

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Steel is safer, and operates better, and the carrying capacity is greater.

Mr. CULKIN. But wood could be used, and they could be built speedily there in your judgment?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. CULKIN. And they would be entirely workable?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Yes, sir; I think so.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you any wooden towboats?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. No, sir; all of our towboats and tugboats are made of steel. We formerly had them, but everybody has gotten away from wood and gone to steel.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; but we went away from buggies and went to automobiles, too.

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. There would never be any question of a shortage of water on this canal?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. No, sir; because it is fed from the Gulf.

Mr. RANKIN. So that everything on this canal could move continuously without interruption?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Yes, sir; that is right.

Mr. BOYKIN. What about the use of concrete barges?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. The draft of them would be such that their carrying capacity would be very limited in the shallow waters.

Mr. BOYKIN. And they would be about as hard to get as steel?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And it would take more power to tow them too, would it not?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Yes, sir; it would take more power to pull wooden barges and concrete barges than it would be pull steel barges. To move 120,000 barrels a day from Port Arthur, say, to Norfolk, Va., 120 towboats and 480 barges would absolutely do the job of moving 120,000 barrels a day.

Mr. RANKIN. I do not know whether they would be strong enough, but we can furnish you several million automobile motors if this rubber shortage continues.

Mr. GREEN. As for the lumber, in my State they have it piled up in large quantities, both pine and cyprus. Some of it has just been ready for years.

Mr. RANKIN. They were saving it for that purpose?

Mr. GREEN. They were trying to sell it, but could not. There are more than 30 small boatbuilding plants there very anxious to build wooden barges.

Mr. BOYKIN. The same thing is true in New Orleans, Mobile, and in Gulfport.

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Yes, sir. The total steel required in a barge to carry oil, say a 10,000-barrel barge, is approximately 223 tons for each barge.

Mr. BOYKIN. How long does a good steel barge last?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Their life is approximately calculated at anywhere from 15 to 20 years.

Mr. RANKIN. You are familiar with the Tombigbee River?

Mr. DE BARDELEBEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you think that would be a much better way for barges to travel than to fight the current on the Mississippi River?