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## FATE OF MIAMI'S SUGAR INDUSTRY HANGS ON CHAMBER COMMERCE

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capacity of 5,000 tons of cane per day, turning out 500 tons of sugar per day. There are a number of such sized mills in Cuba and one of this size was laid out by the writer in Porto Rico eighteen years ago and is most successful.

"There is tributary to the Miami canal and therefore to Miami harbor 500,000 acres of land suitable for the raising of sugar cane. This land is now partly available and with the extension of the Miami canal which is now being dredged will all be available for the cultivation of sugar cane within the next few years. This land is capable of producing over 1,250,000 tons of sugar. This is more sugar than is being raised in all of Germany.

"This development depends on two things: Drainage and transportation. The state of Florida is doing the drainage. It is up to the United States to give this vast section a deep water harbor so that we will have water transportation. Florida will then be the sugar producer for the larger part of the United States."

Many other letters were submitted in support of Mr. Sewell's contention that the moment deeper water is provided the merchants and the growers alike will patronize the steamship lines made available by better harbor facilities. Some of these letters were from business men and told in figures the amount of their tonnage during the past year, both rail and water borne; others were from growers stating the number of crates of fruits and vegetables they shipped and what proportion they would ship by steamer if vessels were available.

### Sewell Submits Data.

After calling attention to logical reasons why Miami should have the support of the federal government in its deep water project, Mr. Sewell submitted data in the form of the communications mentioned above, showing that the writers, comprising not more than forty per cent of the growers in the section tributary to Miami, ship annually more than a million and a half crates of

fruits and vegetables and two thirds of this would be shipped by water if could be done. This would mean 1,125,155 boxes by water borne transportation and it could be easily doubled.

The total value of the fruits and vegetables shipped by the growers from whom the Chamber of Commerce obtained data, Mr. Sewell said, is \$4,109,700.01. Of this nearly three millions would be sent by water. These growers also submitted data to show that would receive by steamer 115,637 tons of fertilizer annually, capable of being increased to 231,314 tons.

Inadequate transportation has caused enormous losses to growers, he added, but data submitted applied to only 337,908 crates valued at \$861,107.

Seventy-four per cent of the vast amount of merchandise, nearly all of which comes from northern states; would come by water, Mr. Sewell said, if the merchants of Miami had access to water transportation. He also emphasized the great saving to the people of Miami if any large percentage of this freight came by water instead of by rail, and said the same condition would apply to outgoing freights.

It developed during the hearing that one lumber exporting company shipped last year five million feet of lumber to Cuba and now has two million feet lying in Miami deteriorating in value because of the impossibility of obtaining ships that can enter this port. This company will have to abandon its business here, it was asserted, unless relief is obtained.

## Fate Of Miami's Sugar Industry Hangs On Chamber of Commerce Efforts To Get Harbor Deepened

Miami's infant sugar industry which promises great development will probably be lost entirely unless the Chamber of Commerce succeeds in its efforts to obtain better harbor facilities for this city.

This was brought out at a hearing in the Chamber of Commerce auditorium yesterday afternoon before J. M. Braxton, acting U. S. district engineer, in a statement by Van Alen Harris, resident manager for the Pennsylvania Sugar Company.

Mr. Harris had submitted a letter to the chamber for presentation to Mr. Braxton in support of the chamber's petition for an appropriation to insure a depth of 25 feet and a width of 208 feet in the ship channel leading from the Atlantic ocean to the municipal docks on the west shore of Biscayne Bay, and was being questioned by Mr. Braxton relative to some of the statements contained in that letter when he submitted the possibility of the Pennsylvania Sugar Company abandoning its Everglades project unless better transportation facilities are obtained.

The sugar company has in Texas a sugar mill which it can sell for more than the original cost. To move the mill to its Everglades plantation, install and add to it as is contemplated would cost a million and a half dollars, Mr. Harris said, and before the company's directors expend this sum they must be assured that better transportation facilities are to be accorded.

Such is the importance of deeper water in the Miami harbor, as shown at yesterday's hearing.

### Harris' Letter.

Mr. Harris' letter to E. G. Sewell, president of the Chamber of Commerce, which Mr. Sewell submitted to Mr. Braxton in support of his petition, follows:

"This company has purchased 100,000 acres of Everglades lands along the Miami canal, for the development of sugar plantations with the necessary cane cultivation and sugar factories.

"The reason for our locating in this vicinity is because the Miami canal leads into Biscayne Bay, by way of the Miami river, giving us water transportation from our future mill sites to the harbor of Miami.

"The freight rate on sugar from Cuba

to New York or to Philadelphia, where our refinery is located, is fifty cents per hundred pounds. The freight rate from Miami to Philadelphia on sugar by rail is \$1.81, or more than three times as much on 100 pounds of sugar from Miami to Philadelphia, under present conditions, as from Cuba to Philadelphia.

"We started active operations in April of this year, although we had done some work before that time. We now have six hundred acres planted in sugar cane, and are planting at the rate of 20 acres per month. Our expenses for cultivation and other development work amounts to over \$30,000 per month.

"We are going ahead on this development on the supposition that Miami will have a deep harbor within the near future. If Miami does not have deep water by the time that the price of sugar drops to normal, we will not be able to compete with Cuban sugar and sugar development in Florida will be a failure.

"We have purchased a raw-sugar mill in Texas, which when erected here with the improvements which will have to be made to modernize the factory will cost us \$1,500,000. This factory will have a daily capacity of grinding 1,000 tons of cane and producing 100 tons of sugar per day.

"We are going ahead with our cultivation work, but our directors are not disposed to move the factory until we have some solution of the freight-rate question. No sugar company can afford to pay \$250,000 more freight in a grinding season than it would have to pay in Cuba. We must have water transportation from Miami in order to compete with Cuban sugar. There will be no difficulty in getting water transportation, if we have a harbor with twenty-five feet of water.

### Plan For Second Mill.

"We have only spoken of our first development, with a 1000-ton mill. It is the intention of this company to continue its development work, if the first development is satisfactory, which depends largely on transportation, so that the next mill would have a grinding

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