

Machinery Costs And Size Have Farmers Wondering

HOW MUCH LARGER

In 1945 the writer and a neighbour invested \$325.00 jointly in a used tractor. It was a compact model capable of doing a great deal of work and performed faithfully for seven years when it was traded in for \$700.00 on a \$2,100.00 job. This tractor is still in operation although the contrast with the 1966 models is not very flattering.

Tractors have been increasing in size and needless to say in cost also. They cost more for two reasons, they are as large as locomotives and due to generally price increases across the board.

The farmer shopping for a tractor today has his choice of models ranging from \$3,000.00 to \$15,000.00 with the trend to larger machinery operated by power take-off the \$5,000.00 job appears to be almost the minimum. Obviously the farmer who intends to play in this league must have large volume and realize profits. Many farmers are asking whether machinery will continue to increase in size and cost or whether there will be a leveling off.

Another question that we would like to see answered is whether the big machinery is responsible for upward pressure on farm size or whether the large farm is demanding bigger equipment.

POST HOLES

In this province about the only requirement in the way of tools to produce a post hole is the shovel and bar. It doesn't come quite that easy in all parts of the world where rock is close to the ground and where air hammers have to be used. Now a firm in the United States has produced a hydraulically powered jack hammer operated off the hydraulic system of any farm tractor that has a pump flow or at least ten gallons per minute. However, the cost is somewhat higher than a shovel and bar being over \$300.00.

FARM ASSISTANCE

Practically every province has some form of subsidy or bonus to farm production. Culled from a listing we have taken some of the following items. On fertilizer Quebec pays 33 per cent of the cost with a limit of \$100.00 to each farm. Nova Scotia is in the fertilizer business with \$20.00 for farmers used for feed production. Prince Edward Island is also getting into this area on the basis of 20 per cent on forage crops.

All six Eastern Provinces appear to be helping out in the purchase of lime. Nearly all provinces have encouragement for the purchase of improved livestock. Manitoba pays 50 per cent of the cost of material in control grasshoppers. New Brunswick pays half of the interest on Farm Credit Corporation loans. Quebec certainly has the longest list. For example any cost over \$200.00 in the digging of a well is paid 37 per cent on potato storage grants for stone clearing, \$60.00 per acre for clearing and plowing to settling areas. For the dairy farmer premiums are paid on milk production and grants for the construction of milk houses.

THE EARLY BIRDS

Last week a few starts were made at hay-cutting. It is a problem to cut the crop early but to cure it is another question. On Sunday spiritual considerations held up haling and on Monday the weatherman. This week would appear from the calendar standpoint to be a good one for starting as before the job is completed maturity will be setting in its quality defeating work.

The province is certainly outdoing itself with the prospects for an abundant crop of hay, grain, potatoes and with pastures at their best for many years.

MACHINERY INVESTIGATION

Recently the Canadian Feder-

ation of Agriculture submitted a statement to the Commission of Enquiry into the cost of farm machinery and repair parts. In part the submission had the following to say:

"It should be recognized at the outset that farmer expressions of concern about the high cost of farm machinery have two aspects:

1. One is the feeling that machinery costs and the costs of parts and repairs are excessive in themselves and that if at all possible these costs should be brought down.

The second is the feeling that farm machinery, as a major item of the farmer's costs, is overpriced in relation to the returns the farmer receives for his produce — in other words the concern refers to the cost-price squeeze.

On the second aspect, we do not believe that the Commission can use this enquiry as a vehicle for undertaking a general examination of the farm problem, in terms of pricing, marketing, incomes and the structure of the farm industry. However, we do think that under number 4 in the Commission's terms of reference, regarding productivity, it should be possible, and would be very desirable, for the Commission to enquire into the relation of management practices, including the joint use of farm machinery, and in general efficiency of machinery utilization."

"1. The question of whether manufacturers charge excessively through some form of combination, or otherwise undesirable trade practices, to maintain prices.

2. The question of the costs of the distributive system and the possibilities of rationalization in this sphere, with consequent reduction in costs.

3. The question of achieving reductions in cost through:

- (a) standardization of components.
- (b) reduction in number of models and frequency of model changes.

4. The question of the adequacy of parts and repair service, and the costs thereof. This is a major question, embracing problems of costs, organization of service, prediction of needs for particular parts and the related question of pre-testing of new models, and the problems of maintaining parts services for older machines. The economic costs to the farmer of delays due to breakdowns is a major matter. There is no subject that is more urgent in the farmers' mind than adequate parts and repair service, and the costs of the same. Involved in this subject is the examination of provincial law regarding parts availability and services, where this exists, and its effectiveness.

5. The question of machinery quality in both workmanship and design — including the need for research and testing. The economic aspects of costly design features could be equated into this connection. Some companies now specialize in simplified basic machinery.

CNR Income Up For May

MONTREAL (CP) — Net railway operating income for Canadian National Railways for the month of May amounted to \$4,768,000 compared with \$2,983,000 for the corresponding period last year.

Railway operating revenues totalled \$80,236,000 and expenses, taxes and rents totalled \$75,468,000. In May, 1965, railway operating revenues were \$70,073,000 and expenses, taxes and rents amounted to \$67,000,000.

The aggregate net railway operating income for the year as of May 31 was \$10,086,000.

Explosive Feeling Reported On Ship-Manning Standards

OTTAWA (CP) — President Red McLaughlin of the International Union of Canada Seafarers' Association said here today that a potentially explosive feeling of unrest among Canadian sailors over the government's refusal to establish vessel-manning standards for the safety of inland shipping.

The head of the Seafarers' International Union of Canada said here today that a potentially explosive feeling of unrest among Canadian sailors over the government's refusal to establish vessel-manning standards for the safety of inland shipping.

leading to fears among sailors that the sufficiency and efficiency of crews was a matter for cabinet decision.

Asked at a news conference if the situation might lead to a wildcat walkout, he said: "No. There's no possibility of that, unless the shipping companies make some suicidal decision for extending the crew cuts to other ships."

A spokesman in Mr. Pickersgill's office said the minister was studying the letter with department officials.

Charging "buck-passing," Mr. McLaughlin said the Shipping Act of 1952 had contained a pro-

North Ireland Group Outlawed

BELFAST (Reuters) — Northern Ireland's staunchly-Protestant government has outlawed an extremist right-wing organization which it blames for a current wave of terrorism and murder.

The ban, a week before the Queen is scheduled to arrive here on a two-day visit, affects the self-styled Ulster Volunteer Force — described by Prime Minister Capt. Terence O'Neill as "a sordid conspiracy of criminals prepared to take up arms against unprotected fellow citizens."

However, this ruling did not apply to new vessels and since that time 45 had been put into service with reduced sailing where an arbitrator ruled that

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