

Mr. CULKIN. Have you submitted this information to the War Department.

Mayor SHARIT. I have.

Mr. CULKIN. This is new information you have given to us. Has the matter been taken up with the War Department engineers?

Mayor SHARIT. No.

Mr. CULKIN. I think you ought to do that.

Mayor SHARIT. They know this history, I think, and the War Department engineers are in and around there generally every day.

Mr. CULKIN. Usually these matters are discussed with the engineers, and I think that information ought to be furnished to them.

Mayor SHARIT. All right.

Mr. GREEN. I think it would be well to submit it to the engineers, and also to have it in our record here.

The CHAIRMAN. It is already in the record now.

Mayor SHARIT. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. We thank you, Mr. Sharit.

STATEMENT OF W. S. JOHNSON, MANAGER, JACKSONVILLE (FLA.) CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. SIKES. Mr. Chairman, the next witness is Mr. W. S. Johnson, manager of the chamber of commerce of Jacksonville.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, as you know the city of Jacksonville has at all times been interested in the canal across north Florida. If our interest in years gone by has been strong, it certainly has become stronger from our own personal experience with sinking of tankers in that area.

A few months ago I went out to one of the hospitals where 20 men, virtually charred like pieces of charcoal, were in that hospital as a result of the sinking of a tanker and its burning. And nobody who has ever seen such a sight would stand in the way of making it possible to bring the oil across this State, without putting the lives of these brave American men in this great danger.

You gentlemen have heard in these hearings in the past 2 days that the German submarines have now closed the ports of Mobile, New Orleans, Corpus Christi, and Isabel. And if the Germans have successfully blocked the Gulf ports, I would say to you that we should recruit 100,000 men with picks and shovels to go in and dig that canal today; because if we are deprived of the privilege of conveying our commodities from the Gulf coast to the Atlantic seaboard in the boats of this Nation, our war effort is that day stagnated, and there will never be successful operation as long as we are blockaded in the Gulf or the Northeast.

Now, gentlemen, you have heard a lot of things about oil in the State of Florida and the State of Georgia. But there are at the present time thousands of soldiers and sailors in training there today. Mr. Chairman, there are thousands of boys from your State in the State of Florida today; and, Mr. Johns, there are thousands of boys from your State in the State of Florida. They are not there training as foot soldiers. The training that we are doing there today is not the kind of training we did in the last war; they are not foot soldiers;