

in the United States. They have been saying that ever since I have been here—for 12 years.

Mr. RANKIN. I do not know whether you were in the room the other day when I gave some figures that convinced me that if the intracoastal waterway were finished it would be capable of carrying all of the oil produced in the United States. In other words, there would be no scarcity of water. It would be limited only by the space necessary for these barges to travel, and it would be capable of carrying all the oil produced in the United States if it could be delivered to it.

Mr. BOWIE. That is true, sir.

I would like at this point, if I may, to call attention of the committee to one thing that has not been talked about very much, and which I know has been used as a club by the railroads to stop this improvement.

At the hearing before the Board of Army Engineers we undertook to show that this is true so far as our part of the country is concerned, in the Rio Grande Valley, where we have about 250,000 people living along this little strip of 75 miles, where the towns are so close together that it looks just like one main street.

We have to bring in all the products we use, except what we can grow on the farm. About 75 percent of all that tonnage coming into the Rio Grande Valley originates along the great waterways of the Mississippi and the Ohio. The railroads said, "Yes; that may be true, but what are you going to ship north? You cannot run a barge and make it pay unless you have traffic both ways."

But, my friends, they forget about one thing. They forget about the tremendous tonnage in Mexico, as referred to by Mr. Hofmacker. I am sorry he could not remain to tell you about that, because he is an authority on the potential tonnage and the tonnage actually moving.

We are now going to present it as we found it on the other horn of the dilemma. We are going to develop from Mexico products to fill the barges on their way back.

Mr. RANKIN. If they do not help us obtain some relief from the Transportation Act increases and discrimination in freight rates, they might as well take their industries away because we will use this oil to run our own industries after the war is over.

This barge line is as much to their interest from a long-range standpoint to transport finished products into that area as it is ours to transport raw materials.

Mr. BOWIE. That is true.

Mr. RANKIN. Some railroads that are fighting this are charging the people of Texas about twice as much for shipping goods out as to ship them in, and more than twice as much as they charge for the same distance in the Eastern States.

We might as well understand that; because we are coming to the time when the Eastern States will realize that, from the standpoint of transportation, the greatest thing they can do is to encourage the development of waterways.

Mr. BOWIE. At this point it might be well for me to state the attitude of our people in regard to water transportation or any other form of transportation.

As a port director I am not representing any special interest; I represent the taxpayer, the farmer on his land, and the oilman—