

So, with the tremendous burden which this acute transportation situation has placed upon our intracoastal waterway, I venture the assertion that if needed the facilities, towboats and barges, are provided, together with sufficient channel depth and width, the canal within a very few years will be handling an even much larger tonnage than the 25,000,000 tons it carried last year.

I would like to close with this observation: Mr. Chairman, there can be no question that if we now had a completed, protected inland waterway from the Rio Grande Valley across Florida, connected with the existing 12-foot channel, from Jacksonville, Fla., to Trenton, N. J., with sufficient floating equipment, this very disastrous transportation situation which now confronts us would not exist.

Many people will say, "Well, it will take some time to build a canal across Florida." Of course it will.

Mr. HALL. How long will it take?

Mr. MILLER. I would prefer to have the engineers give you that information.

Mr. RANKIN. If you build it upon the plan laid down in the river and harbor bill and make it a 12-foot barge canal it would take 15 months.

Mr. HALL. How long would it take to build a pipe line across there?

Mr. MILLER. You will have some experts who will appear later and who I think will testify that that can be done in 120 days after authority is given to go ahead.

Mr. HALL. I asked that question for this reason. It seems to me that the vital subject today has to do with oil and gasoline, and in view of the fact that this bill provides for a pipe line and barge canal, I was wondering whether we should not separate those items and go to work immediately upon the pipe-line proposition.

The CHAIRMAN. That is, put the program for the pipe line ahead of the other, so that it can go into effect at once.

Mr. HALL. I was wondering if we could not go ahead on the proposition for a pipe line and handle that as a separate proposition so we could get that behind us. It seems to me that is the vital thing today, so far as the 17 eastern seaboard States are concerned. It seems to me those projects can be divided without any trouble, and if the committee could go to work on the proposition for a pipe line, we can take as much testimony as we desire about that, and the work could start without delay.

The CHAIRMAN. As to the pipe line alone, this committee would not have jurisdiction.

Mr. DONDERO. Congress passed an act last year authorizing the construction of pipe lines at once if the President deems it necessary, without any further authorization from us.

Mr. PITTINGER. Congressman Dondero asked practically the question I had in mind. I was going to ask the witness this question in reference to this pipe line, but I want to say this, so that I will not be misunderstood.

The CHAIRMAN. That is for temporary relief.

Mr. PITTINGER. I have never been antagonistic to the Intracoastal Waterway system. I think that would be a mighty fine thing. But I want to say that you would not be in this difficulty now on the Atlantic seaboard if you had not opposed the St. Lawrence seaway