

The Address—Mr. Bater

siderably more tough grain. More tough grain is being brought into the elevators than we used to have when we harvested with the binder in the old days. I would suggest that throughout western Canada more drying facilities should be installed, more internal storage facilities. In connection with internal storage facilities, I hold in my hand a memorandum which I should like to place on *Hansard*. I will not take the time to read it, but with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to have it included in my remarks. It is entitled: "Memorandum re grain handling in northwestern Saskatchewan".

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Bater: The memorandum is as follows:

Memorandum re Grain Handling in
Northwestern Saskatchewan

Practically every fall prior to the last few drought years and again in the year 1939 farmers of northwestern Saskatchewan have been faced with the problem of congestion of grain and with embargoes. Railway officials have done everything possible with the facilities at their disposal to cope with the situation and conditions have been relieved from time to time, but the opinion is strongly held that a more permanent remedy should be effected and that storage facilities should be established at a nearby central point in order that grain can be expeditiously moved from country elevators to an internal storage elevator during the threshing season.

In the southern part of the province harvest is usually two to three weeks earlier than in the northern part, with the result that when the bulk of the crop in the north is ready to be moved congestion and car shortage have already developed.

Modern methods of harvesting have speeded up delivery of grain to such an extent that it is impossible for the railways to move the grain to the head of the lakes and other ports as fast as the farmers deliver it to the country elevators. Now that the Hudson bay route is in operation it is desirable that the larger portion of the crop be retained within the province, in order that exporters may have the option of moving the grain to any one of the three chief grain routes. As North Battleford, in addition to being the logical centre to serve north-western Saskatchewan, is the most centrally located city in western Canada from a railway standpoint, being 1005 miles from the head of the lakes, 1017 miles from Vancouver and 883 miles from Churchill, it would be a decided advantage to exporters to have grain stored here, as it could then be forwarded to any one of three ports without incurring the expense of a back-haul.

In addition there are delivered to country elevators large quantities of coarse grains (particularly oats which are raised extensively between North Battleford and the Alberta boundary) for which the principal market is within the province and it is desirable that such grains should be stored as near to the area of production as possible, in order that they may be delivered economically to the purchaser.

Another important consideration is that of retaining in the district the by-products of the internal storage elevators, thereby making available to farmers a larger quantity of cheap feed.

[Mr. Bater.]

The city of North Battleford is well served by railways and highways from all parts of northwestern Saskatchewan. The railways which converge here are as follows:

Canadian National Railways

- (a) From Radisson in the southeast.
- (b) From Lloydminster, west-northwest.
- (c) From St. Walburg and Frenchman Butte in the northwest.
- (d) From Medstead, north.
- (e) Loop line via Rabbit Lake and Speers.
- (f) From Blaine Lake, northeast.
- (g) From Biggar, south.
- (h) From Carruthers, west.

Canadian Pacific Railway

- (a) From Meadow Lake in the north.
- (b) From Ravenhead and Redfield, north-east.
- (c) From Marsden and Cut Knife, west.
- (d) From Wilkie, south-west.

The highways leading into North Battleford are:

- (a) No. 4—from the north and south.
- (b) No. 5—from the south-east and west-north-west.
- (c) No. 26—from the north-west.
- (d) No. 29—from the south-west.
- (e) No. 40—from the west and from the north-east.

Much of the agricultural development of recent years in Saskatchewan has been north and north-west of the city of North Battleford. According to the 1936 census the population between 1931 and 1936 in what is described as the "prairie" portion of Saskatchewan decreased by 7.8 per cent, while the population in what is described as the "park" portion of the province increased by 10.8 per cent, the larger population now being in the "park" portion, namely, 483,090, as against 447,887 in the "prairie" portion. In the North Battleford federal riding the population increased from 41,513 in 1931 to 55,350 in 1936, an increase of 33.33 per cent. In The Battlefords federal riding in the same period the population increased from 45,064 to 48,913, an increase of 8.54 per cent. The movement to the north is still in progress.

Agricultural development extends many more miles farther north on the west side of the province than on the east side and the need of more facilities for handling grain in the north-west is very urgent.

As the Hon. J. G. Gardiner, federal Minister of Agriculture is reported to have stated on April 24th, 1940, at Melville, Sask., "that 1940 would be one of the toughest years in history for disposing of agricultural surpluses," this would appear to be an added reason for erecting an internal storage elevator at North Battleford in which to store some of the surplus grains of the north-west part of Saskatchewan.

The city of North Battleford serves a sufficiently large territory to warrant the erection of an internal storage elevator of three to five million bushels capacity. It is estimated that even in years of light delivery an interval storage elevator of the size stated would be used to full capacity, and there is every indication that such an elevator would be self-supporting.

A suitable site on trackage would be available at reasonable cost. Electrical energy and adequate supply of good water would be available at favourable rates. In the event of a pipe line being installed to supply North Battleford with natural gas from Lloydminster (which is probable) or other natural gas fields which may be subsequently developed a very cheap supply of power would be available and there would be a tendency to lower the already low cost of providing electrical energy.