

In the second place, other leader's hostile stand is not necessarily irrevocable. On the contrary, President Eisenhower has already been successful, notably on the bill granting him reorganization powers, to suggest a prompt change in a House Committee position.

Even if every single one of the leaders of the Congress were against it, that would still not be a binding argument against a pro-Seaway stand.

As a matter of fact, I think that it would be a tragic black-eye for the Administration if it were timidly -- in action, if not in words -- to retreat from a position that has been held by every Administration in the last three decades. It would be a political black-eye. It would be a psychological black-eye. It would be a surrender to false "unity", by surrendering principle.

Many of Mr. Truman's Congressional leaders opposed the Seaway, but that did not prevent him from fighting for it and from directing his agencies to fight for it and to send their highest officials to the Hill to back it -- and not just give it "lip service."

If Teddy Roosevelt had adopted a "let-Congress-decide-all-by-itself" attitude, we never would have had the Panama Canal; some of his Congressional leaders were unalterably against it.

4. I have no doubt that, as you said, there are many Canadian leaders who very definitely would prefer that they built it themselves.

That, however, is one phase of Canadian approach.

What you and I must think of -- as I know you agree -- is our own American national interest, basically. That national interest requires that we not abandon title to this great resource..

5. Speaking purely personally, I should like to recall that when I saw President Eisenhower at the Commodore in November, I said that I would never ask him for anything for myself. I have yet to make a single personal request on our great President.

But this project means more to my state, and, more important, it means more to the nation than almost any other single bill which will come up during these two years, and I feel that I have every right to ask with all the force and earnestness at my command that a strong favorable stand be taken by all the Administration's officials, right down the line.