



Anwenderbericht

United States Ports: Coal Based Expansion

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In the past 18 months 'International Bulk Journal' has published approximately 80 pages of text discussing in depth issues affecting the expansion of dry bulk handling ports on the North American continent. These detailed the various projects on the U.S. east and west coasts the Canadian west coast the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway as well as those on the U.S. Gulf and, in particular the terminals of the Lower Mississippi.

This survey of recent IBJ reviews outlines major factors such as the dredging issue and leveling in coal export growth in 1982 which have influenced expansion projects in the U.S.

As a direct result of the rapid pace of steam coal increases intense debate in all sectors of the U.S. coal export industry has developed. Major topics for debate have included port congestion and vessel waiting time and the inability of existing ports to fully load vessels drawing more than 40-45 ft; the possible imposition of user fees aimed at recovering the cost of port and inland waterway maintenance and improvements; the attitude of the railroads particularly towards contract rate making and their application for the exemption of export coal moves from the regulatory control of the ICC; the formation of pressure groups such as the Alliance for Coal and Competitive Transportation (ACCD intended to promote slurry pipelines in competition with railroads; and the whole complex and divisive

issue of dredging requirement, funding and the permitting process not to mention the possible trend to building terminal over-capacity.

Of all the issues arising out of the export coal expansion dredging and coal terminal capacity dominate but while of course, these are interrelated it is important to see both issues separately.