

Mr. CULKIN. But the coastwise transportation by cargo boats has disappeared.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Well, coastwise transportation is practically eliminated.

Mr. CULKIN. Boats going to England have been taken off.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Because of the submarine menace.

Mr. CULKIN. And prior to that.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Yes.

Mr. CULKIN. Prior to that, it was naked of all transportation. Do you know as a matter of fact that that was due to the Transportation Act of 1940, passed by Congress in 1940?

Mr. ALEXANDER. No; I do not know that.

Mr. CULKIN. That is a fact. In a signed article in the New York Times about a year ago the railroads were quoted as saying that they had killed the coastwise and the intercoastal traffic, and that was the result of the Wheeler-Lea Act of 1940, the Transportation Act, so-called. The boats were gone before the submarine came; is not that true?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Practically, the coastwise.

Mr. CULKIN. Do you think a common carrier brought into the field, to build these smaller and less expensive boats, operating across the peninsula of Florida and around the Gulf and then up the coast—do you think that would be a workable system?

Mr. ALEXANDER. It has worked.

Mr. CULKIN. And within the limits of a comparatively small investment?

Mr. ALEXANDER. It has worked. These barges and these tows, loaded with all kinds of material, have operated on the section of the canal as built.

Mr. CULKIN. The craft that has come up through the coastwise canal has been largely recreational craft.

Mr. ALEXANDER. On the Atlantic side?

Mr. CULKIN. On the Atlantic side.

Mr. ALEXANDER. That was because it did not reach anywhere. If they have a west canal they will have something to move on.

Mr. CULKIN. I am merely outlining the situation.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Those of us interested in moving this freight have watched that.

Mr. CULKIN. The coastwise shipping was killed off by the railroads, by the passage of the act of 1940. They did not quite get to the inland shipping under that act, but they are encouraged and are going to try that.

How many tons of traffic originate in the Gulf of Mexico? Can you answer that?

Mr. ALEXANDER. No; I could not answer that.

Mr. CULKIN. One hundred million tons a year in Texas alone, the clerk of the committee tells me, and he is a reliable authority. How much is there in the whole Gulf?

The CHAIRMAN. About 140,000,000, I think.

Mr. CULKIN. I have seen it stated on good engineering authority that about 90,000,000 of the 140,000,000 tons would use this canal if it were constructed. Is that true, in your opinion?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Coastwise traffic?