

Mr. CULKIN (interposing). The situation has changed since then. Those questions were decided by the W. P. B. originally, but the proponents of this measure are hopeful that the W. P. B. will see the light soon.

Mr. RANKIN. These are questions to be taken up by the committee in executive session. We have a number of witnesses here to be heard, and I think we should hear General Reybold.

The CHAIRMAN. We will hear General Reybold at this time.

STATEMENT OF MAJ. GEN. EUGENE REYBOLD, CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, UNITED STATES ARMY

General REYBOLD. Mr. Chairman, I have a brief statement that I have prepared and, with your permission, I would like to present that first.

The CHAIRMAN. All right, General; you may proceed.

General REYBOLD. Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to appear before the Rivers and Harbors Committee in connection with your hearings on H. R. 6999. I must state at the outset, however, that time has not permitted me to ascertain the relationship of this legislation to the program of the President and, accordingly, my testimony does not involve any commitment as to such relationship.

It is the purpose of the bill to authorize—

(a) The construction of a barge canal across the State of Florida extending from a point on the St. Johns River to the Gulf of Mexico.

(b) The construction of a canal inside the coast line of the State from the western terminus of the barge canal to the eastern terminus of the present intracoastal waterway in the vicinity of Apalachee Bay, and the enlargement of this waterway to the present western limit at Corpus Christi, Tex., and its extension of the vicinity of the Mexican border.

(c) The construction of a pipe line, with necessary terminal facilities across Florida from the vicinity of Appalachicola Bay to the vicinity of Jacksonville.

The proposed barge canal would provide a waterway between the Gulf coast and the Atlantic seaboard. Construction of an inshore canal to connect the western terminus of the projected barge canal with the eastern terminus of the proposed intercoastal waterway in the vicinity of Apalachicola Bay, and the enlargement and extension of this waterway as proposed in the bill would, in connection with the barge canal, provide a continuous and improved 12-foot waterway from Port Isabel, Tex., to Jacksonville, Fla. Jacksonville is the southern terminus of an existing inland waterway having a minimum depth of 12 feet and extending north to Trenton, N. J. The value in time of war of an improved through inland waterway from Port Isabel to Trenton with minimum depth of 12 feet is believed sufficient to warrant construction of these improvements. It is my opinion that such improvements should be authorized by Congress now and that construction should be initiated at the earliest date on which work can be commenced without interfering with construction directly connected with the war effort. I believe that the canal and waterway should have a minimum width of 150 feet instead of 125 feet as stated in the bill.