

June 4, 1917.

Mr. Charles E. Davis, President,
National Highways Association,
"Elmwood", Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Sir:

Referring to your letter of May 15th, I beg to enclose herewith copy of letter written to President Wilson on letterhead supplied to us by you, which we hope is in order.

Referring to your letter of May 23rd. We quite appreciate your point that the minute anybody attempts to get appropriations for specific alignment, all other alignments join together to defeat such legislation. This would be very true if it were merely a question of building a highway between two different points. The military highway stands on its own basis and its alignment either justifies its construction by the government or it does not justify it. If it does justify it, no other combination of other highways should be able to defeat its being built by the government. If it does not justify it, no combination should be able to have it built by the government.

If you were down here and knew what a tremendous proposition it would be for the government to try to move troops from points between New Orleans and Mobile, Mobile and Pensacola, Pensacola and the Atlantic Coast, you would realize that there is every justification for the government taking over and building this highway, if there is any likelihood of troops having to be moved between these points.

One man, with a well placed bomb, can stop the moving of troops from Pensacola to Mobile for three days. There is only one railroad line connecting the two points, and the destruction of a bridge on this railroad line would mean that troops and supplies could not be moved. The distance, as the crow flies, is about sixty miles, and therefore it is quite feasible for transportation by foot, wagon and track. This by rail is ninety miles, and this is only a sample of conditions that prevail along every part of the coast.

Yours truly,

SECRETARY.

SALCB/MS