

GERMAN PLOT TO PLACE IRON COLLAR ON CANADA FAILED

Keiser's Minion Said to Have
Worked to Gain Port
Near Quebec.

ISLE OF ORLEANS MADE NAVAL BASE

Dominion Ministers Did Not
Welcome Proposal and
Idea Died.

Quebec, Jan. 4.—Did Germany include in her world-wide plans a scheme for the domination of this old historic port? This is the question which more than one Quebec financial, shipping and railway man has been asking himself recently, as he recalls a movement which was on foot a couple of years ago, but which for reasons which will appear later, was still-born and came to naught.

In the winter of 1912-13 a German baron, a promoter with offices in Montreal and interests in Porcupine, broached a scheme for the exploitation of the Isle of Orleans, which it is safe to say looked much better to certain Canadians at that time than it ever will again. This same German baron is still in Montreal, where he reports regularly to the registrar of aliens, and where his liberty is said to include permission to visit his Porcupine holdings occasionally.

Made Overtures to Ottawa.

The Baron, so the story goes, secured an option on the charter of Le Compagnie du Chemin de Fer de Quebec at de l'ile d'Orleans, and, it is stated, made overtures to the Dominion Government for aid for the following ambitious proposal:

(1) The building of docks and other necessary harbor works at the east end of the Island of Orleans.

(2) The building of a railway around the Island which would connect these docks and the city of Quebec.

(3) By means of a bridge 2,200 feet long, with a swing span to be located just east of Montmorency Falls, where the river is narrow, where examination had disclosed good foundations, and where the water was not so deep as to present any great engineering difficulties.

(4) The erection of a fine tourist hotel upon the height of the Island, at the west end, overlooking the city and the harbor of Quebec.

The bridge was estimated to cost about a million and a quarter and the entire development, involved a minimum expenditure of two millions and a half, in which event the Government was asked to grant a bridge subsidy of \$400,000, and the usual railway subsidy per mile.

Hamburg-American Terminus.

The Baron's idea was to interest the Hamburg-American line, which at this privately-owned and controlled harbor would escape the Quebec harbor dues, and the location of the docks at the east end of the island would, it was claimed, greatly enlarge the season of navigation, in fact make a new winter port.

The railway and bridge would, if the Government aided the scheme, be financed and constructed by the firm of Leuz & Company, of Berlin, Germany, official railway contractors to the German Government. An exhaustive preliminary report had been secured by the Baron from an engineer on the possibilities of establishing a port on Orleans Island and the advantages of the island over Quebec as a port. The enterprise

would have meant the investment of several million dollars by German capitalists and concerns of the highest standing.

If Things Had Happened—

Needless to say the proposal to establish a rival port to old Quebec at her very doors was not received enthusiastically by any of the Dominion Ministers approached. It may be that the proposal did not look good, even in the then absence of the "emergency," but in any event the prospect simply slept away.

Of course the way the present war has developed a private German port just below Quebec would have availed Germany very little, but if the German plan to dispose of Russia and France and afterwards make a surprise attack on Great Britain had gone through, the presence of a potential naval base within gun throw of Quebec might have been fraught with serious consequences. Did a devious German plan to place an iron collar on Canada's neck go wrong?