

NSC STAFF STUDY

on

NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE  
ST. LAWRENCE-GREAT LAKES SEAWAY PROJECT



I. Summary Statement of Legislative History and Present  
Legislative Proposals

1. Since 1932 the Executive has tried to secure Congressional approval of arrangements for U.S.-Canadian development of the St. Lawrence. A treaty to this end failed in the Senate in 1933 and in 1941 an Executive Agreement with Canada was signed. In succeeding years, no Congressional action was taken on authorizing legislation, although hearings were held almost annually. In 1951 the House Public Works Committee held extensive hearings but came to no vote. In 1952 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee split but reported the bill to the floor where it was recommitted by a 43-40 vote.
2. While estimates of committee and Congressional action are notoriously inaccurate, it is possible that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee may report favorably on the Wiley Bill. The House is another question and, from all present indications, chances there appear slim.
3. Present legislation is considerably less involved than former proposals, and costs to the United States will be considerably lower. Under legislative proposals considered by the Congress in 1951-52, the cost to the U.S. Government of the St. Lawrence Project, power and navigation, was estimated at \$566,794,000. Under Senator Wiley's S. 589, the cost to the U.S. Federal Government is estimated at \$88,074,000 (December 1952 cost levels). S. 589 plus Senator Thyne's Amendment, which provides for the deepening of channels between Lakes Erie and Huron, would cost \$187,658,000.
4. Costs under S. 589 are lower than in earlier proposals because power development is not included. That development would be paid for by Ontario and New York at a cost to each of about \$225,000,000. Cost to Canada under the Wiley proposal would be \$174,950,000.
5. Senator Lehman has proposed legislation, which would include federal construction of the power project as well as seaway construction in the St. Lawrence and in the connecting channels, and which would cost the U.S. \$471,574,000. His proposal is not, however, compatible with arrangements made with Canada and incorporated in the International Joint Commission's findings.