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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

DATE: February 11, 1958

SUBJECT: Ceremonies to Mark Opening of St. Lawrence Seaway

PARTICIPANTS: White House:
Governor Sherman Adams
Mr. Gerald Morgan
Brig. General Goodpaster
Mr. Robert Gray
Mrs. Wheaton

Mr. Louis Castle, Administrator, St. Lawrence Seaway
Development Corporation
Mr. E. A. Place, Public Information Officer, St. Lawrence
Seaway Development Corporation
Ambassador Wiley T. Buchanan
Marselis C. Parsons, Jr., Director, BNA

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Following introductory remarks by Governor Adams who then left the meeting and turned it over to Mr. Gerald Morgan, Mr. Castle described the problem posed by the desirability of holding international ceremonies upon the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway on or before June 23, 1959.

Mr. Castle noted that the Queen would probably visit Canada to attend the opening ceremonies of the Seaway and that it was assumed that the President would wish to participate in those ceremonies whether the Queen attended or in her absence the Prime Minister of Canada. He said that it appeared desirable to have the ceremonies on the international boundary but that a problem arose since the most suitable spot on the boundary was at Cornwall-Massena where a long narrow bridge spanned the waterway. He also pointed out that a major problem arose in making arrangements for visitors to travel to the opening ceremonies and in settling questions of protocol involving the Cabinet, the Congress, Governors of riparian states and Mayors of principal cities situated on the Great Lakes. He also spoke of the desirability of

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playing down the opening of locks on the United States side of the waterway on the first of July, 1958 which would permit vessels of 14-foot draft to transit the Seaway. The town of Massena intends to celebrate this event.

Mr. Place indicated that the Canadians were already considering holding ceremonies near Montreal where the Seaway passes through four locks before opening on to the navigable section of the St. Lawrence River.

After discussion of these problems it was decided that (1) Ambassador Merchant on his return to Ottawa about March 1 would be requested to approach the Canadian Government to propose that one international celebration be held to mark the opening of the Seaway. (2) The Ambassador should ascertain whether the Queen had officially accepted a Canadian invitation to attend the opening ceremonies and to inquire the dates of her visit to Canada. (3) The Ambassador propose a working-level group be established to recommend a site for the celebration and to develop plans for joint participation by the President and the Queen subject to their approval. (4) If it is ascertained that the Queen has formally accepted the Canadian invitation for specific dates, a recommendation shall be submitted to the President that he invite the Queen to visit the United States officially following the Seaway ceremonies.

It was thought that any invitation to the Queen to join the President in a joint international celebration should be extended through the Canadian Government while an invitation officially to visit the United States would be transmitted direct in London.

Mr. Morgan and General Goodpaster favored holding the ceremonies on Cornwall Island because of the superior security conditions and the comparative suitability of the area in contrast to the International Bridge. No objection was seen to the President's participating in ceremonies on this Canadian island.

It was agreed that Ambassador Merchant's conversations should remain strictly confidential and that every effort be made to avoid any press treatment or speculation on plans for the ceremonies particularly during the election period in Canada.



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