

Mr. CULKIN. The President appoints them.

I cite as an outstanding illustration of that the outrageous performance of conducting a hearing for 7 years, and then throwing the record away, and starting all over again. That action outrivals any contrivance that Al Capone ever resorted to.

Mr. JOHNS. You are one of the leading lawyers on this committee, and I want some lawyer on the committee to tell me why it is, since we have reported out a bill which includes this canal down in Florida, anything else is necessary than to simply offer an amendment providing for building a barge canal instead of a regular ship canal. Authorization for a canal is already in the bill which has been ordered reported, and, as I understand it, the President has power to build the proposed pipe line. If he has that authority already, why should we repeat it here, or why should we take time in attempting to pass this bill which provides for something that we have already authorized in the bill already ordered reported?

Mr. CULKIN. I am not able to state just what may be in the minds of the proponents as to that.

Mr. JOHNS. I do not know why we do not press that bill for enactment. That bill already authorizes the construction of a canal across Florida, and by amendment it could be changed from a ship canal to a barge canal. The President also is already authorized to construct a pipe line.

Mr. CULKIN. I would say this, that the railroads have put up a terrific drive against that bill. It is estimated by good authority that they have spent from ten million to fifteen million dollars for the purpose of killing that bill. It is said on good authority that they have spent that much in influencing public opinion, by editorials and by other means of influencing public opinion. Frankly, I would say that the situation of that bill is a very hazardous one.

Mr. JOHNS. But we do not know that, because we have never tried, or have not considered—

Mr. CULKIN (interposing). The gentleman from Wisconsin, of course, is highly intelligent, and he has witnessed this performance on the part of the railroads in the fight against this bill. The bill has been characterized as pork in practically every editorial in practically every publication in the country. Even the chairman of this committee, who knows more about transportation than anyone I know of, and who has the true Jeffersonian blood, has been denounced and caricatured, as the gentleman knows, quite recently.

Mr. JOHNS. Do you think that in this time of emergency that the railroads are going to try to influence public sentiment against the passage of this legislation?

Mr. CULKIN. I so understand. I understand that representatives of the plutocratic brotherhoods will be here in opposition to this bill, or that is what I am told. What we are trying to do, so far as the proponents of the bill are concerned, is to get a situation that will appeal to a majority of the Members of the House, and then bring this bill in and pass it. Frankly, I do not think we could pass that bill today. Does the gentleman think we could?

Mr. JOHNS. I do not know whether we could or not. I do not know whether we can pass this bill that is pending here today. It is logical to believe that we could pass the bill, because in that bill we are dealing with improvements in the lake region and the Mississippi River