

**INLAND WATER
TRANSPORTATION: HEARINGS;
SIXTY-FIFTH CONGRESS;
DECEMBER 13, 1918**

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INLAND WATER TRANSPORTATION.

COMMITTEE ON RIVERS AND HARBORS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D. C., December 13, 1918.

The committee met at 10.30 o'clock a. m., Hon. John H. Small (chairman) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlemen of the committee will remember as to the Mississippi River, between the Ohio and the Missouri, it was understood that the committee desired additional evidence as to the commerce on that river, both existing and prospective, and it was suggested that Mr. Tomlinson could furnish us some information. Mr. Tomlinson is present this morning, by request, and we would be very glad to hear from him now, briefly.

STATEMENT OF MR. G. A. TOMLINSON, DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF INLAND WATERWAYS, UNITED STATES RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Tomlinson is director of the Division of Inland Waterways of the United States Railroad Administration and, I understand, assistant to the Director General as regards waterways.

Mr. Tomlinson, we are considering the Mississippi River between the Ohio and Missouri Rivers, and the committee desires all the available information they can secure regarding the existing and prospective commerce on the lower Mississippi. Will you kindly state what activities are in progress with regard to traffic on the lower Mississippi?

Mr. TOMLINSON. The Railroad Administration during the past season has purchased 2 steamers and 9 barges from the Kansas City & Missouri River Navigation Co., has leased 2 towboats from the St. Louis district of the engineering department and 20 steel barges. It has also leased 1 towboat from a civilian. This fleet is now operating, consisting of 5 towboats and 29 barges, between St. Louis and New Orleans and furnishing a weekly service.

There is now before the Railroad Administration, on my recommendation, a proposition to build 6 steel towboats of large horsepower (of 1,800 horsepower each) and 40 steel barges. Contracts for the towboats have been let. The contracts for the 40 barges are about to be let.

There is naturally some consideration being given now to the fact that the war has terminated and that the life of the Railroad Administration is unsettled. I suppose you are all aware of the fact that the Government, under the direction of the President, provided for the construction of 4 steel towboats and 19 steel barges to trade



between St. Louis and St. Paul, carrying ore southbound from the Minnesota fields and coal northbound from the Illinois fields. If all of these barges are completed, the greatest activity on the Mississippi River will naturally be between the mouth of the Missouri and the Ohio.

Mr. KENNEDY. Are these boats on the lower river, from St. Louis up, carrying general commerce?

Mr. TOMLINSON. Yes, sir; they carry general commerce. The joint tariffs of the Railroad Administration have just been promulgated. It is a rather complicated process preparing those tariffs, so that at the present time the tonnage has been limited to the river bank. The activity has been mostly in grain southbound with mixed cargoes northbound. As soon as those joint tariffs are promulgated the Mississippi section of this division will be able to reach back into the States contiguous to the river banks.

Mr. KENNEDY. One reason why the committee wanted additional information was that the amount asked for maintenance on that reach of the river between the mouth of the Missouri and the mouth of the Ohio, was about twice as much as it has been in the past, and we wanted the information as to commerce that was on the river and was expected in the near future.

Mr. TOMLINSON. The appropriations already made will amount to more than ten millions for floating property on that section.

Mr. DEMSEY. How much tonnage do you figure you are going to carry?

Mr. TOMLINSON. I do not feel competent to forecast that.

Mr. DEMSEY. I mean the capacity of your boats; I did not mean what you were going to carry, only the capacity of the boats.

Mr. TOMLINSON. The barges are about 2,000 tons, drawing 8 feet. In other words, the new construction for the lower river would be 80,000 tons a trip. I am not so well informed about the construction for the upper river, because the work has not been placed under the division of inland waterways. The appropriation, I understand, was under the direct action of the President and the construction is being conducted by the War Department.

Mr. DEMSEY. I would like, Mr. Chairman, to ask Mr. Tomlinson about an entirely different matter when they have finished with this.

Mr. OSBORNE. When did this service commence?

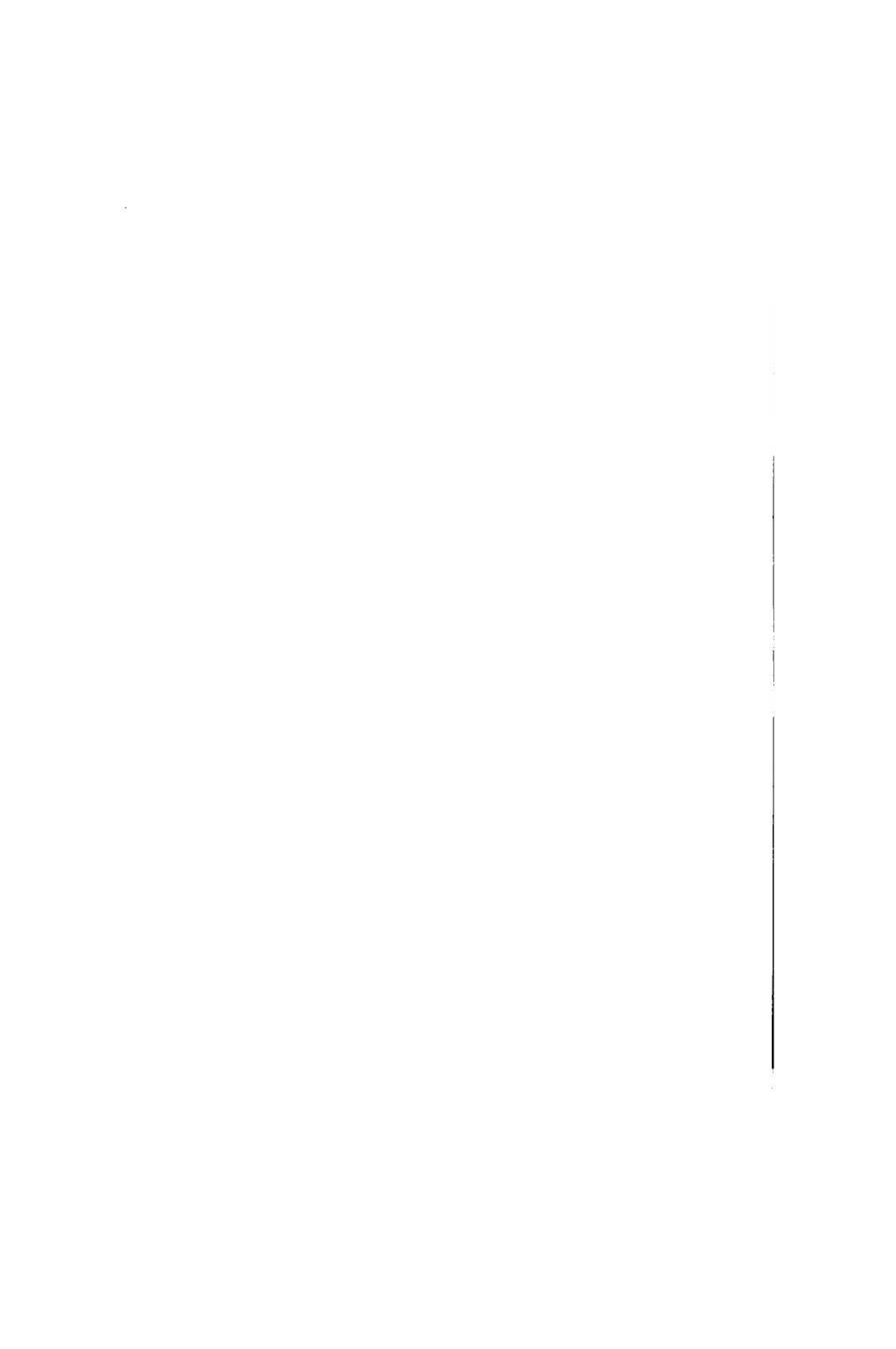
Mr. TOMLINSON. The 28th of September last.

The CHAIRMAN. I had the pleasure of writing a letter to Mr. M. J. Sanders, who, I believe, is the Federal manager.

Mr. TOMLINSON. Of the Mississippi section; yes.

The CHAIRMAN. On the lower Mississippi section. I suggested to him that he be as active as his time would permit in urging upon the cities and towns on the Mississippi between St. Louis and New Orleans the construction of adequate water terminals, and he replied that he had already been engaged in that activity and proposed to continue. Have you any present information as to the condition of terminals in the several cities and towns on the Mississippi River between St. Louis and New Orleans, or any prospective activity in their construction?

Mr. TOMLINSON. The prospective activity exists in nearly all of the larger river towns. Memphis is quite active at the present time,



and Mr. Sanders has just left here to make a tour of the river and endeavor to stimulate interest. Of course, the terminals at St. Louis and East St. Louis are or will be adequate immediately. The one in St. Louis is not completed; the one at East St. Louis is very well adapted for the needs of our service, and, as everyone knows, New Orleans, with some additions in the methods of handling, will be one of the best and most modern of our ports.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand you to say that the water terminal at East St. Louis is completed?

Mr. TOMLINSON. We are using that now. The Railroad Administration, I might say—that is, part of the barges from the Kansas City & Missouri Navigation Co.—are using that now rather more than on the St. Louis side.

Mr. OSBORNE. I notice, Mr. Chairman, that the present tonnage of that project is 298,000. I would like to ask, Mr. Tomlinson when this new barge line went into operation?

Mr. TOMLINSON. September 28 was the first sailing from St. Louis.

Mr. OSBORNE. So that none of that is included here?

Mr. TOMLINSON. No, sir.

Mr. OSBORNE. And I presume that will add considerable to this total tonnage given here?

Mr. TOMLINSON. Yes, sir. The weekly southbound, offhand—I should like an opportunity of giving that accurately—I should say would be 4,000 or 5,000 tons when we operate capacity. I refer to the present fleet, owned and leased, and not including the barges we are having constructed, the 6 steel steamers and 40 barges.

Mr. OSBORNE. That would be additional to this present tonnage?

Mr. TOMLINSON. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I would say to Mr. Osborne that the commerce on this section of the Mississippi which he was quoting was for the calendar year 1917.

Mr. OSBORNE. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. While we are on this, I will read to the committee, and suggest it be made a part of the record, a letter from Gen. Bixby, who was, in the past and may be still so far as I am advised, president of the Mississippi River Commission. The letter is addressed to the chairman, dated November 7. It says:

Referring to past correspondence or conversation concerning development of commerce on the Mississippi River, I inclose you herewith a brief statement as to new developments on the river, by which a both-ways transportation is being established, with coal downstream and aluminum ore upstream.

The statement inclosed reads:

Within the last few weeks an arrangement has been made by the Pittsburgh Coal Co. with the Southern Coal, Coke & Mining Co., of St. Louis, by which the latter will take over the Memphis, Baton Rouge, and Plaquemine branches of the former; and a contract for 10 years has been closed with the Aluminum Ore Co., whereby the barges of the latter, formerly sent downstream empty, will now be sent downstream loaded with Illinois coal from the large mining properties of the Southern Coal, Coke & Mining Co. By this arrangement a both-ways barge transportation service will be permanently established, carrying Illinois coal downstream to Southern States and aluminum ore upstream from Southern States to factories in Northern States.

As a start, the Southern Coal, Coke & Mining Co. expect to send downstream 100,000 tons of coal annually for distribution through the Memphis territory and to railroads and general trade on both banks of the Mississippi. At present this company has its own river tipple at East St. Louis for the loading of

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coal, and they will utilize the old Pittsburgh Coal Co. elevator at Memphis to unload the coal and shift it to the upper levels of the city of Memphis; and they will also be able to make use of the Aluminum Ore Co. unloading bridge on the Arkansas side of the Mississippi immediately below Memphis, by which coal can be unloaded direct from the river craft to railroad cars and delivered to all the railroads on the west bank of the Mississippi. Later arrangements are expected to be made for sending these loaded coal barges farther down the Mississippi, to Baton Rouge and Plaquemine, from which it can be distributed by rail to inland points on both banks of the river, utilizing the empty barges on their way upstream to take care of intermediate trade.

The State of Illinois has an almost unlimited supply of coal within easy railroad access to the St. Louis terminal, and the United States Fuel Administration allows the shipping of the Illinois coal into Memphis and the lower Mississippi.

Such arrangement for sending Illinois coal down the Mississippi is exceedingly fortunate, especially at the present time when Pittsburgh and the upper Ohio River territory is practically monopolizing all spare coal of western Pennsylvania and eastern Kentucky; and the new both-ways ore transportation barge service thus established starts under conditions which give every prospect of permanency and profit to all concerned.

WM. H. BERRY,

President Mississippi River Commission.

Now, Mr. Dempsey, unless some other member of the committee has some question to ask about the Mississippi, you may proceed.

Mr. DEMPSEY. Mr. Tomlinson, the Federal Government took over the Erie Canal, didn't it?

Mr. TOMLINSON. No, sir.

Mr. DEMPSEY. I thought they took over the management of the running of the Erie Canal at one time?

Mr. TOMLINSON. No, sir. The Federal Government leased power boats and barges and let barge contracts for additional barges to be operated on the New York Barge Canal.

Mr. DEMPSEY. And the Government did not assume to do anything except undertake the construction of some barges to be operated on the canal?

Mr. TOMLINSON. The Railroad Administration you mean, Mr. Dempsey?

Mr. DEMPSEY. Yes.

Mr. TOMLINSON. The Railroad Administration's functions are only those of an individual on the New York Barge Canal. We are simply operating a fleet of vessels on the canal.

Mr. DEMPSEY. Are the vessels they operate those simply which they have constructed, or did they purchase vessels?

Mr. TOMLINSON. They have purchased only three vessels at the present time. They leased the existing facilities of the old type of Erie Canal boats. That is the only type there is on the canal.

Mr. DEMPSEY. Then they have simply leased existing boats; they did not construct any new boats?

Mr. TOMLINSON. They are constructing new barges. We have had eight of them delivered to us now, within the last 30 days.

Mr. DEMPSEY. What is the type of boat which they are constructing?

Mr. TOMLINSON. It is a 650-ton type.

Mr. DEMPSEY. What is the size of that?

Mr. TOMLINSON. 150 by 22 by 12.

Mr. DEMPSEY. By "six hundred and fifty" you mean 650 tons?

Mr. TOMLINSON. Six hundred and fifty tons dead-weight, sir.

Mr. DEMPSEY. You say eight of those are about ready for delivery?