

BEAUFORT TO BOSTON
Small Speaks on the Proposed Inland Water Route.

ARGUES CONVINCINGLY

By the Completion of the Projected Route from Norfolk Through the North Carolina Sounds and the Construction of a Few Connecting Links, a Great System of Inland Navigation Can Be Established.

Washington, Jan. 14.—Special.—Mr. Small made a strong and convincing argument in the House, Saturday, in favor of an inland waterway from Beaufort Inlet to Boston. He said:

"Mr. Chairman: Judging from the character of this debate, an unusual condition is presented by the House upon this bill. Out of the 357 members of this House, it would appear that at least 340 of them are opposed to the bill which has been reported by the committee and that there are only 17 in favor of it, these 17 constituting the members of the committee. I do not rise for the purpose of giving notice of any amendment which I intend to offer or to make any specific complaint against the bill. Many objections have been urged against it. Members have complained that their parliaments against or that they were discriminated against or that waterways and harbors within their respective sections have been neglected by this committee. It was left to the gentleman from Kentucky, who has just spoken (Mr. Boorman), to cap the climax of criticism by stating, as I recall his language, that \$70,000,000 is included in this bill for a waterway against the protest of the member within whose district that waterway is situated. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. Cushman) presented an elaborate table of figures to which he referred in addressing the House and by which he contrasted the volume of appropriations made in those States which are represented by members on the committee with the remaining 23 States not so represented and attempted to show that the committee had prepared this bill from a sectional and partial standpoint. The distinguished gentleman from Iowa (Mr. Hepburn) in his usual forceful manner made a general attack not only upon the bill but generally on appropriations for river and harbor improvement. There was one feature of the gentleman's argument with which I was particularly impressed. He contended that the provisions of a river and harbor bill should not include appropriations for any waterway which did not affect commerce inter-State in its character. This proposition seems plausible on its face but I am of the opinion that difficulties would arise in making the application. There are today various waterways and harbors upon which are carried hundreds of thousands of tons of commerce between the different States, but which were comparatively insignificant and local in their importance in the national government began to make appropriations for improvement in recent years.

As our country develops and traffic and the demand for transportation increases new waterways which seem at the time insignificant and yet contain possibilities of future growth and commerce, will demand the attention of the national government. I assume that the aid which the government has for years been extending to internal improvements of this character will continue indefinitely as the policy of the government. I cannot conceive that any of these complaints which have been made against the present bill are well founded in fact. I have been one of the persistent and important members who have continuously waited upon the River and Harbor Committee seeking to have improvements and appropriations included in this bill. I have not received recognition to the extent I desired nor as I believe to the extent of the needs of my district, but I realize the fact that if the demands of every member had been met and all the recommendations of the engineers had received appropriations, the aggregate amount contained in the bill would have staggered even the liberality of this House and would have subjected the committee to merited criticism. I think I appreciate some of the difficulties which confronted the committee. While the committee may have sought to set up certain standards and tests to judge of the worthiness of improvements, yet they found it impossible to rigidly adhere to them and such has been the experience of all committees in the past. The one supreme test is the amount of tonnage to be affected by the improvement and not the location of the waterway nor the persistence of the interest involved. The distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Burton), who is chairman of the committee, has had too long and honorable service in this House to be affected by criticism intended for home consumption. I believe that he and the entire membership of the committee in the preparation of this bill have endeavored to discharge their duty to this House and the country with fidelity and impartiality and that sectional considerations have not entered into their deliberations. However, Mr. Chairman, I did not rise for the purpose of defending the committee, but it did occur to me that some member of this body having no official connection with the committee should give expression to these sentiments of justice which everyone knows express the truth.

"Mr. Chairman, my object in seeking recognition was to address the committee briefly concerning a great inland waterway which is not subject to any of the objections which have been urged against other improvements and which is national in its character. At the last session of Congress I had the honor to introduce a bill for the survey of an inland waterway sixteen feet in depth from the southern terminus of the Dismal Swamp canal, at South Mills, on the Pamlico river, North Carolina, thence extending down the Pasquotank river to Albemarle sound, thence across Albemarle sound, Croatan sound, Pamlico sound and Core sound, with an out-

let to the ocean with a depth of 18 feet through Ocrakee inlet and Beaufort Inlet, North Carolina. This bill was included within the provisions of the Emergency River and Harbor bill of June, 1900. The survey was made during the last summer and fall and the report of same submitted to Congress, but it was not printed in time for the consideration of the River and Harbor Committee in connection with the pending bill. I have fortunately just secured an advance copy of the printed report which is of exceeding interest in connection with this great project.

"The report recommends that Beaufort Inlet be chosen as the outlet to the ocean rather than Ocrakee inlet for several reasons, but chiefly because the dangerous navigation around Cape Lookout will thereby be avoided. It appears from the report that the distance from the southern terminus of the Dismal Swamp canal on Pasquotank river to Beaufort Inlet is 214 miles. It further appears that the cost of this projected interior waterway would not exceed \$5,532,893. I may say without fear of contradiction that it is one of the most important projects connected with the coastwise navigation of the United States. It was the dream of the early founders of the republic to connect by a capacious canal the magnificent waters of Chesapeake bay with those beautiful inland sounds in eastern North Carolina which I have mentioned. River since Sir Walter Raleigh's fleet entered the inlet on the coast of North Carolina and planted the first English colony on our Atlantic coast the dangers of Cape Hatteras and of Diamond Shoals have been known to the mariner as our coast. Thousands of ships have foundered in its treacherous waters and thousands of lives have found an unknown grave in the hungry vortex of its angry waves and countless tons of produce have been scattered upon its shores. It stands as a menace to our coastwise shipping and modern science and skill have failed materially to reduce the losses which annually occur along this perilous highway. It has been estimated that ten per cent. of our coastwise shipping was annually lost by shipwreck and the great bulk of this is lost upon the bleak and dangerous coast of North Carolina. Now to avoid this dangerous coast and this menace to our shipping has been an ever-recurring problem. George Washington originally, it is said, formulated the scheme for the construction of what is now known as the Dismal Swamp canal. This canal was constructed many years ago, but for some time was permitted to remain out of repair until several years ago a company was organized and purchased the same and they have recently reconstructed this important highway so that the canal now has a depth of 8 feet, which it is proposed to maintain and which is about the limit of depth which can be carried at all points across the North Carolina sounds. This canal is an important factor in the development of commerce between the harbor of Baltimore and all points on Chesapeake bay and the various ports in eastern North Carolina.

"There is also another canal which connects Chesapeake bay and Norfolk harbor with the waters of Currituck sound and thence into Albemarle and Chesapeake canal. This canal has also been in operation for many years and is owned by a company of enterprising and able men and has an efficient and zealous president devoted to the development of the tide water section of Virginia and North Carolina. This canal also maintains a depth of 8 feet and enjoys a large traffic with steamers and barges engaged in our coastwise commerce. The report of the district engineers, together with the division engineer and the chief of engineers to which I have adverted, emphasizes the importance of this improved waterway, but they recommended that other and additional surveys be made of the route via the Albemarle and Chesapeake canal and of all other existing routes between Norfolk harbor and Beaufort Inlet in order to intelligently determine the respective availability of each. The report further states as a conclusion that by the national government should embark in the construction of this waterway it should own one or more of the intervening canals and make the same a part of this great highway, to be maintained by the government and kept open free to all shipping. I concur most heartily in these recommendations of the engineers.

"I now ask the indulgence of the committee to further call attention to some of the facts which go to make up and emphasize the importance of this inland route. From a commercial standpoint its magnitude cannot be magnified. One of the modern innovations in water traffic has been the construction of freight barges, a number of which are towed by a powerful tug and which are capable of carrying immense quantities of produce. It is to the further development of this class of shipping that this waterway would be particularly valuable. The estimated value of the coastwise commerce to be immediately affected by this route has been conservatively fixed at \$200,000,000 and the quantity of traffic to be affected is estimated to be at least 10,000,000 tons. This water route would result in a large saving in traffic rates as compared with the present rates between the North and South by railroad and the annual saving to be thus effected is estimated to be between \$750,000 and \$1,000,000 annually. The annual saving of this sum to the coastwise commerce of the country would be 3 per cent. on \$200,000,000, which is four times the cost of the construction of this waterway, exclusive of the cost of the purchase of one of the canals referred to.

"Another distinct advantage resulting from this route would be the reduction in insurance rates both on cargo and shipping. This can easily be calculated by advertising to the difference between marine insurance on cargo by sailing vessels which navigate our coast around Cape Hatteras with the rate on cargo shipped by barges through the present insufficient waterway and canal.

"Again the construction of this waterway could be utilized as an additional means of defense in time of war. Upon this point I quote from the report of the engineer: 'An inland waterway would afford an interior line of communication in time of war for transportation of supplies and for naval operations by light draft vessels, such as torpedo boats and destroyers. Its value for such purpose can hardly be estimated, being similar to that of seacoast fortifications, which are rarely actually need-

ed, but when the need arises it is most acute.' This waterway would afford a line of communication with our navy yard at Portsmouth, Va., and with Fortress Monroe, and our navy at Hampton Roads. The importance of this position has been recognized by engineers who have reported upon this matter in the past and by other eminent men engaged in the service.

"I shall not consume the time of the House in discussing the importance of this waterway in connection with local development of the eastern section through which it would pass, although it through which the least important of the results to flow from the beneficent enterprise. The thrifty and progressive towns in Eastern North Carolina, such as Elizabeth City, New Bern, Washington, Washington and New Bern, would feel the impulse of this new artery of commerce and the people of all the tide-water section of North Carolina and of other States thereby affected would be brought in touch with the commerce of our country.

"In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I wish to refer to the national character of the interior waterway. Not only the section concerned which is tributary to the Chesapeake bay and the sounds of North Carolina claims every State upon our Atlantic coast, including even those which border upon the Great Lakes, must feel an interest in this great project. If this waterway shall be established, it will only be one link in a chain which shall connect the city of Boston with Beaufort Inlet, N. C. To make this clear it is only necessary to point to the geography of our Atlantic coast north of the Chesapeake bay. Going north via Chesapeake bay we traverse an ample waterway until we reach a point near the city of Philadelphia and thence via the Delaware and Chesapeake canal we reach the Delaware river. Upon this ample stream is located the city of Philadelphia. By going up the Delaware river to Bordentown, N. J., we can cross by a canal to New Brunswick, N. J., on the Raritan river. From this point there is fine inland navigation to the harbor of New York. From thence by Long Island sound we reach Buzzards bay and the construction of a short canal from this point, which has already been begun, will complete the interior waterway and thence the route is to Cape Cod and Boston. It will only be necessary for the government to own and improve these intervening canals to open up this magnificent waterway from the New England States to the South.

"But not only would this proposed waterway afford communication along our Atlantic coast States, but it would give them access to the Great Lakes and to the States and cities adjacent thereto. After reaching New York harbor the magnificent Hudson river leads to the Erie canal, thus bringing the Great Lakes within easy and cheap communication with all of our Atlantic seaboard. "If the members of this House will study this project in the light of its importance to the country, I believe it will impress itself upon them as a project of national and paramount importance, which is not exceeded by any other that is now under the consideration of Congress, and I ask them to join with me in pressing this improvement upon the attention of Congress and of the commercial interests of the country. It is not ideal in its character and therefore escapes the criticism which has been directed against other projects. It discriminates against no one because its benefits extend to every part of the country. It is along the line of the trend of the present thought of the country which seeks to evolve a plan for the easy and cheap transportation of our crude products on the one hand and our bulky manufactured products on the other between the different sections of our country. It would promote the transportation of lumber and other forest products from the South and would give increased facilities for the transportation of coal and other products of the mines and bulky manufactured products from the North and the West. Upon many of these articles at present the tariff rates are prohibitory, but by opening up this great artery of domestic commerce the interior of all sections of our country will be promoted and the peoples of our common country would be bound closer together by the bonds of commerce which after all will afford the surest guarantee of concord and fraternity."

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