

BLAIR TO SHAUGHNESSY

The Minister of Railways' Reply to the President of the C. P. R.

Mr. Blair Complains that the C. P. R. Has Not Given Him Enough Time - What the Minister Has to Say.

WOODSTOCK, Sept. 19.—Hon. Mr. Blair was seen tonight in reference to the letter which Mr. Shaughnessy has given to the press.

The following is the reply of the minister of railways to Mr. Shaughnessy, mailed Tuesday, and received at Montreal Wednesday morning:

"At St. Stephen, N. B., Sept. 19, 1900.

"My Dear Mr. Shaughnessy—I have been unavoidably delayed in acknowledging and replying to your favor of the 13th inst. with reference to the transfer of your export traffic to Intercolonial at Montreal, and I have only just now concluded my conferences with my officers and the general manager. The proposition you make, as I understand it, to deliver to us at Cartier Junction the traffic you have been heretofore carrying to St. John for export, is one which, with some minor modifications, I am bound to say has much to commend it to favorable consideration. The arrangement of details to ensure a satisfactory working agreement, and the necessary preparations which the Intercolonial would have to make to enable it to handle so large an additional traffic, would require time to adjust and provide for. Your suggestion that I should let you know inside of 12 or 15 days whether the Intercolonial is not prepared to enter into a binding agreement with you to take care of this traffic during the approaching winter, you must, from the standpoint of the Intercolonial, see does not afford adequate time in which to complete the negotiations necessary before such a contract should be concluded. The volume of your traffic last year east bound for export aggregated 200,000 tons. To add such an enormous business to the normal traffic of the Intercolonial would involve the settlement of many details. Let me enumerate them:

"First, your suggestion is based upon the condition that we should make with your company an agreement on the basis of that existing between the Grand Trunk and the Intercolonial for export traffic. This would be satisfactory if you make the conditions identical, or nearly so, and in order that we may be on as good a footing in a financial sense, carrying your merchandise as we are with respect to any we may receive from the Grand Trunk, we would require you to deliver to us at Ste. Rosalie, rather than at Jacques Cartier Junction. This is a minor detail, however, which we could, I have no doubt, after discussion, arrange between us.

"Second, our facilities at St. John, which are approaching completion and which will be ready for winter business, would be quite insufficient to handle anything like the large volume of business you propose to turn over to us. As a consequence, we should have to discuss with you, and also with the bridge company, the terms upon which we could utilize your works on the west side of the harbor, and the bridge and the tracks. Upon the assumption that you are retiring from the export business at St. John, this would be practicable, but some necessary arrangements would require to be made for taking over, either temporarily or permanently, your west side facilities, with the Carleton bridge and connecting tracks, and in this regard I presume the corporation of St. John would be able to have a say as to the property which they have constructed and placed at your disposal, and following the results of our arrangement parliamentary action would have to be had to enable us to legalize and effectuate such agreement as we might make.

"Third, as a sub-question, and perhaps involved in the above, the terms upon which the use of the bridge could be acquired is a matter of importance. The charges now made for crossing the bridge by the bridge company, and the charges for the miles of track which we would have to use to reach the west side terminals, would involve to the Intercolonial an additional cost, as against east side shipments, of over \$1 per ton. This is an expense which your company avoid, as you are not under the necessity of crossing the bridge, and \$1 per ton taken off the rate which you propose to us would be a very considerable item, and would necessitate our endeavoring to secure the bridge upon terms entirely different from any which the bridge company have heretofore been willing to concede.

"Fourth, the Canadian Pacific has reached its present capacity for handling the considerable tonnage which you were able to take care of last winter as the result of years of organized work, and is the growth of time. To cast upon the Intercolonial the responsibility of handling 200,000 tons of additional freight beyond its ordinary business during the approaching winter, and to do which you would bind us to undertake in a manner satisfactory to shippers, is such a large problem that months would be required of vigorous preparation to justify us in assuming it. Our present locomotive and car equipment is really not sufficient to handle the ordinary business which now comes to us, and I have been making strenuous efforts to increase our capacity for the purposes of this normal business. I have had no parliamentary authority to incur expense this year to take up such a burden as would suggest we might assume. I quite understand that in the matter of care you would not doubt be willing to furnish these on the usual car mileage terms, but we would require a number of additional locomotives, besides securing a sufficient and organized staff to handle business.

"Fifth, there would still remain the problem of making arrangements with shipping companies for the ocean transport of this traffic, and you would realize as fully as the traffic officers of the Intercolonial do, the

impossibility of effecting such arrangement on 12 or 15 days' notice.

"Sixth, I have assumed that you propose to hand us over all the export traffic you can secure. Possibly I may be in error in this, and if I am, there is the more reason for our coming to an implicit understanding upon this question, which can only be arrived at after much thought and discussion. In your letter to me of the 3rd you speak of your being under the necessity of discontinuing export business from St. John in the manner and to the extent you have heretofore carried on that business. There is here an implied reservation, if not an express one, that part of the business you would retain. We would naturally have to discuss between us what is the portion of this business you contemplate reserving for your company. Export business consists of various classes, some of which are better paying than others, and it is only when the general traffic includes both the less profitable and the more profitable that average results are obtained, which make it possible for the railway to transact the business. You would be the first to acknowledge that an offer to us of the unprofitable business, while you retain the profitable portion, could not be entered into and would not be in accordance with either the letter or spirit of the suggestion that we should get your export traffic on the same basis as is provided for in our agreement with the Grand Trunk. All the above considerations, it appears to me, are of point to one conclusion. That your company should have decided months ago what would intimate now you have decided, that the relations of the government railway with your company render it necessary for you to withdraw from the export business at St. John. In such a view, the conclusion would have likely forced itself upon you months ago, and when you did so decide, it would have been better to have at once made such a proposition to us as is contained in your letter of the 13th inst.

"Had that been done, we could then have debated the whole question with you, doubtless have come to a conclusion upon it, procured the necessary parliamentary authority, have increased our equipment and got into a shape in which we could have undertaken the business. Upon the whole, and treating your proposal seriously, I would suggest that you continue the export business this winter as usual, and I will be prepared during the coming season to take your proposition up and make an honest effort to come to an agreement upon fair and reasonable terms.

"Yours faithfully, (Signed) A. G. BLAIR."

QUEEN'S CAMPAIGN.

J. B. Hazen, M. P. P. and H. B. Hetherington, at Codys.

Address a Large and Enthusiastic Gathering of the Electors—McKeown's Cold Reception.

CODY'S, Queens Co., Sept. 20.—Representative and very enthusiastic public meeting in the interests of the liberal conservative party was held in the public hall at Cody's tonight.

The Hon. Sir W. Laurier: Dear Sir—The president of the C. P. railway has lately had an interview with me, at which he stated, as well as the members of the board of trade, were present, with reference to the continuation of the port of St. John for winter port business. A full copy of the interview has been forwarded to you for your information, and you will learn the points of dispute between the department of railways and the C. P. R. The Hon. Mr. Shaughnessy is of the opinion that the government should assist him in the carrying out of his project, and that the government should not throw difficulties in the way. The attitude of our government at this stage there should arise any doubt of the sincerity of our intentions, and for which they have made such immense financial sacrifices, about \$750,000, and more, in the winter port business. The withdrawal of this business would be viewed in the light of a complete abandonment of the project, and would be a most regrettable act. Since this business was first started here, there has been a large and constant growth, every winter being marked by a great increase in the tonnage exported, so that last winter nearly 300,000 tons of goods were shipped, as against about 45,000 tons four seasons previously, and evincing points to a gradual but immense development.

I have seen it stated that this matter is still the subject of negotiation between the government and the C. P. R. Mr. Shaughnessy intimates that he knows of no negotiation at present, and so the matter appears to be still in limbo. I take the liberty, as mayor, of calling attention to the fact that the government, which you are the distinguished leader, will in the settlement of this matter, as between the C. P. R. and the C. P. R., not forget the great and important interests of this city, and the promotion of this really national undertaking. I have the honor to be, sir, Your obedient servant, J. W. DANIEL, Mayor.

"To that letter the following reply was received by the mayor: AETHABASKVILLE, July 30, 1900. Dear Sir—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 25th inst. I have also received the report of the interview of Mr. Shaughnessy with yourself, a number of the aldermen and president of the board of trade of St. John. The matter therein referred to is now engaging the attention of the government. The question is that the C. P. R. company object to the present condition of things and would like to direct their business to some place which now exist in order to continue their present system of winter port at St. John, and that in all preceding the case in any way, I can say at this moment, that it is enjoying our most serious attention. Yours sincerely, WILFRID LAURIER.

"As soon as Hon. Mr. Blair reached St. John, after his arrival from England, the mayor waited on him and requested an interview for your committee. The minister stated that he was too busy to grant an interview at that time, but on his return here would consider the question as to the advisability of an interview. The mayor, hearing nothing further, on the 17th inst. telegraphed the minister in the following lines: "Our committee extremely desirous of an interview with you re winter port matters."

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WINTER PORT.

The City Council Turns from Blair to Laurier.

A Resolution to be Forwarded to the Premier Calling Upon the Government To Take Such Action as Shall Result in the Continuance This Winter, of the Established Business With Great Britain.

A special meeting of the Common Council was held at the City Hall yesterday afternoon. Mayor Daniel presided, and all the members were present except Ald. Christie, Maxwell and Tuttle.

The mayor said he had called the meeting on account of the trouble which had arisen with regard to the continuance of the winter port business by the C. P. R. at Carleton. He thought the committee to whom the matter was referred some time ago should let the Council know just how the matter stood. The Council occupied the peculiar position of being bound to lose in the event of the C. P. R. taking their business or a part of it away, yet not being able to exert any commanding influence with either party. The Council would be looked to to give an answer for what they had done or what they had not done. It was considered best to make a statement of what had been done and let the Council take whatever action they might decide best in the interests of the city. The mayor then read the following report: "Your committee appointed re winter port matters, beg leave to report as follows. After the visit of Mr. Shaughnessy to our city on July 20th ult., at which time he stated that the C. P. R. could not continue to do the extensive export business at this port which it had been doing during the last winter, and that he was unable to make any arrangements could be made with the government than it had hitherto been able to obtain, it was felt that a disagreeable crisis in the winter port business was being reached. The benefits which have already accrued to this community from the business, in the form of a very large amount of money every winter, which otherwise would not take place, and in the employment of large numbers of our working men during the months that they would otherwise be idle, in the distribution also of large sums to the merchants of this city, as well as to the province, are so well known and appreciated that it was hardly necessary to refer to them. "The minister of railways and canals was at this time absent in England, and as it was felt to be important that no time should be lost in acquainting the government with the serious aspect of this matter—at least serious to the City of St. John, a type written copy of the stenographic report of the interview was immediately forwarded to the Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, leader of the government."

"The Hon. Sir W. Laurier: Dear Sir—The president of the C. P. railway has lately had an interview with me, at which he stated, as well as the members of the board of trade, were present, with reference to the continuation of the port of St. John for winter port business. A full copy of the interview has been forwarded to you for your information, and you will learn the points of dispute between the department of railways and the C. P. R. The Hon. Mr. Shaughnessy is of the opinion that the government should assist him in the carrying out of his project, and that the government should not throw difficulties in the way. The attitude of our government at this stage there should arise any doubt of the sincerity of our intentions, and for which they have made such immense financial sacrifices, about \$750,000, and more, in the winter port business. The withdrawal of this business would be viewed in the light of a complete abandonment of the project, and would be a most regrettable act. Since this business was first started here, there has been a large and constant growth, every winter being marked by a great increase in the tonnage exported, so that last winter nearly 300,000 tons of goods were shipped, as against about 45,000 tons four seasons previously, and evincing points to a gradual but immense development.

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"No answer was returned to this telegram. On the 20th inst., as the minister was passing through the city, the mayor again waited on him to request an interview for the committee, when the minister told him he didn't think an interview was necessary or advisable, as he was in full possession of the facts. Your committee do not for a moment say or express themselves as believing that the minister of railways was wrong in his opinion that an interview was useless, but they felt that the publication of Mr. Shaughnessy's offer to turn over C. P. R. winter business to the I. C. R. at Montreal and Mr. Blair's reply, placed the matter in a new light, and your committee would have been glad to have an opportunity to present their views on this aspect of the question to Hon. Mr. Blair, not only as a minister of railways, but as the representative in the cabinet of the province of New Brunswick.

"The fact that the minister states that the I. C. R. could not possibly carry freight for export, even if it was handed over to it at Montreal, makes it absolutely plain that if we are to have a continuance here this winter of the immense winter export business to which we have been accustomed, it can only be done by the C. P. R. at the west side of the harbor. "Your committee feel that considering the importance of the subject to our city, they must lay a statement of what has been done before you and ask you to take such action as shall result in the continuance of the winter port business. They recommend that the following resolution be forwarded to the Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, premier of Canada: To the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, P. C., Premier of Canada: Resolved, that this Council earnestly request the government to make such arrangements with the Canadian Pacific Railway company as may enable that railroad to continue its winter business through the port of Saint John during the coming winter, in the same manner as it has been conducted for some years past. We urge this most strongly, as during the past year the steamships engaged in the winter business, a disbursement of at least \$5,000 for each vessel, besides other portions of this province have become deeply interested in the supply of winter agricultural products to these steamers, which results in the distribution through several counties of a large amount of money. Besides this, a considerable portion of our population has come to rely more and more, upon this employment as a means of livelihood during the winter, and the sudden withdrawal of such employment would entail great hardship upon the people of this province. As this we see no compensation, as the honorable minister of railways and canals has stated that he is unable to do so, we urge the government to transfer to the Intercolonial railway at Montreal, the winter business of the Canadian Pacific railway during the coming season.

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best arrangements possible after that.

Ald. Seaton was satisfied with the resolution as it read. Ald. McGoldrick thought the committee should have seen the minister of railways and canals before reporting. Years ago the city undertook to build wharves and provide facilities at Sand Point, and the C. P. R. agreed to do business through the port. Now because there was some rivalry between the I. C. R. and the C. P. R. we were likely to suffer, that was to be regretted. Street rumor was to the effect that politics were behind this move, but he did not credit that story. Still the committee might have made a further effort to get an interview with Mr. Blair. Mr. Blair was being asked to be a candidate in St. John, and he would certainly not do anything against the city. He would vote for the report of the committee, as it could do no harm.

Ald. McMillan was of the opinion that the business would go on. No harm could come of this resolution, and he would vote for it. Ald. Colwell said a year ago Mr. Blair gave a committee an interview, but he accused two of the aldermen of attempting to embarrass the government and himself. Mr. Blair then receded from the position he had taken, and the C. P. R. continued the business. He was hopeful that Mr. Blair, when he realized what a blow it would be to St. John to have the C. P. R. abandon St. John, would make an arrangement with that railway which would be satisfactory. The resolution could do no harm.

Ald. Macrae thought there might be a chance of getting business outside of the C. P. R. It would not be well, therefore, to mention that railway in the recommendation. The government were only bound to whom the Council could appeal. Let us ask them, as his amendment suggested, to ensure to us the business. Ald. White moved that the following be added in the resolution after the particular section under discussion in the first sentence: "And that the Council of the government may be such as will ensure to the port of St. John for the future, through some system of railway connection, a continuance of the winter port export trade that it has hitherto enjoyed."

The report was adopted, as amended by Ald. White, by a vote of 7 to 5. It was moved that copies of the resolution be telegraphed to Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Hon. A. G. Blair. The appeals of the Lewin and Turnbull estates with reference to taxes were referred to the treasury board, with power to act.

WINTER PORT QUESTION. Press Opinions on the Blair-Shaughnessy Letters. AN ACUTE CRISIS. (La Patrie-Tarte's organ.) The long-continued dispute between the C. P. R. and the railway department has reached an acute crisis. We have confidence that Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues will give this winter port question their attention, and will regulate the affair so as not to permit the commerce of the West carried to the American port as that of the Grand Trunk enriches Portland.

WHAT WILL ST. JOHN DO ABOUT IT? (Frederick Gleason, Con.) The minister of railways has become thoroughly conversant with the winter port question, and tells the C. P. R. to go to Boston or anywhere else they like. If St. John advances such a course it would be suicidal. Upon the present occasion the C. P. R. has offered extra aid, as they claim, unnecessary inducements to the I. C. R. to get equal lights with the Grand Trunk and fair treatment at St. John. What is St. John going to do about it? And will the rest of the province back her up? It surely remains to be