

The Grain Blockade

The tie-up in the Grain Movement is becoming very serious, due largely to congestion at Fort William. The C.P.R. have placed an embargo on Flax until November 25, and a partial embargo on all other Grain. The congestion at Buffalo is serious.

Buffalo Congested

(Free Press Dispatch.)

Buffalo, N.Y., Nov. 20.—The grain congestion at the Port of Buffalo is becoming more serious as the hours advance, for today 4,000,000 bushels of grain are afloat in vessels outside of the breakwater waiting to enter the harbor to the elevators. Of this 4,000,000, 1,440,000 bushels are Canadian grain divided among several boats as follows: Omega, 130,000 bushels; Carnegie, 230,000; Leopold, 330,000; Sylvia, 350,000; Brantford, 100,000; Hefelfinger, 240,000, and Whitney 240,000 bushels.

The railroads are unable to supply sufficient cars to carry the Canadian grain in the packed Buffalo elevators to New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore.

It was stated this afternoon to the Free Press special correspondent that the railroads had placed an embargo on all shipments from Western Canadian ports to the lower lake ports, thereby tying up the trade. Farmers in the Western Canadian wheat region are laying the cause of the congestion to Buffalo, although the Lake Carriers' Grain association stated today that the congestion is not as serious as reported, and would be relieved in a few days. It is now requiring six to ten days to unload each boat that enters the port. Eleven large carriers of Canadian grain were unloaded here Tuesday and this afternoon three boats were lightened. This afternoon elevators in operation unloading Canadian wheat were Wheeler, Kellogg connecting terminal, Mutual Electric, Erie and the Eastern.

The railroads deny there is serious car shortage and they say they are making the supply according to good judgment; however, it is certain that Canadian grain is being shipped from Buffalo just as fast as cars can be secured to the ocean ports by rail. Last week 6,116,441 bushels of grain were elevated and three weeks ago 7,104,144 bushels were unloaded at local elevators. All elevators tonight are filled to overflowing with Canadian grain.

Conditions at Duluth

Duluth, Nov. 20.—Assurance of the effort that is to be made to handle all grain that may come to this port this winter is given in the movement begun today to extend shipping season until December 10, or five days longer than has been provided for even with the unusual extension of time already arranged. Many vessels will be unable to give this extended service owing to clauses in their insurance and the prohibitory rates demanded for post-season protection, but there is a considerable fleet which can take advantage of the extension, and this should make a decided difference in the space in local elevators available for incoming grain.

Figures reported today show that Monday brought the largest outloading of grain from any one house at head of lakes, when 1,017,000 bushels went out of the Great Northern elevators. Yesterday 1,250,000 bushels left the harbor, and today's shipments are estimated at over 1,500,000. Rate now is 2 1/4 cents to Buffalo, with no indication of increase.

Pittsburgh Steamship Co. finished ore loading today, but several independents will continue to carry ore until season closes.

Vice-President Bury Talks

Winnipeg, Nov. 21.—"There is no embargo on loading grain on the Canadian Pacific railway lines. I wish to make that point clear," said Vice-President Bury yesterday afternoon on his arrival from Fort William, where he had been in conference with railway and terminal elevator officials.

"The situation is that we have lessened the loading of grain, to correspond with the rapidity with which it is taken away from the head of the lakes."

He stated that there is no embargo

today on loading wheat, oats or barley; that agents had been told, however, not to load flax for delivery to the Canadian head of the lakes until November 25, but to supply American routing cars to any shipper who desired to forward his flax to Duluth during that period.

Asked as to the reasons why this step was taken he stated that there are more cars on hand today loaded with flax than the elevators at Fort William and Port Arthur could handle by the end of the month.

Speaking in response to a request for a summary of the situation he stated that the Canadian Pacific had been loading over 800 cars of grain daily, and so long as the grain was taken away freely from the elevators this movement could be kept up. The grain has poured into the elevators much faster than the vessels took it away. With the diversity of grades, amount of cleaning to be done, as the elevators filled, their capacity for unloading has gradually lessened until the unloading there dropped to between 450 and 600.

"If the grain is loaded at the rate of 800 cars daily and poured into the head of the lakes, it does not take very much figuring to see what will happen if the vessels are not there to take it away," said Mr. Bury.

He said he is advised that a fleet of boats is on the way and as soon as they relieve the elevators the grain loading in the country will be pushed up to where it was before.

"It must be borne in mind that while the movement is lessened temporarily it is still one-third greater than it was one year ago. Cars are distributed with a view to loading an equal percentage of grain to that marketed from the three prairie provinces. Today the percentage of grain loaded to that marketed on the C.P.R., in the three prairie provinces is as follows: Manitoba, 72 per cent.; Saskatchewan, 70 per cent.; Alberta, 70 per cent."

Rush Loading

It was officially stated at the C.P.R. offices this morning that the grain loading on the company's lines during the next few days would be 30 per cent. higher than it had been during the corresponding period last year. It was further said that the company had 913 cars inspected in Winnipeg yesterday, and 1,097 were sent east in addition to 94 empties. It was pointed out that the company was forced to place a temporary embargo on flax as it was impossible to keep up the pace of unloading from 950 to 1,000 cars daily at the head of the lakes. This is what the C.P.R. had been doing lately, but it could not keep up this rate.

While the situation has been becoming serious at the head of the lakes, the officials of the company hoped that the situation would be relieved today, as a number of vessels were expected in to take away the grain. The strike at Fort William has embarrassed the C.P.R. to a great extent, but at the present time practically all the important positions had been filled. W. H. Skene, who was chief clerk before the trouble began, has been appointed grain agent, with the result that the work is now going along smoothly in that department. There still remain two important positions to fill in the freight department, but it is expected that men will be found to take them either today or tomorrow. The majority of the men who went on strike have applied for reinstatement; five or six returned on Monday and a similar number went back yesterday. All who wish to do so can return, with the exception of three or four of the ringleaders.

Over 66,000,000 Bushels Marketed

Up to date the C.P.R. has marketed 66,885,000 bushels of grain in the West, as against a total of 52,227,000 bushels during the same period last year. Ince September 1, 23,594 cars of wheat have been loaded direct from the elevators, and 5,907 cars of other grains. Dur-

ing the same period 7,766 cars of wheat have been loaded direct from the farmers, while the total number of cars of other grains loaded has reached 1,717.

Altogether yesterday the company loaded 560 cars of grain, as against a total of 413 on the same date last year.

Boats Needed

Fort William, Ont., Nov. 20.—Given the bottoms, Fort William can handle grain faster than all the railroads can bring it to the head of the lakes, was the reassuring declaration made today by F. W. Young, general manager of the Lake Shippers' Clearance association.

Mr. Young states that there is nothing in the present situation to inspire a panicky feeling and that while there is a much larger quantity of grain in store here there is still room for as much more.

Nearly 1,500,000 bushels is pouring into the holds of boats from the elevator spouts and a fairly good sized fleet is anticipated tomorrow.

Rates this year are much higher than they were one year ago and lake shippers are getting about all the traffic they will stand for moving grain down the lakes.

There is, however, little doubt that the movement this year has not been as brisk as it might have been. This is a condition over which shippers, elevator men and transportation interests have no control. The market being a falling one, growers are not anxious to sell on a falling market, and are holding for a stronger market. The holding is done largely in the terminal elevators, and it is this fact that is mainly responsible for the unusually large quantity in store here.

According to figures compiled by the Clearance association, the quantities of grain in store at the head of the lakes today is estimated to be as follows: Wheat, 10,000,000 bushels; oats, 2,500,000; barley, 1,200,000; flax, 1,235,000. Total storage capacity of the terminal elevator plants is estimated at 25,000,000 bushels.

Grain Commission Active

Ottawa, Nov. 20.—In view of the report from Fort William and Winnipeg that the Canadian Pacific railway had placed an embargo on the loading of grain, the Board of Grain Commissioners of Canada, Dr. R. Magill and Mr. W. D. Staples, telegraphed today to Mr. George Bury, superintendent of the Canadian Pacific railway at Winnipeg, asking for information.

Mr. Bury sent a reply, which is identical with the interview furnished the Free Press as above.

With regard to this reply, the commissioners have authorized the following statement: "The embargo on flax at this time of year is, of course, a serious matter, and illustrates the fact that lake tonnage is the most important cause of the situation. The removal of the embargo on the 25th November will, however, relieve matters. The movement of grain from the West to terminals this year is unique, surpassing the capacity of the vessels taking freight to Eastern ports."

INVESTIGATE ELECTION CHARGES

Regina, Sask., Nov. 21.—Premier Scott gave notice in the legislature today that on Monday he will move that an inquiry be made immediately into what is described as the illegal interference of the Dominion government in the last Saskatchewan campaign, and also into Hon. Robert Rogers' charges against the provincial government.

The premier's motion is lengthy, covering four pages of foolscap. It declares that the Dominion government did by unconstitutional and illegal methods participate in the last Saskatchewan campaign, in the interests of one of the parties. This interference is referred to as indicating a radically new and dangerous policy in regard to the relations between the Dominion and provincial governments.

Hon. Robert Rogers is specially mentioned as having made certain statements subsequent to the election which, "if true, indicate the existence in Saskatchewan of a dangerous condition, and if false, constitute a grave defamation of the entire province." The special standing committee on privileges and elections will make the inquiry.

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