

Mr. SHARY. As I go on I will probably answer that in a later paragraph.

Mr. CULKIN. If you can, discuss whether or not it is continuing, and then give me your views of our intelligent civilization on the question of transportation, its duties to the people, and so forth. I hope I have not given you too big a job.

Mr. SHARY. As I have said, we are a section where one can raise almost all that is necessary for a livelihood for himself, but in going further than a bare living and attempting to ship out and give the benefit of this wonderful valley to the whole Nation it has met with many difficulties in the line of transportation.

We are urgently in need of competitive transportation facilities. The railroads do not give us the relief necessary to enable us to enjoy the outlet for our products to the eastern seaboard, to which we are justly entitled.

We are likewise heavily penalized because of the high railroad rates from properly developing what we call our central home trade territory along the Mississippi Valley to the Great Lakes of the North.

The valley can and does produce, in my opinion, more of the many varieties of food products urgently necessary now, and more and more necessary as time goes on, in our war efforts, and to feed the hungry world even after the war.

It is my opinion that if the intercoastal canal is extended to our valley that we are destined to become one of the great factors of our country in the production of food commodities adaptable to water transportation.

The canning industry, which was stifled before we secured the ports at Brownsville and Port Isabel, has since become a tremendous industry. However, at present, because of lack of sea transportation due to the war and the U-boat menace, this industry is again in a bad predicament.

The extension of the intercoastal canal would not only relieve the situation but in my opinion it would augment that one industry alone many times to what it is today.

Now, we have another great industry in the Rio Grande Valley, that is the oil development with its refineries, pipe lines, and so forth, products of which are most urgently needed at the eastern seaboard to assist this country at war. This industry at home has been severely penalized because of the lack of transportation.

The oil fields of South Texas could produce almost unlimited quantities of oil and transport it in barges up this channel to the eastern seaboard, thus avoiding all of the hazards of coastwise shipping; and when we speak of the cost of this extension from Corpus Christi to the Rio Grande Valley, according to engineer's reports the total cost is scarcely more than the price of one timber.

In addition to the oil industry we have our friendly neighbor, Mexico, looking to our country for a market for its strategic materials needed for defense, such as lead, zinc, manganese, copper, iron, and other defense commodities, passing through the port of entry at Brownsville, and which could be moved through this channel.

In conclusion, the construction of the canal across Florida and the widening and deepening of the canal already completed, and the completion of the canal from Corpus Christi to Brownsville, Harlingen, and Port Isabel, will provide a facility that is urgently