

Mr. ALEXANDER. Yes, sir; steel barges. They carry the equivalent of over 50 tank carloads of gasoline.

Mr. CULKIN. Do you think gasoline could be carried in wooden barges?

Mr. ALEXANDER. I do not think you could carry gasoline in wooden barges.

Mr. CULKIN. How about fuel oil?

Mr. ALEXANDER. You could not carry fuel oil in wooden barges under the present Department of Commerce law. Under the present regulations, you could not carry either fuel oil or gasoline in wooden barges.

Mr. CULKIN. Do you not find some difficulty in getting steel for the construction of barges?

Mr. ALEXANDER. We have not had any so far. We do not have a large plant, but we can get steel to build them.

Mr. CULKIN. Are you getting steel for that purpose now?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Yes, sir; we have been getting it continuously. We have been building tanks and barges for the War Department, the Navy Department, and a lot of people who are towing gasoline and fuel oil on this same route.

Mr. CULKIN. Assuming that you could not get steel, could the barges be built of wood?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Yes, sir.

Mr. CULKIN. Could they be operated successfully?

Mr. ALEXANDER. I do not think they could be operated successfully for carrying gasoline.

Mr. CULKIN. Because of the danger of fire?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Yes, sir; and because of the leakage. There would be a certain amount of leakage if they carried gasoline.

Mr. CULKIN. Precautions in the matter of fire protection would help.

Mr. ALEXANDER. It would help; yes, sir.

Mr. CULKIN. It would help in the case of wooden barges.

Mr. ALEXANDER. They could use wooden barges for the heavier fuel oil and steel barges for the transportation of gasoline.

Mr. CULKIN. How long would it take to build a steel barge that could carry 12,000 barrels of oil?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Ours is a small plant, but we can build two per month. At the same time, we could build tugs for towing them.

The CHAIRMAN. Are they all-steel tugs?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Yes, sir; they are all steel. It does not take much tonnage to build a steel tug.

The CHAIRMAN. Many years ago they were operating with wooden tugs on the Ohio River.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Yes, sir.

Mr. DONDERO. Do they have difficulty in navigating the Mississippi River with barges?

Mr. ALEXANDER. No, sir.

Mr. DONDERO. It was stated before the committee that it was difficult to operate barges on that river.

Mr. ALEXANDER. You would have to have a little more motive power.

Mr. DONDERO. By navigating the river with barges, oil could be shipped up the Mississippi River to the Ohio River and landed in the Pittsburgh area, from which point it could be transferred overland by