

EXTENSION OF THE INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY SYSTEM

TUESDAY, MAY 19, 1942

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON RIVERS AND HARBORS,
Washington, D. C.

The committee met at 10:30 a. m., Hon. Joseph J. Mansfield (chairman) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Miller, are you ready to proceed?

Mr. MILLER. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if it would be out of order for me to merely call the attention of the members of the committee to a report contained in the Washington papers this morning concerning the address delivered last night by Lieutenant General Somervell, commander of the Army Service and Supply. I would like to read two paragraphs from his address, which was delivered at the sixteen engineering societies' banquet at the Mayflower Hotel last night:

I especially commend to the attention of those of you in transportation the unhappy fact that transport, afloat and ashore, is our greatest bottleneck.

Our tank factories and our plane factories are turning out machines in numbers that would astound and dismay the dictators. Our task is to get them where they are needed by the shortest route in the shortest possible time.

If one of you transportation engineers can figure out some way of increasing transportation efficiency, and put that scheme to work, you would be as great a national hero as the general who wins battles on the field.

I do not mean to suggest that you gentlemen who are considering this bill might be entitled to that honor, but I submit for your consideration that the measure being considered, as I am quite sure you are convinced by the testimony presented yesterday, and will be further convinced by the testimony that will be presented today, will aid materially in the removal of one of the bottlenecks in our transportation situation.

I am sure that the members of this committee are gratified over the fact that this very question of the inadequate transportation for oil and gasoline was considered at a White House conference yesterday, participated in by Senator Barkley, the majority leader of the Senate; by the Speaker, Mr. Rayburn; by the majority leader, Mr. McCormack; and by the Vice President. I notice from the report in the Times-Herald the following, which I would like to quote:

Speaker Rayburn, of Texas, also at the conference, said proposals were discussed to increase deliveries to the East by barges on inland waterways and on the intracoastal canal. This would expand present barge lines on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. The White House talk also revived an often-discredited project for a barge canal across Florida to connect intracoastal waterways on the Gulf of Mexico and on the Atlantic coast.

Mr. RANKIN. What was that last sentence?

Mr. MILLER. The statement was:

The White House talk also revived an often-discredited project for a barge canal across Florida to connect intracoastal waterways on the Gulf of Mexico and on the Atlantic coast.