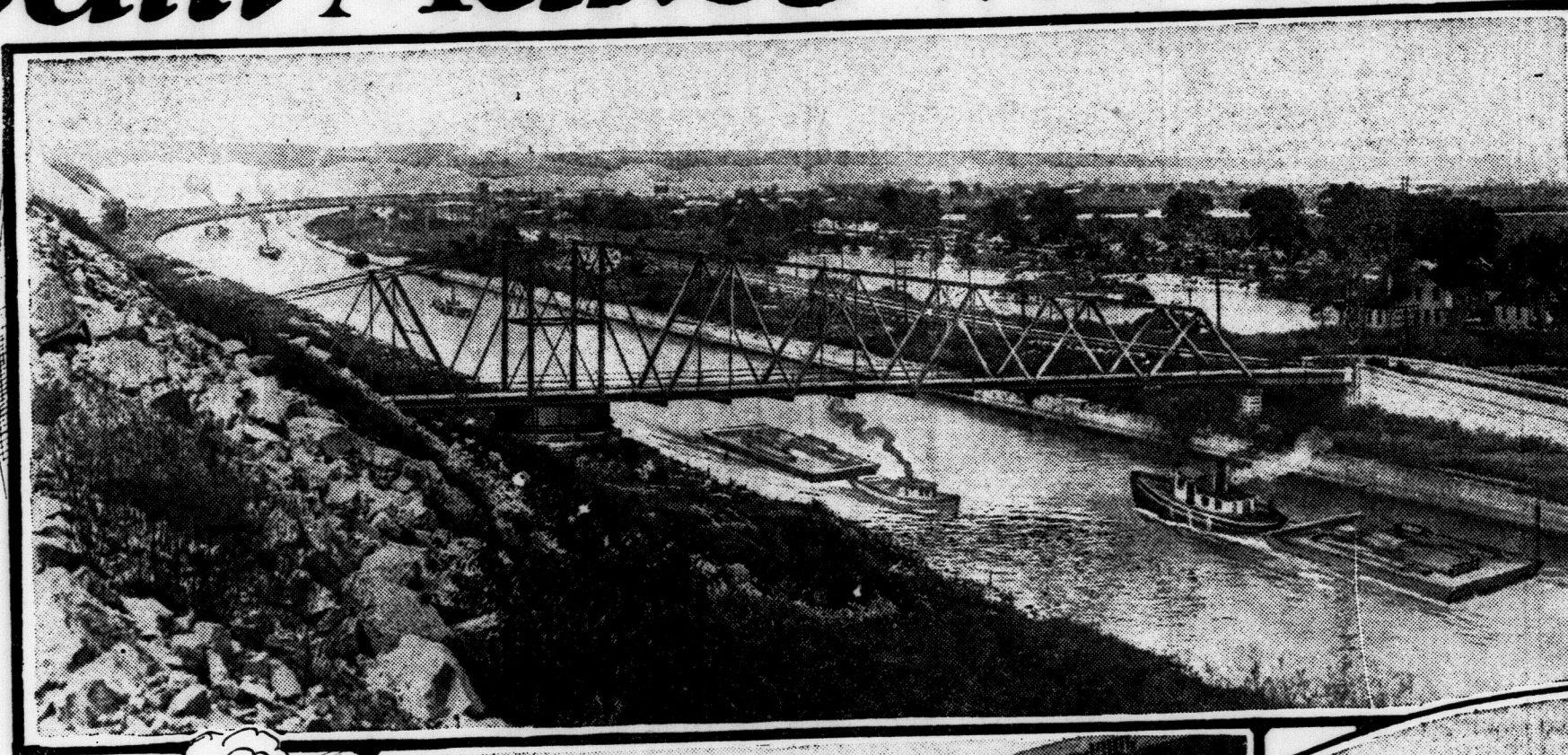


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## Uncle Sam Makes War on Chicago



This is the vision back of the Chicago water steal—the all American waterway from the great lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.

Outlaw City to Be Attacked by U.S. Army, Supported By Canadian Artillery and Cavalry?—Courts Are Defied and Chicago and Her Water Steal Handed Over to War Department—Will Lake Be Dried Up Before The War Is Over?

By GREGORY CLARK

THE United States army, assisted by certain units of Canadian artillery and cavalry, attacked Chicago at dawn.

Are we to read something of this sort, some day, as the result of the international gunman conduct of the world's most lawless city, Chicago?

What is to be the end of Chicago's defiance of all authority in her stealing of water out of the Great Lakes?

Could it mean war? It begins to look like it. For the war department of the United States has issued an ultimatum to Chicago. The exact procedure has been followed as if Chicago were an enemy of the United States. The supreme court of the nation found Chicago guilty of breaking the law and defying the law. Then the finding was handed over to the war department, and the war department drew up an ultimatum. "Either you will cease taking out more water than we authorized thirty years ago, or

Or what?

That is the question that interests Canada.

Imagine later despatches from the Chicago front in the great war between America and the gunman city:

"The enemy has succeeded in deepening the sewage canal out of Lake Michigan into the Mississippi, with the result that ten times the amount of water formerly taken is being run off the Great Lakes. Ship traffic has ceased entirely on the lakes. There have been a large number of wrecks. Practically no water is running over Niagara, and the power plants are dead. Toronto, Hamilton, Buffalo, Rochester and scores of other central cities and towns are without power and everything is in darkness and at a standstill. The water supply of these cities has failed and fires have broken out and cannot be controlled. Montreal harbor is filled with grounded ships. Typhoid has broken out in all the lake cities and towns. Unless the city can be captured within twenty-four hours peace will have to be made with Chicago before she destroys the entire ten million population of the Great Lakes region."

In more than imagination, Chicago has the fate of the Great Lakes in her hands.

Fortunately for Canada, there are more United States people than Canadians resident on the lakes. There are larger United States cities than Canadian cities to suffer from any damage Chicago may do to the Great Lakes. New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan are the four most powerful allies of Canada in the war to control Chicago.

What's Chicago Doing, Anyway?

THE situation in a nutshell is this: The bung of the barrel of the Great Lakes is Niagara. All the water the upper lakes have to shed comes out the faucet of Niagara Falls. Along comes Chicago with an auger and bores a new hole in the barrel. The whole economy of the civilization of the Great Lakes is founded on the fact that the water of the lakes behaves in a known manner. Navigation is the least of all considerations. Billions of dollars have been invested on the margin of this water that is being tampered with. Scores of cities, hundreds of towns and villages depend for their very lives

and security on the changeless condition of the Great Lakes. Waterworks have been installed at enormous expense on the secure foundation of certain water levels. Sewage disposal has been organized on the basis of certain depths of water to carry it away.

Those who have visited Georgian Bay or Lake Huron summer resorts this past summer have an idea of what will happen to the civilization of the Great Lakes if the water supply of the lakes is tampered with further. That whole district, a little civilization in miniature, has been rendered helpless and somehow comic by the fall of water more than two feet. Boat-houses are perched far inland like henhouses. Channels that used to lead right to cottage wharves are dry land, and wharves are set like tent platforms on eminences of their own. Cottages that used to be upon islands are on the mainland now. Water pumps suck air. The whole summer civilization has been rendered ridiculous. The steamers can't call at certain former ports.

Already some Georgian Bay and Lake Huron towns are feeling the more sinister effects of the water lowering. Merritt's fire fighting system is impotent. Others can no longer use their water-pumping installation in case of fire. Bays into which their sewage was dumped are so shallow as to be no longer fit to receive the sewage.

In miniature, the fate of the ten million civilization of the Great Lakes is foreshadowed in these cases if control of the Great Lakes water supply is not assured.

Chicago takes up to ten thousand cubic feet of water per second out of the Great Lakes supply. That is from one-fifteenth to one-twentieth the amount of water that flows in the ancient natural way over Niagara Falls.

Away back in 1871, half a century ago, Chicago discovered that it was bad to empty her sewers into Lake Michigan when she was taking her water supply out of the same place. So she backed up the Chicago river which runs through her, made it flow south into the Illinois river, instead of into the lakes, and began taking water out of the Great Lakes to flush her sewage down this system. Those were the days when everybody thought the lakes were inexhaustible.

City's Terrible Open Drain

CHICAGO got authority to take this water out of the lakes, to stick her auger into the great barrel, from the United States war department. They authorized some 4,000 cubic feet a second.

From that day, little by little, without authority from anybody, and in cool defiance of all orders to the contrary, Chicago has gradually increased her takings from the barrel to 10,000 cubic feet of water per second, a goodly fraction of all that flows by nature out of the main bung at Niagara Falls.

Anyone who knows Chicago cannot help but sympathize with her present condition. She has got herself into a fine mess. While all the rest of the world has been going ahead with modern methods of sewage disposal by means of septic tanks and treatment plants, Chicago, the heart of America and one of the wealthiest cities in the universe, has been playing village. She has been emptying her sewage into an open drain and letting it go somewhere else.

A cess pool in the heart of the mighty city of Chicago, bubbling, boiling, festering with filth—this is the Stock Yards Slip, a part of the great city's sewage disposal problem.

Right in the midst of that city with its stately towers and majestic buildings runs the stock yards slip. There is nothing in Shanghai or Pung Chow or a Congo village to equal it. It is simply a horrible, unbelievable stinking open drain, wider than a creek, perfectly stagnant, and bubbling, bubbling, curdling, festering in the broad light of day with putrescence. Hand-some modern factories with nationally-famous names rise beside this filthy canal. In the background, less than a mile away, ascend the stately towers of Chicago's fabulous enterprise. A stench as horrible as the sight of that boiling, writhing cesspool rises higher than all those majestic towers.

And this stock yards slip flows, slowly and horribly, into the fine handsome canal through which Chicago is flowing ten thousand cubic feet of good lake water in her antiquated endeavor to dispose of her sewage in the manner of the village she was a hundred years ago.

Chicago is famous for many things. She is famed for her lawlessness, her political corruption, graft, as well as for her wealth; for her slums as well as for her handsome hotels. After a few days in Chicago, looking on her tremendous modernity on the one hand and on her unbelievable backwardness in the simple matter of sanitation, after a few experiences of her lawlessness and her utter helplessness to govern herself as all the rest of America governs itself, the visitor gradually becomes aware of a horrible suspicion of Chicago. The hair begins to creep. The idea takes form that Chicago is not quite all there. It is as if Chicago were a great big strong mental defective. There is a violence, an ingenious uncleanness and a beauty about her that is seen in some adults who are mentally deficient. Like them, Chicago can't be controlled.

Away Behind the Times

CHICAGO has at last decided to be up-to-date in the matter of her personal cleanliness. The Supreme Court decreed that Chicago was an outlaw in taking all the water she is taking out of the Great Lakes. The war department then took the first step in an act of war and issued an ultimatum to Chicago. Over a period of four years, she may take her usual supply—8,500 cubic feet a second, increased to the peak load at certain intervals—on condition that she undertake at once a program of modern sewage disposal works at enormous expense.

So Chicago, having already built three small sewage disposal plants at points from which she could not dump the raw sewage into her canals, has almost completed one huge sewage disposal plant to look after a population of 800,000. You have seen a Great Lakes freighter. It is about 600 feet long. This new plant has ninety tanks, each as big as a lake freighter, side by side, a huge and picturesque establishment. It will be connected up and functioning in two years. The war department's ultimatum says that by 1929, when the permit to use the full quantity of water ends, there must be sewage disposal works to handle the sewage of a population of 1,200,000. Chicago's population is three times that.

H. P. Ramey, assistant engineer of the Chicago sanitary district who gave the writer a complete statement of the situation as it now stands, showed a schedule of design and construction of sewage treatment and disposal works for the period 1925 to 1929, which called for an expenditure of \$61,745,000. This schedule is already well ahead of itself, and there is every evidence of good faith. Chicago means to proceed at once with the business of making itself up to date in the treatment of all sewage.

Does this mean that Chicago will in due time require no water from the Great Lakes? Once she has all her sewage passing through treatment plants, can the water steal be ended?

Now arises a new and rather staggering and permanent factor in the Great Lakes problem. The dream of a Pan-American inland waterway from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, a dream that is a century old, a dream that visions not merely the great commercial importance of a large canal clean down the continent but the economic value of inexhaustible water from the great inland seas for those Mississippi states, a dream that has played a part in the war department's schemes and plans as well as in the ambitions of mid-American cities—the dream of that great Pan-American water highway is about to come true.

Without Chicago and her absurd sewage problem, her lawlessness and irresponsibility, that dream could never come true. For no international commission would ever consent to the tapping of the international Great Lakes for the benefit of the United States alone.

To Use the Mississippi

HERE is the Mississippi running within a few hundred miles of Chicago. One by one, through the long years, the tributaries of the Mississippi are drying up, through natural causes, the clearing of the land, deforestation. As a great wealthy civilization has grown up on the banks of the Father of Waters, the river has been crying out even now for sources of new water. What it would mean to all those states along the Mississippi to be in direct water connection with Chicago and the Great Lakes, as well as what it would mean to Chicago to be in direct water communication with the great country to the south, can not be computed in millions.

But without a canal across that divide which lies between the Great Lakes basin and the Mississippi watershed, this dream was vain. Chicago and Chicago alone has made the dream a reality. For it is a reality. Who has been responsible for making Chicago the whole goat in this Great Lakes war?

For the state of Illinois is already spending \$20,000,000 most busily on the next section of the Pan-American waterway, the Illinois State canal, linking up the Chicago "drainage" canal with the Mississippi river.

And . . . . . that war department which runs out its pop guns and grimly orders Chicago to obey the supreme court to use only 4,000 c.f.s. by using NOT MORE than 8,500 c.f.s., EXCEPT on certain frequent occasions, when, for sanitary purposes, it may use up to 11,000

The only water-power being developed out of the stolen water amounts to about 17,000 horse-power, a flea bite in Chicago's demands.

(not the famous 10,000 cubic feet per second) . . . . . that same war department has for years had its engineers working on the whole scheme of the Great Lakes waterway. And it is on the plans and specifications of that war department's engineers that the Federal government of the United States is taking in hand the third section of the great canal, which is the deepening and canalization of the upper reaches of the Father of Waters to a nine foot barge canal connecting with the great river itself, and to the gulf.

In a few years, fifteen or twenty at most, Chicago will have caught up with the times. All her sewage will be treated. There will be no reasons other than "sentimental" ones—the word is Chicago's own—against running the effluent of these sewage plants back into the lake, just as Toronto and all other Great Lakes cities do, chlorinating their water supply.

But by that time, the Pan-American waterway will be completed. Then who will the Great Lakes cities charge with stealing water?

Chicago will have behind her—as she has now—all the states to the south, clear down to Louisiana. The question will no longer be one of a city but of a nation stealing water. The problem will have solidified into part and parcel of the political economy of the United States of America.

How Chicago Defends Action

IT is all very evident in the report of the engineering board of review, a board of the most eminent engineers in the States, who reviewed the case of Chicago in so impartial a manner as to discover that at least 10,000 cubic feet per second was essential. In a quiet part near the end of their report they say:

"The diversion of 10,000 c.f.s. at Chicago would make feasible a nine-foot channel without locks from the Gulf of Mexico to within 100 miles of Chicago, and but five locks, to be paid for by the people of Illinois, would be necessary for the remainder of the distance."

"With no diversion at all from the Great Lakes, the cost of the waterway becomes almost prohibitive."

The claim made by Chicago and those who defend the waterway project is that the taking of 10,000 c.f.s. is not responsible for the great lowering of the upper lakes, but that a general condition of lack of rainfall in the Great Lakes basin is responsible. To prove this, they have the charts of the Great Lakes Survey covering a period of sixty-five years. This shows a slow rise and fall in the lakes over long periods of years. They claim that the most the 10,000 c.f.s. diversion could do, calculated by expert mathematicians from the area of the lakes and the amount taken out in cubic feet, would lower the lakes only six inches. The trick in this defense is that there is a possibility that the water will rise again to nearly its old level. Then public opinion on the Great Lakes will be satisfied that Chicago is not guilty. Chicago is banking her whole roll on this natural rise in the Great Lakes within the next four years. If the water comes up, the situation is saved. Then she can press hard for the regulating and compensating works which she advocates.

The scheme is to erect dams at the outlet of each of the lakes, like the dam at Sault Ste. Marie. The Soo locks and dams have, of course, actually controlled the levels in Lake Superior since 1916. There is some justice in the claim that the severe lowering of Huron and the other lakes is aggravated by the fact that Lake Superior is conserving her water and not letting the lower lakes have the full natural supply they have been accustomed to.

A great scheme of dams to control the lakes, each by itself and co-operatively as necessary, would, of course, be wonderful for the lakes, but

disastrous to the St. Lawrence. For every inch held back in Superior Huron would have to hold back an inch and a little more. And so on. By the time Lake Ontario did her conserving the accumulative effect on the St. Lawrence would be the full blow of the whole system. The effect on the St. Lawrence water power and waterway project is profound.

But—if the lakes are controlled, what, then, is to prevent Chicago from enlarging her present canal?

When the canal is no longer a drainage canal but the beginning of the Great Pan-American Private Waterway, and the needs of more water from the Great Lakes are not merely Chicago's needs but the needs of the entire middle section of the continent how embarrassed is the civilization of the continent—how embarrassed is the civilization of the Great Lakes?

And, of course, with a controlled water supply in the Great Lakes, what on earth would be the objection to letting the Great Pan-American Waterway and all those wealthy and powerful states down the middle of the continent have a few thousand more cubic feet per second of life-giving water?

Developing a National Problem

CHICAGO officials will be gladly quoted on the sanitary aspect of the case. These same engineers who made the survey on which the war department based its findings, points out the pitiful situation Chicago finds itself in: "Should the current of the canal be reversed," they say, "sewage will flow into the lake and the only defense the people will then have is the chlorination of the water supply."

But, of course, Chicago already chlorinates its water. Once in a while, during flood seasons and time of great rainfall, the canal does back up, and raw sewage goes out into the lake. "When this happens," say the engineers, "only chlorination of the water supply protects the people against disease due to the use of sewage-contaminated water."

Every city of the Great Lakes faces this problem and has faced it for years. But this statement gives away once and for all the crumbling basis of the sanitation excuse for the diversion of water at Chicago. There is a larger scheme afoot.

Chicago sets up as a sentimental city. "To discharge the sewage into the lake, however well it may first be treated, would be a backward step, highly repugnant from the sentimental viewpoint and equally objectionable from the point of view of public health."

The outcry of the state of Illinois in those parts below Chicago through which the Illinois river passes, horribly polluted by the raw sewage of Chicago, has died down. As the vision of the great barge canal opens up, with the promise of Chicago to get busy at once and treat its sewage, opposition fails.

The whole question suddenly takes on new dimensions and moves to new ground.

"Unquestionably," said another engineer of the sanitary district, "the load is being lifted off Chicago's shoulders. It looks now as if we never will reduce the amount of water. The question is, when will be able to increase it? People talk as if we were not the greatest power on the Great Lakes. Why, we are as interested in the welfare of the lakes as anybody. More so, in fact. For, owing to the low levels of the water this year, we can't get as big a flow through our canals as we would like!"

But Chicago, that great careless city, feels a little relieved that at last the problem is coming out into the open, and appearing in its proper guise—a problem of national rather than of municipal responsibility.

Canada should never forget that the United States' national game is poker.