

LAST MINUTE NEWS FOR ALL LUMBERMEN

Cost of Airplane Spruce Production

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 6.—Maj. Gen. Charles T. Menoher, who succeeded John D. Ryan as director of the air service, told the House committee investigating aviation today that the cost of airplane spruce production was approximately \$50,000,000. Gen. Menoher estimated the cost of the 38-mile stretch of railroad built connecting the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul trunk line with the big Government mill on the Olympic Peninsula at \$8,188,000. Critics of this project have estimated the cost as high as \$12,000,000. The spruce was produced and the road built before Gen. Menoher returned from France where he commanded the Rainbow division. Figures brought out by Chairman Frear indicated that the Seims-Carey H. S. Kerbaugh Corporation, which built the 38-mile railroad had a cost plus contract to get out 250,000,000 feet of airplane spruce.

Decision Condemns Tap Line Waste

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 7.—In a formal decision handed down today in investigation and suspension Docket No. 11—wasteful service by tap lines—the Interstate Commerce Commission condemns "increased divisions to certain tap lines secured thru the device of hauling shipments of lumber and forest products from the proprietary mills over unnecessary and circuitous routes before delivery to the connecting trunk line." The commission holds that under its orders in the tap line case "the divisions must be measured by the distances over the direct routes from the mills to the junctions with the trunk line."

This proceeding brought in issue the lawfulness of divisions of thru interstate rates from proprietary mills of the Prescott & Northwestern Railroad Co. and the Ouachita & Northwestern Railroad Co. The former company is affiliated with the Ozan-Graysonia Lumber Co., Prescott, Ark. The Ouachita road is affiliated with the Louisiana Central Lumber Co., Clarks, La. Both short lines connect with the Missouri Pacific system.

"The practice that is questioned," says Commissioner Eastman, who prepared the opinion, "is the unnecessary hauling of lumber by the tap line from either mill in the opposite direction from its destination and out of line, making deliveries at points that involve the return of the traffic at the station at which the originating mill is located before it moves toward its point of final destination."

Railway Wage and Rate Crisis

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 6.—The Senate committee on interstate commerce today voted to write a letter to President Wilson advising him that he has full authority under existing law to increase the wages of railroad employees and the freight and passenger rates. This action has the effect of "passing the buck" to the President in the crisis brought about by the demand of the railroad employees either that their wages be increased or that the cost of living be reduced.

Director General Hines, in explaining to the brotherhood shopmen that he could not grant the desired increase in wages without additional legislation, had said that when the Senate passed the Cummins bill restoring the prewar power of the Interstate Commerce Commission over rates, it served notice on the Railroad Administration that no more general increases in rates were to be made without the approval of the rate making body.

This was emphatically denied by Senator Cummins and other Republican senators, who declared that so long as the Cummins bill has not been enacted into law the President and director general have absolute authority in the matter. Many senators frankly state their conviction that the President sought to "pass the buck" to Congress when he already was clothed with ample authority.

Representatives of the industry in Washington are watching developments closely in the new situation caused by the sudden decision to go after the high cost of living, complicated by the demand of all classes of railroad employees for increased wages or reduced living expenses.

All agree that the only wise thing to do is to face the situation calmly and study frankly all phases as they develop, including the Plumb plan for the operation and management of the railroads of the country. While not a voice has been raised in Congress for the Plumb plan and while Representative Sims, of Tennessee, who introduced the bill "by request," has disclaimed personal responsibility for it, it is realized that advocates of the measure are putting it forward seriously and that it should be studied and disposed of in this light.

Meanwhile, leading men of the lumber industry are being advised that it is of vital importance that the entire industry support the Cummins bill, restoring the Interstate Commerce Commission's authority over rates, which now is pending before the House.

Discuss Price Stabilization

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Aug. 7.—Lumbermen from Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Detroit, Toledo and Cleveland met here Wednesday, Aug. 6, to discuss the lumber situation as it is at the present time from the retail lumberman's point of view, the discussion being held at the Cleveland Board of Lumber Dealers. The chief object of the meeting was to devise ways and means of stabilizing prices. Retailers as individuals decided they could do little from this point but are ready to back the National Retail Lumber Dealers' Association to the limit in seeking such stabilization. The conference put it up to the National organization to take such action as it deemed satisfactory to seek this end. As far as is known there is no evidence of a speculative element in the lumber business, but if such exists the local and allied city interests are for prompt elimination of such speculation. In a stabilized market the retailers see assurance for continued good business, as against a lull in building with constantly advancing prices.

More Labor Unrest on Coast

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

SEATTLE, WASH., Aug. 7.—Labor unrest on Puget Sound continues to grow. Today's reports from Bellingham are to the effect that the Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills' plants are closed down tight except one planing mill. The Whatcom Falls Mill Co. has shut down and the night crew has been taken off by the Puget Sound Sawmill & Shingle Co.

Today seventy-five men, largely wobblies, quit the Eby Logging Co's camp and nearly as many quit the camps of the Cherry Valley Logging Co. This is attributed to I. W. W. influence, as it is not known that any demands were made prior to the strike.

If all hired men on the farms should strike and present a petition to Congress saying they will no longer help produce food unless the Government buys all of the fertile farms, issuing to farmers Government bonds in payment of their land, appointing the laborers as managers of the farms with representatives of the Government and the consuming public to sit on the board of directors, how do you think that would suit the railroad men and the people generally of the country?

Sawmill Destroyed by Fire

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

SEATTLE, WASH., Aug. 7.—The sawmill of the Bissell Lumber Co., this city, together with \$30,000 worth of lumber, burned yesterday entailing a total loss of about \$300,000, nearly half covered by insurance. The mill was new, having been in operation only the last year. While it is too soon to state definitely, it probably will be rebuilt.

Labor Troubles Cause Rail Embargo

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

SEATTLE, WASH., Aug. 7.—The Northern Pacific and Great Northern railroads yesterday issued orders placing an embargo on west Coast lumber on account of labor troubles with mechanical and car forces. The orders stated that they would not accept dead freight excepting coal, flour and similar food stuffs but would continue to handle stock, perishable freight and merchandise as far as possible subject to delay.

This morning Regional Director L. C. Gilman advised that the embargo announced yesterday was removed and that lumber would be accepted but subject to strike delay, which means practically the same thing as an embargo.

Urge Speedy Labor Settlement

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

TACOMA, WASH., Aug. 7.—Yesterday afternoon millmen met here and decided to send telegrams to the president and western members of Congress urging a speedy settlement of labor troubles, in order that the transportation system of the country be not tied up. It is likely that local meetings of millmen will be held in all districts and delegates sent to a general meeting in Seattle.

Shipping Board Gets Big Tonnage

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 6.—During the week ending Aug. 1 a total of forty-six ships and hulls were delivered to the United States Shipping Board aggregating 163,355 gross tons or 245,033 deadweight tons. Of this number twenty-one were of wood aggregating 41,667 gross tons or 62,500 deadweight tons.

Up to Aug. 1 the total number of ships delivered to the shipping board was 1,182 representing 4,342,248 gross tons or 6,513,372 deadweight tons. The total number of wood ships delivered was 330, representing an aggregate of 764,800 gross tons or 1,147,200 deadweight tons. In addition thirteen composite ships were delivered, representing 30,333 gross tons or 45,500 deadweight tons.

To Take Action on Railway Problem

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 7.—With the railroad problem overshadowing everything else in Washington, complicated as it is with the high cost of living issue, the traffic committee of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association has drafted a specific proposition as to railroad legislation for submission to the executive committee for action. The nature of the proposition is withheld pending action by the National association. Even the League of Nations has for the moment been pushed aside by the railroad problem.

Commissary Managers' Annual

[Special telegram to AMERICAN LUMBERMAN]

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Aug. 7.—At the three days' annual convention of the National Commissary Managers' Association which closed today, the keynote of the addresses dealt with the importance of keeping profits at the narrowest margin and of instilling sound Americanism. The discussion of store problems held the entire attendance at all sessions. Members from many States were present and they were enthusiastic for extending the organization's work.

R. N. Lindsay, Knoxville, Tenn., was elected president. The 1920 annual convention of the association, its eleventh, will be held at Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 10, 11 and 12.

Anti-wood Shingle Ordinance Tabled

BRYAN, OHIO, Aug. 6.—Several weeks ago a proposed anti-wood shingle ordinance was introduced in the village council. The lumbermen of Bryan and particularly R. O. Stine, of the Stine Lumber Co., thought that the proposed ordinance was unfair and unnecessary. Immediate action on it was deferred until the true situation could be presented to the city fathers and the matter came up for action at the meeting of the village council this week, when Frank T. Kegley, of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association, Chicago, met with the village council and gave an interesting and instructive talk on building codes and on shingle legislation. As a result the proposed ordinance was unanimously tabled.

SOUTH EAGER FOR CHICAGO NEGRO LABOR

NEW ORLEANS, LA., Aug. 4.—As one result of Chicago's race riots inquiries are being received by Louisiana and Mississippi officials as to whether employment can be furnished for negroes who wish to return South. One such query, from a Chicago newspaper, was received at the governor's office in Baton Rouge last Friday. On account of the Governor's absence the reply was deferred, but Commissioner Harry D. Wilson, of the State department of agriculture, expresses the belief that Louisiana can "absorb every good negro who left the State during the war and after, and 50 percent more." He thinks also that transportation can be provided for them. It is announced that a Clarksdale, Miss., business man has arranged in Chicago for the transportation of 2,000 negroes to Coahoma County, Mississippi. Louisiana planters are expressing a willingness to give employment to many of the wanderers and it is believed in industrial and agricultural circles that every well behaved and industrious negro who finds conditions in the North very far from what they were "cracked up to be" and who is in consequence disgusted and homesick, can be re-absorbed by the southern industries and farms.

FOR \$1 EACH the American Forestry Association is supplying bronze markers to be nailed to memorial trees for soldiers, giving the soldier's name and company in addition to a suitable general inscription.