

the proposition submitted by the state of Illinois for the extension of the drainage canal. It must be borne in mind that the extension of the drainage canal is an entirely different proposition from that of the lakes to the gulf canal proper, although the promoters of each of these schemes are using the argument that later on the drainage canal may form the first link in the lakes to the gulf canal should that work ever be undertaken.

Two propositions were given consideration by the commission appointed by the 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 from the lakes to the gulf of Mexico.

The report of this commission was presented to congress some time ago and we ask you to consider the conclusions arrived at, and decide for yourself as to the necessity for entering upon an aggressive campaign to check the adoption by the government of any project which, directly or indirectly, threatens to injuriously affect navigation on the great lakes and menace the welfare of the nation.

In their report on the first proposition the commission recommended the construction of an eight foot waterway from Chicago to the Illinois river, which it says is entirely feasible and would be a highway of great commercial value to the business of the middle west. Further along in this report the commission says:

"The work now proposed by the state of Illinois in connection with the canal of the Chicago sanitary district, contemplates a waterway from Lake Michigan to Utica, which although departing from the lines of the old canal, substitutes a waterway more than sufficient for any probable navigation. This will, in fact, fulfill the original agreement between the state and the government, and incidentally develop a waterpower which the state considers a profitable investment. The board believes that the state is more generous in its provisions for navigation than necessity requires, that the locks are larger than will be utilized, etc."

The two paragraphs referred to appear to be rather conflicting, as an eight foot waterway, which would be more than sufficient for any probable navigation, could not possibly prove to be a highway of great commercial value to the business of the middle west. As a matter of fact, on June 25th, 1908, the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, gave a decision denying the navigability of the drainage canal, and this decision was later affirmed by the Supreme Court of Illinois.

So far as the state of Illinois is concerned the gist of their proposition is contained in the statement "and incidentally develop a waterpower which the state considers a profitable investment." The promoters of the scheme for the extension of the drainage canal are not interested in furnishing transportation facilities; they want the development of a waterpower which will become a personal benefit to themselves; therefore the scheme must stand or fall upon its own merits as a power proposition, not as a portion of the lakes to the gulf canal.

The construction of the drainage canal resulted in an appreciable lowering of the lake levels, and its extension would still further affect lake levels and become a serious menace to navigation. As a result of recent activities on the part of the promoters of the scheme for the extension of the drainage canal, a further investigation has been made, and even the citizens of Chicago are protesting against any further lowering of the lake levels, and General Bixby has made a strong protest to members of congress on the subject, stating that any further diversion of water from the lakes would imperil navigation thereon. An eight foot canal would be useless for purposes of navigation in this day of large capacity vessels.

The second propositions calling for the construction of a deep waterway to the Gulf of Mexico is dismissed by the federal commission in very few words. The report reads: "A 24 foot waterway