

HUGE WHEAT SALE TO U.S.S.R.

Mr. Otto Lang, the Cabinet Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, made the following announcement in the House of Commons on December 15:

I wish to inform the House that the Canadian Wheat Board today announced the conclusion of a contract with V/O Exportkhleb, the official grain-purchasing agency of the U.S.S.R., for the sale of 3,430,000 long tons of wheat and flour.

This quantity represents the remaining obligations of V/O Exportkhleb and the Canadian Wheat Board covered in the long-term agreement entered into in June 1966, after allowance for buyers' shipping tolerance provided for in that agreement.

The contract provides that 2 million long tons, including 260,000 long tons of flour for shipment to Cuba, will be shipped prior to December 31, 1970. The contract further provides that, in complete fulfilment of the master agreement of June 14, 1966, V/O Exportkhleb will endeavor to buy the remaining quantity of about 1,430,000 long tons as soon as possible.

Some shipments will commence immediately and the majority of the wheat shipments will be completed prior to the end of the current crop year on July 31,

1970. The contract provides for shipment from all Canadian port areas, including the Pacific Coast, Churchill, Lakehead, St. Lawrence and Atlantic ports. The grades will be mainly No. 3 Manitoba Northern and No. 4 Manitoba Northern.

The export dollar value of the 2 million tons of wheat and flour now programmed for shipment in 1970 will be over \$130 million.

To clarify these figures - 3,430,000 long tons is equivalent to about 128 million bushels.

Honorable Members will remember that a quantity of 135 million bushels has been commonly mentioned as representing the outstanding Russian commitment. There was, however, a sale of flour last April, not previously announced, equivalent to about 8 million bushels, which accounts for the difference. The 2 million tons programmed for shipment commencing immediately is equivalent to about 75 million bushels....

The delivery program for the first 75 million bushels ensures a good movement of wheat to West Coast and Eastern ports, including Halifax and Saint John, throughout the winter. In fact a number of vessels are at present proceeding to St. Lawrence ports, and will be loading before the end of this month....

CANADIAN FURS

God's Narrows, Coppermine, Lac du Brochet are some of the outposts of Canada's last frontier, which exist primarily to fill the demand for elegant furs.

Although the trapper continues to play an important part in the fur industry, the less colorful fur farmer has become the main supplier of pelts. Fur farmers are, in fact, earning more than 60 per cent of the money the fur industry spends annually.

More than 99 per cent of the farm-raised pelts are mink. Other furs, such as fox, beaver, marten, fisher, wild mink and otter, come from the wilderness, thanks to the persistence and skill of a handful of trappers. Almost every part of Canada contributes to the fur "harvest".

The Canada majestic mink - known internationally for its dense, silky pelt, which occurs in a wealth of natural colors that would have amazed the early fur-traders - is produced on farms located across Central and Southern Canada from coast to coast. Trappers still take fox, mink, beaver, otter and muskrat pelts in the same regions.

It is further north, however, in a territory three-quarters of Canada, that the most expensive pelts are taken. These luxurious furs created and maintain Canada's centuries-old tradition of excellence.

The trapper operates from an isolated cabin deep in the northern woods. His work begins when lakes and rivers freeze and deep snow falls. His "crop",

"harvested" in successive rounds of the trap line, is the soft pelts turned dense and silky by the crisp northern winter.



Buyer inspects fox pelts at fur auction.

From the beginnings of the fur trade in the sixteenth century until the early 1900s, most of the Canadian fur crop was sold in Europe.

In 1920, the first Canadian fur-auction company opened in Montreal. Fur auctions spread to five other Canadian cities shortly afterwards and today most of the annual production is sold by auction in Montreal, North Bay, Winnipeg, Regina, Edmonton and Vancouver.

(This article is the first of a series on the Canadian fur industry and fur-bearing animals.)