

It is of utmost importance at this particular moment and of interest to the committee, I have just received information that all reports involving these two projects are now in the hands of the Bureau of the Budget, where clearance is expected within a very, very short time.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the first witness I would ask, with your indulgence, to appear in connection with the first project is Mr. Joseph V. Ferguson, who is the attorney representing people in the Michoud area. If you will allow Mr. Ferguson to proceed as he desires, I would appreciate it.

Mr. BLATNIK. Mr. Ferguson, please take the witness chair.

Mr. Ferguson, Congressman Edwin Edwards of Louisiana is a member of the Rivers and Harbors Subcommittee and hoped to be here today. But because he was called out of town on an urgent matter he was not able to be present today. He has asked me to welcome you to the committee in his own behalf and to express his regret that he can't be here to personally welcome you.

Congressman Edwards has also requested that I state for the record on his behalf his support for the Mississippi gulf outlet and Michoud Canal project, and his desire to be of whatever assistance he can be. I assure you, as a member of the subcommittee and full committee, that he is, and has been, and will be of assistance. He is a very effective and respected member.

Mr. Ferguson, please proceed.

Mr. FERGUSON. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity of being permitted to appear before you on behalf of the several parties, landowners, and other interested people in the Michoud area.

We come before you to seek your approval for a modification for certain existing waterways in the eastern area of New Orleans. You will see from your record that we have had a report, a very favorable report, I might say, from the district engineer, and duly approved by the Chief of Engineers and Rivers and Harbors Board, and we have been before the Senate committee on this project.

The district engineer has estimated the cost of construction of this modification to be in the sum of \$1,300,000, exclusive of \$20,000 for aids to navigation and a very favorable cost-benefit ratio in the sum or in the ratio of 7-1, which I have been informed is a very high ratio for a project.

Now, in order that the committee may quickly familiarize themselves with the area, I have caused several exhibits to be prepared, and I would like to point them out to you.

This is the area which we are seeking a modification of these existing waterways [indicating].

This channel here is the present Mississippi River gulf outlet, a deep-water channel leading from the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to the Gulf of Mexico.

This is the existing Intracoastal Waterway which would be modified and deepened for an extent of approximately a mile here [indicating].

This is the existing Michoud Canal, which will be deepened and a turning basin constructed at the northern terminus of this canal.

Now subsequent to the preparation of the report by the district engineer, there have been some additional industrial developments in the area. And this photograph is a photograph taken in looking in a