

MILLERS' ASSOCIATION AND THE TERMINALS WANT GOVERNMENT CONTROL

Mr. C. B. Watts, Secretary of the Dominion Millers' Association, on behalf of that body, submitted the following memorandum dealing with the terminals:—

Sir Richard Cartwright,
Minister of Trade and Commerce,
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Sir,—While there has been a certain improvement in the grain as it comes from the public elevator at Fort William and Port Arthur since the government took closer control, yet we regret to say that matters are not yet in a satisfactory condition.

There is a marked difference in the quality of the grain coming out of the privately owned and operated terminal elevators, as compared with the C.P.R., both dealers and millers telling me that the wheat out of the C.P.R. is on an average $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1c. bushel—and sometimes the difference is considerably greater than this—better value than out of the elevators owned and operated by firms interested in the buying and selling of grain.

All the terminal elevators except those owned by the C.P.R. are operated by men who are dealing in grain, and are largely controlled by United States concerns and managed by experts from across the line. We are strongly of the opinion that it is not in the best interest of either the farmers, millers or exporters that the terminal elevators should be in the hands of parties interested in the buying and selling of grain, and we believe that the only way in which the best interests of all parties can be served and the high reputation of Manitoba wheat preserved is for the government to operate the terminal elevators, acquiring them by lease or purchase.

Private individuals can make far more money by handling and manipulating grain than they can by the legitimate elevation and storage of grain, which should not be allowed, as they should be warehousemen pure and simple and have no interest in the grain in any way, shape or form outside the authorized charges, which pay a very handsome return on the capital invested.

I beg to submit the following figures for your consideration:

During the year ending 10th December, 1908,	
there has been over 80,000,000 bushels put	
through the elevators, which at $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per bus.	
would make	\$ 600,000
In store January 1st, which will remain in for	
say 4 months, 7,000,000 bus. at $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per bus.	332,500
Say 3,000,000 bus. more before navigation opens	
remaining in for say $\frac{1}{2}$ c.	82,500
Total	\$1,015,000

This does not take into account the extra storage which undoubtedly was earned on a large portion of the 80,000,000 bus. which was shipped directly through the elevators, storage on which would be 1-30 cent. per day, or 1c. bushel per month after the first fifteen days' free storage expired.

STORAGE PROFITABLE.

That the storage business at Fort William must be a very profitable one is shown by comparison of the rates charged at Fort William with those at the elevators this side the lakes:

Rates at Fort William from say 1st December to 14th March:—

Elevation and fifteen days' free storage $\frac{1}{2}$ c., and	
1-30c. per day for 4 months on 1,000,000 bus.	
total $\frac{1}{2}$ c. bus.	\$47,500
Elevator rates this side the lakes from 1st December to 1st May, including $\frac{1}{2}$ c. bus. elevation $\frac{1}{2}$ c. bus. 1,000,000 bus.	15,000

Extra charge at Fort William on 1,000,000 bus.... \$32,500
or on 10,000,000 bus., \$325,000.

Government operation of the elevators would not only prevent the selection of the grade alleged to take place in the elevators outside the C.P.R. at Fort William, by which No. 2 Northern, or No. 3 Northern or other grades may be delivered to their clients worth 2c. bushel more than to another client—or by which they can ship out on their own sales wheat worth 2c. bushel more than they deliver to their rival dealers, and still deliver the grade called for by the Government certificate—but it would solve the troublesome question of the delay in loading boats, and also the shortage in weight question, both of which are thought to be largely due to the fact that the boats have to take on their loads at so many different elevators that it is impossible to locate the elevator which gave short weight.

In this connection a good suggestion has just been made that the weighers in the elevators this side the lakes should all be government weighers and should do all the weighing and the elevator owners could have their own checkers if they wished. In this way—it would be a disinterested party who would weigh the grain out of the boats into the elevators and into the cars, and if all the grain was weighed by the government weighers the fee could be reduced much below what is charged at present where they only weigh such grain as they are requested to do.

The government is adopting the principle of government ownership of elevators by erecting a large storage

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