

May 13, 1954

James C. Hagerty, Press Secretary to the President

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT, SENATOR WILEY AND  
SENATOR FERGUSON, AND REPRESENTATIVE DONDERO  
AT THE SIGNING OF THE ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY BILL,  
THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE, MAY 13, 1954.

Congressman Dondero: Mr. President, the people of the United States, through their Congress, have determined that they will participate with their good neighbor to the north, Canada, in the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway. It has been the dream of many decades. It is one of the greatest waterways in the world, and will be one of the great arteries of commerce in the world. I think that it will contribute much to the economic welfare and also to the national defense of both the United States and Canada.

Mr. President, five of your predecessors advocated and endorsed the building of the St. Lawrence Seaway. It has been delayed thirty or forty years, and now under your great leadership this mighty project, the master project of the North American continent, is to become a reality.

I want to add just one more thought, and that is this: that in the days to come, the American people, the Canadian people, the continent of North America, will receive great benefit from what we are doing now.

I am proud to be a Member of the 83rd Congress, to have had some part in bringing this very happy day about, as Chairman of the Committee on Public Works of the House of Representatives.

To you, Mr. President, and your Administration, must go the credit for bringing about the beginning of this great project. Only one thing remains now, to make the Seaway an assured fact, and that is your signature to the bill before you.

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Senator Wiley: Mr. President, I want to congratulate you. History will now record that at long last the dream -- yes, the hope, of countless millions is being fulfilled.

Back of us stands the Ambassador of Canada. It is a symbol that we are united in the greatest effort the two nations ever undertook, in building a Waterway here that will mean happiness, health and prosperity for countless millions to come.

Across the river we have held hands. Now we cannot part. We are one in a great adventure -- to build for the future of America.

I congratulate you and the American people.

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Senator Ferguson: Mr. President, Mr. Ambassador, Members of Congress: This is really a great occasion. I know it will be historic because it is a symbol of friendship between the United States and our friend, Canada, to the north.

Coming from Michigan, one of the border states, this has been a dream for many years. Mr. President, when we look at this map we can see that soon transportation can come into the heartland of America. Transportation, whether it be by ship, plane, railroad, truck or automobile is the lifeblood of commerce and trade. And I know that history will say that we today were looking into the future.

It means a better United States, and a better world, I am sure. This occasion is really one that we can all be happy about -- that this Administration could bring this about.

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The President: I am very happy, in the presence of this distinguished company, to sign this bill.

I think it is particularly fortunate that we have with us the Ambassador from Canada, because this bill is intended to set in motion the great project which will operate to the benefit of both our countries.

This marks, of course, the legislative culmination of an effort that has taken thirty years to reach this point. Now work can begin on the great project itself. That work, we all hope, will progress rapidly without interruption to a successful completion, so that the benefits of this great project can come to all our people on both sides of that great river.

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