prolonged applause)

STATEMENTS FILE

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT AT
THE DEDICATION OF THE INTER-
NATIONAL THOUSAND ISLANDS
BRIDGE, AUGUST 18, 1938.

Mr. Prime Minister, it has always seemed to me that the best symbol of common sense was a bridge. Common sense is sometimes slow in getting into action, and perhaps that is why we took so long to build this one.

It is a particular pleasure to me to meet you here, where a boundary is a gateway and not a wall. Between these islands an international gap, never wide, has been spanned, as gaps usually are, by the exercise of ability, guided by cooperative common sense. I hope all our countrymen will use it freely. I know that they will find, as I have done, a happy welcome on either shore, and forthright fellowship from neighbors who are also friends.

The St. Lawrence River is more than a cartographic line between our two countries. God so formed North America that the waters of an inland empire drain into the Great Lakes Basin. The rain which falls in this vast area finds outlet through this single natural funnel, above which we now stand.

Events of history have made that river a boundary, and as a result the flow of these waters can be used only by joint agreement between our two governments. Between us, we stand therefore as trustees for two countries of one of the richest natural assets provided anywhere in the world. The water which runs underneath this bridge spells unlimited power; permits access to raw materials both from this continent and from beyond the seas, and enhances commerce and production.

When a resource of this kind is placed at our very doors, I think the plain people of both countries agree that it is ordinary common sense to make use of it. Yet up to now the liquid wealth, which flowing water is, has run in large part unused to the sea. I really think that this situation suggests that we can agree upon some better arrangement than merely letting it contribute a microscopic fraction to the level of the North Atlantic Ocean. The bridge which we here dedicate is a tangible proof that administration by two neighbors of a job to be done in common offers no difficulty. Obviously the same process applied on the larger scale to the resource of full sea-going navigation and of complete power development offered by the St. Lawrence River can build and maintain the necessary facilities to employ its magnificent possibilities.

I suppose it is true, as has been true of all natural resources that a good many people would like to have the job -- and the profits -- of developing it for themselves. In this case, however, the river happens to be placed in the hands of our two governments, and the responsibility for getting the results lies plainly at our doors.

At various times both the people of Canada and the people of the United States have dreamed of the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes development. They have translated those ideas into plans which can easily be carried out. While there has been no difference between us as to the object, history compels me to say that we were not able to arrange matters so that both peoples have had the same idea at the same time. How would it do for a change, if, instead of each of us having the idea at alternate intervals, we get the idea simultaneously? I think we are rapidly reaching that happy and desirable event.

I am very clear that prophets of trouble are wrong when they express the fear that the St. Lawrence Waterway will handicap our railroad systems. We know now that the effect of a waterway is not to take traffic away from railroad lines. Actually, it creates new possibilities, new businesses, new activity. Such a waterway generates more railroad traffic than it takes away.

There is today, a fourteen foot channel carrying traffic from the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence River into the Atlantic Ocean. If this were deepened - which can easily be done - to twenty-seven or thirty feet, every city on the Great Lakes, now inland, would become an ocean port. The banks of the St. Lawrence Valley would become one of the great gateways of the world and would benefit accordingly. Here all that is needed is cooperative exercise of technical skill by joint use of the imagination and the vision which our two countries have. Can anyone doubt that, when this is done, the interests of both countries will be greatly advanced? Do we need to delay, and to deprive our peoples of the immediate employment and profit, or prevent our generation from reaping the harvest which is awaiting us?

Let me make, now, an unusual statement. I am sure you will not misunderstand. I consider that I have, myself, a particular duty in connection with St. Lawrence power. The almost unparalleled opportunity which the river affords has not gone unnoticed by some of my friends on our side of the boundary. A conception has been emerging in the United States which is not without a certain magnificence. This is no less than the conviction that if a private group could control the outlet of the Great Lakes Basin, that group would have a monopoly in the development of a territory larger than many of the great empires in history.

If you were to search the records with which my Government is familiar, you would discover that literally every development of electric power, save only the Ontario-Hydro, is allied to, if not controlled by, a single American group, with, of course, the usual surrounding penumbra of allies, affiliates, subsidiaries and satellites. In earlier stages of development of natural resources on this continent, this was normal and usual. In recent decades, however, we have come to realize the implications to the public - to the individual men and women, to businessmen, big and little, and even to government itself, resulting from the ownership by any group of the right to dispose of wealth which was granted to us collectively by nature herself.

The development of natural resources, and the proper handling of their fruits, is a major problem of government. Naturally, no solution would be acceptable to either country which does not leave its government entirely master in its own house.

To put it bluntly, a group of American interests is here gradually putting itself into a position where, unless caution is exercised, they may in time be able to determine the economic fate of a large area, both in Canada and the United States.

Now it is axiomatic in Canadian-American relations that both of us scrupulously respect the right of each to determine its own affairs. For that reason, when I know that the operation of uncontrolled American economic forces is slowly producing a result on the Canadian side of the border, which I know very well must eventually give American groups a great

influence over Canadian development, I consider it the part of a good neighbor to discuss the question frankly. The least I can do is to call attention to the situation as I see it.

Our mutual friendship suggests this course in a matter of development as great and as crucial as that of the St. Lawrence. Fortunately among friendly nations today this is increasingly being done. Frank discussion between friends and neighbors is useful and essential. It is obvious today that some economic problems are international, if only because of the sheer weight which the solutions have on the lives of people outside, as well as inside any one country. To my mind, the development of St. Lawrence navigation and power is such a problem.

I look forward to the day when a Canadian Prime Minister and an American President can meet to dedicate, not a bridge across this water, but the very water itself, to the lasting and productive use of their respective peoples. Until that day comes, and I hope it may be soon, this bridge stands as an open door. There will be no challenge at the border, and no guard to ask a countersign. Where the boundary is crossed the only word must be, "Pass, friend."

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STATEMENTS FILE

Shorthand By Kannee

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HOLD FOR RELEASE

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be delivered on the occasion of the dedication of the International Thousand Islands Bridge, is to be held for release upon delivery, expected about 3:15 P.M., Eastern Daylight Saving Time, Thursday, August 19, 1938.

PLEASE GUARD AGAINST PREMATURE RELEASE.
M. H. MCINTYRE,
Secretary to the President.

Mr. Prime Minister, it has always seemed to me that the best symbol of common sense was a bridge. Common sense is sometimes slow in getting into action, and perhaps that is why we took so long to build this one.

It is a particular pleasure to me to meet you here, here a boundary is a gateway and not a wall. Between these islands an international gap, never wide, has been spanned, as gaps usually are, by the exercise of ability, guided by cooperative common sense. I hope all our countrymen will use it freely. I know that they will find, as I have done, a happy welcome on either shore, and forthright fellowship from neighbors who are also friends.

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W.C. 68 (S.Y. 103)

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N.Y.

MEMORANDUM

SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT AT THE DEDICATION OF THOUSAND ISLANDS BRIDGE.

Mr. Prime Minister, it has always seemed to me that the best symbol of good common sense was a bridge. Common sense is sometimes slow in getting into action, and perhaps that is why we took so long to build this one.

It is a particular pleasure to me to meet you here,
~~is a gateway and not a wall,~~
where a boundary, ~~instead of being a wall, is a gateway,~~
Between these islands ~~the~~ International ~~gap~~, never wide,
~~was at its narrowest; today it has been spanned, as gaps~~
usually are by the exercise of ability, guided by co-operative common sense. I hope all our countrymen will use it freely. I know that they will find, as I have done, a happy welcome on either shore, and forthright fellowship from neighbors who are also friends.

The St. Lawrence River, ~~again-happily-bridged~~, is more than a cartographic line between our two countries. God so formed North America, that the waters of an inland empire drain into the Great Lakes Basin. The rain which falls in ~~this vast area~~
~~nearly one-fourth of the continent~~ finds outlet through this

single

single natural funnel, above which we now stand.

Events

The accident of history has made that river a boundary, and as a result the flow of these waters can be used only by joint agreement between our two governments. Between us, we therefore stand as trustees for two countries of one of the richest natural assets provided anywhere in the world. The water which runs underneath this bridge ~~means~~ ^{of life} unlimited power; permits access to raw materials both from this continent and from beyond the sea; ~~means~~ commerce and production ~~grows~~ provides the elements from which splendid cities of use to both of us can be built.

When a resource of this kind is placed at our very doors, I think the plain people of both countries agree, that it is ordinary common sense to make use of it. If, for example, the Lord had put in this place a great oil field or a rich gold mine, it stands to reason that the riches would long since have been tapped and put to use. Yet up to now the liquid wealth, which flowing water is, has run ~~temporarily~~ ^{large part unused} to the sea. I really think that the common sense of this situation suggests that we can find and agree upon some better arrangement than merely letting it contribute a microscopic fraction to

the level of the North Atlantic Ocean. The bridge which we
here dedicate is a tangible proof that administration by two
neighbors of a job to be done in common offers no difficulty.
~~Cooperative effort built, And cooperative effort will main-~~
~~tain the highway which we today open.~~ Obviously the same
process applied on the larger scale to the resource of ~~full~~
~~completely favorable for our~~
~~navigation and of power offered by the St. Lawrence River~~
~~can build and maintain the necessary facilities to harness~~
~~its magnificent possibilities.~~

I suppose it is true, as has been true of all natural
resources, that a good many people would like to have the
job - and the profits - of developing it for themselves.
In this case, however, the river happens to be placed in the
hands of our two governments, and the responsibility for
~~vision~~
getting the ~~power~~ lies plainly at our doors.

At various times both the people of Canada and the people
~~and friend~~
of the United States have dreamed of the St. Lawrence develop-
ment. They have translated those ideas into plans which can
easily be carried out. While there has been no difference
between us as to the object, history compels me to say that
we were not able to arrange matters so that both peoples have
~~had~~
had the idea at the same time. How would it do for a change,
~~if~~

if, instead of each of us having the idea at alternate intervals, we get the idea simultaneously? I think we are rapidly getting to that stage.

It happens that the St. Lawrence bears on a situation in which both Canada and the United States are in much the same position. Each of us has developed great trans-continental railway systems; and each of us, like every other nation in the world, wish to have our railways strong and profitable. It is sometimes said that the St. Lawrence Waterway will weaken those systems. There is nothing new in the argument. Many of you here remember in the days when the Panama Canal was merely a dream, that prophecies were made that it would detract from the strength of the railroads, both Canadian and American. Of course, we know now that the prophets of trouble were wrong in that regard. I am very clear ~~that~~ ^{the} ~~are~~ ^{they} are equally wrong when ~~a few of them~~ express the fear that the St. Lawrence Water-way will handicap our railroad systems. We know now that the effect of a waterway is not to take traffic away from railroad lines. Actually, it creates new possibilities,

new

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new businesses, new activity. ~~Waterway always~~ generates more railroad traffic than it takes away.

There is today, a fourteen foot channel carrying traffic from the Atlantic Ocean ~~to~~ the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence River] ⁱⁿ If this were deepened - which can easily be done - to twenty-seven feet, every city on the Great Lakes, now inland, would become an ocean port. The banks of the St. Lawrence Valley would become one of the great gateways of the world. ~~And would bring it all to us,~~ ~~unless~~ ~~simply~~ ~~fortunate parts of the earth, rich areas have been created~~ ~~only after struggle.~~ Here all that is needed is cooperative exercise of technical skill, and by joint use of the imagination and the vision which our two countries have. Can anyone doubt that, when this is done, the interests of both countries -- ~~and I include in that the interest both have~~ ~~in their railroad and transportation systems~~ -- will be greatly advanced? Do we need to delay, and to deprive our peoples of the immediate employment and profit, or prevent our generation from reaping the harvest which has

been

been offered to them?

Let me make, now, an unusual statement. I am sure you will not misunderstand. I consider that I have, myself, a particular duty in connection with St. Lawrence power. The almost unparalleled opportunity which the river affords has not gone unnoticed by some of my friends on our side of the boundary. A conception has been emerging in the United States which is not without a certain magnificence. ^{American} This is no less than the conviction that if a group could control the outlet of the Great Lakes Basin, that group would have a strangle hold on the development of a territory larger than many of the great empires in history. ~~In terms of the money which could be made, the idea is ambitious, to say the least. But in terms of ability to dominate the development of some of the greatest areas in both countries,~~ ^{If} it is truly staggering. If you were to search the records with which my Government is familiar, you would discover that literally every development of electric power, save only the Ontario-Hydro, is allied to, if not controlled by, a single American group, with, of course, the usual surrounding

penumbra of allies, affiliates, subsidiaries and satellites.

In earlier stages of development of natural resources on this continent, this was normal and usual. In recent

decades, however, we have come to realize the implications

~~the public - to~~
~~to individual men and women, to businessmen, big and little,~~
~~and even to government itself, resulting from the appropria-~~
~~tions~~

~~by any group of the right to dispose of wealth which~~
~~was granted to us by nature herself. That realization~~

~~This~~
~~ings led to a growing knowledge that the development of~~
~~natural resource, and the proper handling of its fruits,~~
~~is a major problem of government. Naturally, no solution~~
~~would be acceptable to either country which does not leave~~

~~its government entirely master in its own house. We our-~~

~~selves are finding it necessary to give increased attention~~
~~to the economic domination which can be exercised by~~

~~private groups, should any mistake be made. To put it~~

~~bluntly, a group of American interests is here gradually~~

~~putting itself into a position where, unless caution is~~

~~exercised, they may in time be able to determine the fate~~

~~of a large area, both in Canada and the United States.~~

Now

Now it is axiomatic in Canadian-American relations that both of us scrupulously respect the right of each to determine its own affairs. In governmental matters this is taken for granted; and has been the cornerstone of our lasting friendship. For that reason, when I know that the operation of uncontrolled American economic forces is slowly producing a result on the Canadian side of the border which I know very well must eventually give American groups a great influence over Canadian development, I consider it the part of a good neighbor to discuss the question frankly. The least I can do is to call attention to the situation as I see it. It seems to me self-evident that our mutual friendship suggests this course in the matter of development as great and as crucial as that of the St. Lawrence. Fortunately among friendly nations today this is increasingly being done. We have learned that certain economic matters are so closely interwoven that frank discussion between friends and neighbors is generally useful and sometimes essential. This has long been learnt in matters of monetary policy, where we have discovered that cooperation is the path of friendship. It is

obvious today that some economic problems are international, if only because of the sheer weight which the solutions have on the lives of people outside, as well as inside any one country. To my mind, the development of St. Lawrence navigation and power is such a problem.

~~That's the situation, stated bluntly, with respect to St. Lawrence power and navigation today. The disposition of resources of this magnitude can be almost as influential in the lives of peoples as the decisions of governments themselves.~~

I look forward to the day when a Canadian Prime Minister and an American President can meet to dedicate, not a bridge across this water, but the very water itself, to the lasting and productive use of their respective peoples. Until that day comes, and I hope it may be soon, this bridge stands as an open door. There will be no challenge at the border, and no guard to ask a countersign. Where the boundary is crossed the only word must be, "Pass, friend."

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE DEDICATION OF THE
THOUSAND ISLANDS BRIDGE

Wednesday, August 18, 1938.

Mr. Prime Minister, it has always seemed to me that the best symbol of good common sense was a bridge. Common sense is sometimes slow in getting into action, and perhaps that is why we took so long to build this one.

It is a particular pleasure to me to meet you here, where a boundary is a gateway and not a wall. Between these islands an international gap, never wide, has been spanned, as gaps usually are by the exercise of ability, guided by cooperative common sense. I hope all our countrymen will use it freely. I know that they will find, as I have done, a happy welcome on either shore, and forthright fellowship from neighbors who are also friends.

The St. Lawrence River is more than a cartographic line between our two countries. God so formed North America, that the waters of an inland empire drain into the Great Lakes Basin. The rain which falls in this vast area finds outlet through this

single natural funnel, above which we now stand.

Events of history have made that river a boundary, and as a result the flow of these waters can be used only by joint agreement between our two governments. Between us, we stand therefore as trustees for two countries of one of the richest natural assets provided anywhere in the world. The water which runs underneath this bridge spells unlimited power; permits access to raw materials both from this continent and from beyond the sea, and ^{enhances} embraces commerce and production.

When a resource of this kind is placed at our very doors, I think the plain people of both countries agree, that it is ordinary common sense to make use of it. Yet up to now the liquid wealth, which flowing water is, has run in large part unused to the sea. I really think that the common sense of this situation suggests that we can ~~find~~ and agree upon some better arrangement than merely letting it contribute a microscopic fraction to the level of the North Atlantic Ocean. The bridge which we here dedicate is a tangible proof that administration by two neighbors of a job to be done in common offers no difficulty. Obviously the same process applied on the larger scale to the resource of full

seagoing navigation and of complete power development offered by the St. Lawrence River can build and maintain the necessary facilities to employ its magnificent possibilities.

I suppose it is true, as has been true of all natural resources, that a good many people would like to have the job - and the profits - of developing it for themselves. In this case, however, the river happens to be placed in the hands of our two governments, and the responsibility for getting the results lies plainly at our doors.

At various times both the people of Canada and the people of the United States have dreamed of the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes development. They have translated those ideas into plans which can easily be carried out. While there has been no difference between us as to the object, history compels me to say that we were not able to arrange matters so that both peoples have had the same idea at the same time. How would it do for a change, if, instead of each of us having the idea at alternate intervals,

we get the idea simultaneously? I think we are rapidly reaching that happy and desirable event.

I am very clear that prophets of trouble are wrong when they express the fear that the St. Lawrence Waterway will handicap our railroad systems. We know now that the effect of a waterway is not to take traffic away from railroad lines. Actually, it creates new possibilities, new businesses, new activity. Such a waterway generates more railroad traffic than it takes away.

There is today, a fourteen foot channel carrying traffic from the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence River into the Atlantic Ocean. If this were deepened - which can easily be done - to twenty-seven or thirty feet, every city on the Great Lakes, now inland, would become an ocean port. The banks of the St. Lawrence Valley would become one of the great gateways of the world and would benefit accordingly. Here all that is needed is cooperative exercise of technical skill, and by joint use of the imagination and the vision which our two congresses have. Can anyone doubt that,

when this is done, the interests of both countries — will be greatly advanced? Do we need to delay, and to deprive our peoples of the immediate employment and profit, or prevent our generation from reaping the harvest which ^{is awaiting us?} ~~has been offered to us?~~

Let me make, now, an unusual statement. I am sure you will not misunderstand. I consider that I have, myself, a particular duty in connection with St. Lawrence power. The almost unparalleled opportunity which the river affords has not gone unnoticed by some of my friends on our side of the boundary. A conception has been emerging in the United States which is not without a certain magnificence. This is no less than the conviction that if a private group could control the outlet of the Great Lakes Basin, that group would have a monopoly in the development of a territory larger than many of the great empires in history.

If you were to search the records with which my Government is familiar, you would discover that literally every development of electric power, save only the Ontario-Hydro, is allied to, if not

controlled by, a single American group, with, of course, the usual surrounding penumbra of allies, affiliates, subsidiaries and satellites. In earlier stages of development of natural resources on this continent, this was normal and usual. In recent decades, however, we have come to realize the implications to the public -- to the individual men and women, to businessmen, big and little, and even to government itself, resulting from the ownership by any ^{All} ~~any~~ ~~the~~ group of the right to dispose of wealth which was granted to us, ^{All} ~~any~~ by nature herself.

The development of natural resources, and the proper handling ^{ther} of ~~the~~ fruits, is a major problem of government. Naturally, no solution would be acceptable to either country which does not leave its government entirely master in its own house.

To put it bluntly, a group of American interests is here gradually putting itself into a position where, unless caution is exercised, they may in time be able to determine the economic fate of a large area, both in Canada and the United States.

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I look forward to the day when a Canadian Prime Minister and an American President can meet to dedicate, not a bridge across this water, but the very water itself, to the lasting and productive use of their respective peoples. Until that day comes, and I hope it may be soon, this bridge stands as an open door. There will be no challenge at the border, and no guard to ask a countersign. Where the boundary is crossed the only word must be, "Pass, friend."

Not to be released before 4 p.m. Eastern Daylight
Saving Time August 18th

The Bridge-Builders

ADDRESS BY

RT. HON. W. L. MACKENZIE KING, M.P.,

Prime Minister of Canada

AT THE

Dedication of the Thousand Islands International Bridge
at Ivy Lea, Ontario, and Collin's Landing, New York,

August 18th, 1938.



Ottawa
J. C. PATENAUD, L.R.O.
PRESENTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
1938

I had hoped that on this occasion the Dominion of Canada might have been represented by our Governor General, The Right Honourable Lord Tweedsmuir. For months past, His Excellency had been looking forward to to-day's ceremonies. Upon his departure, on the eve of prorogation of our Parliament, his last words to me were: "We shall meet at Ivy Lea." I know how real his disappointment will be to-day that the time of his return has been unavoidably postponed.

Lord Tweedsmuir will particularly regret that he has been deprived of renewing, amid to-day's memorable associations, the warm personal friendship he enjoys with you, Mr. President, and of joining with you in giving expression to the friendship which, over so many years, has existed between the peoples of the United States and Canada. Lord Tweedsmuir's presence in England is itself a reminder of that wider friendship which exists between the United States and all the nations of the British Commonwealth.

I should like to express to Mr. Russell Wright, the Chairman of The Thousand Islands Bridge Authority, and to its other members, and to my friend, Mr. George T. Fulford, how much I, also, have appreciated their kind invitation; and how highly I esteem the privilege of being among the number present at this afternoon's ceremony. I, too, have been privileged to enjoy a friendship with President Roosevelt which extends now over many years. Like him, I have sought, whenever and wherever the opportunity has presented

itself, to further and cement ties of international friendship and goodwill, not alone between the English-speaking countries of the world, but between all countries. It is a joy to me to be able to join with the President this afternoon in drawing to the attention of the citizens of other lands, as well as our own, the wide significance of to-day's proceedings, and much that is symbolized by the new structure, the dedication of which to public use is the occasion of this vast international gathering.

On behalf of the Government and people of Canada, I should like to say to President Roosevelt how pleased and honoured we all feel that he should have found it possible, to-day, to pay our country another visit, and to accept an honorary degree from one of its leading Universities. This is the third official visit of the President of the United States to Canada in as many years. We recall with pride and delight the President's visit to the ancient citadel of Quebec on July 31st, 1930. On September 30th of last year, before embarking upon a cruise on the Pacific Ocean, he paid a brief visit to the westernmost province of the Dominion, honouring by his presence its beautiful capital, the city of Victoria. In visiting Kingston to receive from Queen's University the degree of Doctor of Laws, he has this morning honoured another of our historic cities, one which, a century ago, was looked upon, and spoken of, as the citadel of Upper Canada. These have been official visits, paid in the course of years filled with overwhelming responsibilities, and the most arduous of public duties.

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STATEMENTS FILE

It is a pleasure to recall that there have been unofficial visits as well. The waters of the Atlantic, even more than those of the Pacific, have extended to President Roosevelt a continuous welcome to our shores. For many years, the Island of Campobello, off the New Brunswick coast, has been for the President a place of residence or recreation in the summer months. Personal and official visits alike remind us how near to the heart of the President—and I might add, to the hearts of us all—is his policy of the good neighbour. For the many expressions of international friendship and good-will, towards our country, by the Chief Executive of the United States, the Government and people of Canada are profoundly grateful. It is a gratitude which may well be shared by an anxious world.

In honouring the Chief Executive of the United States, Queen's University has this morning been able also to pay a tribute of esteem and of enduring friendship to the people of the United States. The tribute will especially be welcomed, by Canadians, as the gift of a University of a long and honourable academic tradition, which has given to our country, alike in professional and political callings, not a few of its most public-spirited sons.

It may, at this time, be not inappropriate to remark that the interchange of professors and students between our universities in either country has contributed richly to both. I hope that a continuance of this fraternity of learning may serve to deepen the channels of understanding between our respective countries.

I may be pardoned, perhaps, if I mention that this morning's ceremony vividly recalled to me my own indebtedness to the universities of the United States for opportunities of post-graduate study and research. The passing years have served to increase, rather than to diminish, the sense of obligation I feel for the opportunities thus enjoyed. Particularly is it a pleasure to me to remember, at this time, my own academic connections with Harvard University; to recall that Harvard was the President's *Alma Mater*; and that it was at Harvard, on an occasion not dissimilar to that of this morning, I first had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Roosevelt, and of forming a friendship which, in years to come, was not to be without its associations with the public life of our respective countries.

May I turn now to the particular ceremony of this afternoon and its significance. There is always a satisfaction in seeing the completion of an important public undertaking. I should like to join with others present in extending heartiest congratulations to all who have had to do with the conception, construction, and completion of the Thousand Islands International Bridge.

In May of last year, while attending, in London, the Coronation of Their Majesties King George and Queen Elizabeth, I had the honour of being invited to open a new bridge over the Thames, at Chelsea. My thoughts at the time were naturally of that historic river whose rural beauty is a pleasure to all, and upon whose banks are famous cities, including Oxford and London. I did not forget that the waters of the Thames had witnessed great struggles for freedom which had brought the British race to a proud position in the world. Nor did I forget that these associations formed a part of the heritage of the British Commonwealth.

All of this comes back to my mind as I seek to speak of the significance of to-day's ceremony. It is not the Thames, it is the St. Lawrence that is in our thoughts to-day. The St. Lawrence, too, is not without its history, a history which may well be the pride of the peoples of this Continent. It, ~~has~~, has its great natural beauty. Where in the whole wide world is there a more majestic approach to the interior of any land: more in the way of an ever

changing loveliness on an unprecedented scale? The St. Lawrence, too, has witnessed cities, universities, and capitals rise into being on its banks. Its waters, like those of the Thames, have been the scene of many struggles which have contributed to a larger freedom.

So much for similarities which are not without their significance. There are differences, however, which are of even greater significance to the world to-day. The Thames, from its source to the sea, is within the confines of a single State. Its waters are national in character. The waters of the St. Lawrence, in considerable part, are international waters. They serve to divide, as well as to unite. The possibilities of friction between the two countries are not lessened by the fact that their boundary, in part, is a vast inland waterway which stretches a thousand miles and more from the interior of the continent to the sea. Over the greater part of that distance rivers and lakes constitute the international frontier between Canada and the United States.

The bridge at Chelsea serves to emphasize and enhance the inheritance of commerce and culture shared by those who dwell on either bank of the Thames—a single people in one country. This Thousand Islands Bridge serves to emphasize and, we cannot doubt, will enhance through the years, the inheritance of commerce and culture shared by the peoples on either bank of the St. Lawrence—not one people, but two. The bridge at Chelsea stands as a symbol of national unity; this bridge is a symbol of international amity. It constitutes yet another of the many bonds which join two peoples who rival one another, not in enmities or in armaments, but in devotion to the ways of peace and the spirit of conciliation. Upon a bridge, itself a symbol of international friendship and good-will, we are celebrating once again a century and more of peace between the United States and Canada. When we reflect upon the disputed frontiers which threaten peace in other quarters of the globe, we cannot but feel that the ceremony in which we are participating has in it something of significance to the world.

It may be thought that we owe our achievement to a common background; or that it is due to chance that our frontiers differ so greatly from the frontiers of states on other continents. It is true that we can claim to share the culture of two old world civilizations. The names of Champlain and Frontenac, Marquette and LaSalle belong scarcely less to you than to us, and no historian has recounted their exploits more vividly than your own Francis Parkman. Likewise, until 1776 the history and heritage of the British Commonwealth, to which I referred a moment ago, belonged as much to the thirteen Colonies, as it does to us.

This common background, however, was not sufficient to ensure our peace. The Seven Years war, the war of the American Revolution, the war of 1812, the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38, all turned the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes into an area of significant conflict. The ancestors of those who to-day are here assembled to rejoice that another link has been forged which serves to further their common interests, and to cement their friendship were, in those turbulent periods of our history, at enmity one with the other in either civil or international strife.

Human nature is much the same wherever it exists. Our populations, after all, do not, in origin, differ greatly from those of Europe. Indeed, the European countries have contributed most to their composition. Each of our countries has its problems of race and creed and class; each has its full measure of political controversy. Nevertheless we seem to have found the better way to secure and maintain our peace.

This international highway speaks of that better way. In itself it is one vast undertaking, but it is made up of pieces of solid ground and a series of bridges. Where solid ground has been lacking, and the way, in consequence, made impassable, bridges have been built. Imposing structures they are, ingeniously combining utility and beauty.

In the realm of international relations we, too, have learned to bridge our differences. We have practised the art of building bridges. There is indeed no more striking symbol of unity, of intercourse, and of friendship than a bridge. From antiquity to the present, bridges have been built to span the spaces of separation. Their very appearance suggests the surmounting of difficulties, the overcoming of barriers, the broadening of the path of progress and peace. The peoples of this continent, whether concerned with steel and stone, or with the invisible realities of mind and spirit, have, for the most part, been bridge-builders worthy of the name. In politics, as in road-making, it is a great thing, Mr. President, to know how to build bridges. In the art of international bridge-building there are two structures, each with its association with the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, of which I should like to say just a word. They stand out as monuments of international co-operation and good-will. Each has its message for the world of to-day. The one is the Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817; the other, the International Joint Commission created in 1909.

Before the War of 1812 and while it was being waged, citadels and arsenals came into being. Naval yards were set up and armed craft appeared on the waters of the St. Lawrence and the Lakes. Hostile forts frowned at each other from opposite shores. An armament race had begun; and had it been permitted to continue, we should have been looking back on a century of suspicion, enmity and hatred, instead of rejoicing, as we are, in a century of peace. In the course of the War of 1812, as many as 20 armed vessels were constructed in the Naval Yards at Kingston. One of these, the St. Lawrence, was actually larger in size, and carried more guns, than Nelson's Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar. Within three years of the conclusion of the war, we, happily, had determined to place our reliance upon Reason instead of upon Force, and to substitute for any surviving ill-will such a measure of solid good-will as should bridge succeeding years. By the Rush-Bagot Agreement the total armament on the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, as well as Lake Champlain, was not to exceed six armed vessels, weighing not more than one hundred tons, and mounting one eighteen-pounder apiece.

On the first of this month I had the honour of re-opening, at Kingston, the large fort which has recently been restored. Its name is Fort Henry. It, too, owed much of its size and strength to the War of 1812 and to fears of possible future invasion of Canada by her powerful neighbour. Fort Henry has been reconstructed to attract, not to repel, possible invasions from the United States.

The Rush-Bagot Agreement was a self-denying ordinance. As such it provided a means of escape from competitive arming. It was limited in its application to the St. Lawrence and the Lakes. In fact, it served to end all armaments on an international frontier extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. This significant document has served as the most effective instrument in promoting, between our neighbouring countries, an enduring peace. The decision never to arm against each other was taken, as I have indicated, over a century ago. In our own time, we have crowned that decision by the construction of other bridges of international friendship and understanding. By far the most important of them is the International Joint Commission. It was created to adjudicate all questions of difference arising along our four thousand miles of frontier. In the quarter of a century of its existence, by substituting investigation for dictation, and conciliation for coercion, in the adjustment of international disputes, the Commission has solved many questions likely to lead to serious controversy. This bridge of peace has been the more significant in that while countries on the continents of Europe and Asia have been increasing their frontier armaments, the United States and Canada have settled all their boundary differences by the method and processes of reasoned discussion.

A word in conclusion: The international bridge building of which I have been speaking, and of which our international bridges are fitting symbols, has grown naturally out of our common needs and our common will to live together as good friends and neighbours. All stand as acts of faith in human intelligence and good-will. They mean for us a precious cultural and constitutional heritage which it is our joint purpose to foster and maintain.

It will be at once obvious that the challenges to an international order, founded upon the rule of law, are many and dangerous. No one who looks at the distracted and disordered state of the world to-day can fail to be impressed by the extent to which the forces of international anarchy are seeking to prevail, and to subvert those standards of human conduct which we have come to regard as essential attributes of our civilization. The task of the bridge builder remains. I think I speak the mind of both countries when I say that, not only are we determined to preserve the neighbourly relations, and the free ways of life, which are our priceless heritage, but that we earnestly wish to see them become a part of the common heritage of mankind. To that end, we are prepared to go on building bridges, to throw the spans of friendship and of freedom across the troubled waters of our time.