

It is unfortunate, however, that not only those seeking to improve our transportation facilities have realized these facts, but that others, whose whole aim is to take advantage of opportunities to enrich themselves, have taken hold of the question and are urging the adoption of projects of their own ostensibly for the benefit of the country, but really for their own financial gain, and carrying with their so-called improvement schemes, the danger of lowering the waters of the great lakes and imperilling navigation thereon.

In every country there are men who watch closely the progress of events, and they have taken cognizance of the movement to provide a deep waterway to the sea and have determined to use it for their own personal benefit without regard to whether or not what they are doing, or attempting to do, will result in injury to the people generally. Of such a character are the men who are seeking to exploit power schemes under the guise of the Georgian Bay canal and the lakes to the Gulf canal.

In walking down Woodward Avenue in the City of Detroit recently, my attention was called to a painting displayed in the window of an art studio depicting in vivid colors an attack by pirates upon a merchant vessel and the thought flashed through my mind that the men who to-day prey upon the public are more dangerous to the community than the pirates of the past, who at least risked their lives in their nefarious work.

The privateers and pirates of olden times are a thing of the past, but in our day their places have been taken by the buccaneers of finance who have adopted smoother and less dangerous methods, but are equally ruthless in their work when there is booty in sight for themselves.

Three different propositions for the construction of a deep waterway from the lakes to the ocean are prominently before us today. They are:

The Lakes to the Gulf Canal.

The Georgian Bay Canal.

The Development of the St. Lawrence Route.

I will deal with these propositions in the order in which they are named.

When the lakes to the gulf scheme was promulgated, it attracted wide attention and as a result of the publicity given it, the Federal Government of the United States appointed a commission, headed by Gen. W. H. Bixby, to make a thorough investigation of the project and at the same time they were directed to make a report on the proposition submitted by the State of Illinois for the extension of the drainage canal. It must be borne in mind that the proposed extension of the drainage canal has nothing to do with the lakes to the gulf canal scheme proper, although those who are urging the extension of the drainage canal advanced the argument that later on it could be deepened to 14 feet and ultimately to 24 feet and thus be utilized as the basis of the lakes to the gulf canal should that work ever be undertaken.

Two propositions were considered by the commission appointed by the Federal Government, viz.:

First: Calling for the construction of an eight foot waterway from Chicago to the Illinois River.

Second: The construction of a waterway of not less than 14 feet and eventually of 24 feet to the gulf.

The report of this commission was long since made to Congress and I ask you to carefully consider the conclusions arrived at and form your own opinion as to the possibilities of the lakes to the gulf scheme as a deep waterway to the sea.