

Senator NELSON. Some of the most beautiful scenery in all the Midwest is along this river.

Mr. TAYLOR. The gentleman from California.

Mr. JOHNSON. I have one question on the upper St. Croix, where the property is mostly owned by private enterprise, and you say certain amounts of properties were necessary and you would agree to it, and then others should be taken in the way of easements instead of fee title.

Do you know what—say the Federal Government wanted to purchase this other arrangement that is being talked over and it didn't work out and the Federal Government went in to purchase a certain amount of area there in fee, and then the Federal Government went in to secure easements. What would be the difference in price? Do you have any idea?

Mr. NELSON. It is a very difficult thing to estimate. It would depend upon what you are asking for, what right you are taking away from the owner with the easement. We have had in Wisconsin, I think, the original and the broadest experience with easement. We have bought 155 or 160 miles of easements on both sides of the road running along the Mississippi River below where the St. Croix comes in. This is part of the Mississippi scenic river road concept originated by some thoughtful people in 1919, I believe. We bought those easements and all we were asking from property owners was a scenic easement except for certain places where we bought a little land where we wanted picnic tables and overlooks. All we were saying to the owner was, we would like this preserved in perpetuity in its natural state. It remains yours under this agreement but you are selling to us in perpetuity the scenic beauty of it. You cannot cut down trees. You cannot put up a billboard. You cannot put on it any kind of a structure. You could cut a tree with our consent, so to speak, so all we were buying was the scenic beauty and in some areas where we needed it, we got some land in fee for picnic tables and so forth. The first few miles—something like the first 80 miles on both sides of the Mississippi starting down from near LaCrosse, Wis.—went for about \$700 a mile, which was very cheap.

We use easements in certain special situations, for example, where we find a trout stream springheads. The springhead is owned by a man and it has been in his family for many years. It is a beautiful spring. It is a nice little trout stream. He doesn't want to sell it. We really don't want to condemn it, although in our State the conservation department has the same power of condemnation that the highway department does except the highway department condemns and takes, whereas the conservation department has to condemn and settle the price before they can take.

We would go to these people and say, We want to preserve these springs and the integrity of this shoreline on both sides for 200 or 300 feet, and so we want to buy from you the right to protect it. You can't cut trees. You can't plat it. And hunters can use it.

Sometimes we paid half of the fee price value of it. Sometimes we paid as high as 75 percent, but we got all we wanted out of it. It may be better than an outright purchase because the property still remained on the tax rolls.