

The program of lengthening sidings in order to handle longer trains was also continued and, with the work slated for completion in 1958, all sidings from Montreal to Winnipeg will be able to accommodate 100-car trains and those between Winnipeg and Edmonton 117-car trains.

Further progress was made in the mechanization of track maintenance with the purchase of 284 units of roadway machinery.

Signals

The detailed engineering stage was reached in a program for the systematic application of Centralized Traffic Control to more than 4,000 miles of the railway's transcontinental main line. In 1957, CTC installations were completed on 17.5 miles of Grand Trunk Western lines between Flint and Port Huron, Michigan, and also in the eastern section of the Winnipeg terminals.

Yards and Terminals

Progress was made during the year on the company's long range plans for the concentration of train marshalling operations at main strategic centres. Grading at the Cote de Liesse yard in Montreal proceeded on schedule. Plans were advanced for the construction of similar automatic hump retarder yards at Moncton and Winnipeg, and steps were taken to acquire the necessary property. These three hump yards will incorporate the most modern control and communication devices.

An extensive study of freight handling problems in Toronto, where terminal facilities are badly congested, is now under way in collaboration with independent consultants.

Studies were also undertaken for the construction of new yard facilities at Corner Brook and St. John's, Newfoundland.

Meanwhile, the company proceeded with other yard improvements at Port Mann, B.C., Edmonton, Alta., Sarnia, Ont., Joffre, Que., Edmundston and Saint John, N.B., and at Flint, Pontiac, and Battle Creek on the Grand Trunk Western.

To increase the efficiency of freight car handling, train marshalling studies were undertaken and better inter-yard communications were effected by means of through teletype circuits between Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg, and certain other terminals.

Dieselization

Dieselization by geographic areas, the second phase of the CNR's long range program, made satisfactory progress during the year. This phase was started in 1957 on completion of the company's original five-year plan in which diesel power was applied selectively to specific runs and services.

In the early stages of the program, the maximum utilization made possible by the selective application of diesels yielded very substantial benefits, despite the operation of repair and servicing facilities for both steam and diesel power. The latter stages of dieselization by areas, however, can only be justified by achieving the economies inherent in an orderly elimination of the steam power facilities.

At year end, a new diesel maintenance shop for running repairs was approaching completion at Cote de Liesse yard, and a start had been made on construction of a similar shop at Calder in the Edmonton area. Motive power shops for heavy repairs at Moncton, N.B., Point St. Charles (Montreal) and Battle Creek, Michigan, were being converted from steam to diesel maintenance.

In 1957, diesel operations accounted for 72.9% of freight gross ton miles, 81.6% of yard locomotive hours and 58.0% of passenger car miles. By year end, Canadian National was operating 1,433 diesel units on System lines.