

# Co-operative Elevators Favored

F. W. Green's Views on the Subject  
Balance of Debate on the Elevator question

Continued from Last Week

Frederick Kirkham, Saltreuil, said of three schemes of ownership, private, government, and public, he favored only the last. While paying a high tribute to the ability and integrity of Mr. Partridge, the speaker said he was not prepared to accept his resolution unless the word "public" was substituted for "government" in the scheme of ownership. The principle of the government's bill was to hand over the internal elevators to the farmers, to refuse to take a thing handed over to them in that manner was, like looking a gift horse in the mouth. Inside of twenty years, under this scheme, the elevators would become their own property. After pointing out that the commission were unanimous in their finding, the speaker referred to the speech of Mr. Langley, and remarked that that gentleman could have been tripped up over and over again if he had not been sincere in what he had told them. As one who had taken a stand in the Grain Growers' Guide against Mr. Langley, he was pleased to be able to pay him that tribute.

## Has no Faith in the Farmers

Mr. Stewart, of Milden, stated that for 12 years he had been interested in farmers' elevators, and he could assure them that it was not a satisfactory way of doing business. At one time quite a number of elevators over Manitoba were operated on practically the same principle as was proposed. (Cries of "No, no.") Well, the farmers had got to combine together under this scheme and that was what a farmers' elevator involved. He thought the majority of those elevators had gone down because the farmers themselves would not support them.

J. E. Paynter, Tantallon, remarked that the reason they had that resolution to discuss was because their legislators at the time the railway companies were granted charters, had not enough foresight to insist that those companies should build places to store their grain. He supported the resolution because the Tantallon Association passed a motion that the delegates could not support a half-way measure in dealing with questions of government ownership and operation of provincial elevators, but they demanded a system owned by the government and operated by an independent commission in conjunction with a board at each local point which should be elected by the Grain Growers' Association. He proposed that the report be laid on the table till the next convention so that the delegates might have the opportunity of considering it.

Mr. Craig seconded Mr. Paynter's amendment as he thought the delegates should wait and see how the Manitoba scheme worked out.

The conference then adjourned until the evening.

## Gets After Noble

Mr. Hawkes, at the evening session, in a very forceful manner stated his views. "I moved a resolution at our directors' meeting that we cut off Alberta and Manitoba in the negotiations and deal ourselves with projects which concerned ourselves. Mr. McCuaig comes up from Manitoba and rakes the Saskatchewan organization over the coals. I may say here that Manitoba got their system through us and it is very unfair to have a man come to dictate to us. We sent Mr. Green, the right man in the right place, to Ottawa and being a man deserving of our confidence, we should endorse his action at the capital. He was responsible and did just exactly as we had authorized him."

"The plan presented to the government," continued the speaker, "was not a cast-iron proposal. It was only a suggestion. The question needed to be most carefully studied, they would require to get down to rock bottom and establish a system that would be able to compete with powerful influences before referred to."

## Endorsed by Executive

Mr. Hawkes stated that he moved the following resolution at the directors' meeting at the close of the Prince Albert convention a year ago: "That in the event of the government asking or submitting names to us to serve on the commission that a meeting of the full board be called to endorse."

When names were submitted, a meeting was called at Moose Jaw, to decide on personnel of the commission and the following resolution was passed, moved by Mr. Tate, seconded by G. Boerma:

"We are pleased to note that the government have asked Mr. Langley and Mr. Green to serve on the commission and we unanimously hope they will accept."

At the passing of this resolution, when they were assured of the support of the Grain Growers, it was easy enough for these two men to accept the invitation of the government to act on the commission.

"Now, gentlemen," went on the speaker "we want to show the people that we are reasonable men. We do not want to go back and deprecate the mistakes that have been made, let us profit by them and go ahead and accomplish what we set out to do. We want thorough co-operation. I want you all to do the same; put your shoulder to the wheel and pull together."

## Fred W. Green

F. W. Green, Moose Jaw, secretary of the association, remarked that the elevator question was mooted by himself as a government ownership proposition at the Moose Jaw agricultural society nine or ten years ago. All along the line they had been impressed with the fact that God helped those who helped themselves. And

negotiations were broken. There was no question in his mind, he said, that what they were to ask that they would like to see a commission or committee appointed of the best men in the house to go right into the matter and think it out. A commission was appointed and they had got together a mass of information which he submitted it would have been impossible for any committee who had not thought over the matter; they had watched the scheme as it had been carried out in Manitoba; they had thought over the matter; they had conferred with hundreds of men and presented a report which was in the hands of the convention. They had the advantage of considering the system inaugurated by the Manitoba government and could decide upon it on its merits because the Grain Growers of Saskatchewan could not think out a better plan along those lines than the Grain Growers of Manitoba. He thought by this means the position was altogether changed.

## The Prince Albert Incident

Mr. Green then dealt briefly with the famous correspondence episode at the Prince Albert convention of last year. Mr. Green reminded his hearers that at that convention he declined to read certain correspondence from Premier Scott as it was of a confidential nature.

## OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS, 1911-1912

### SASKATCHEWAN GRAIN GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

#### President:

J. A. Maharg, Moose Jaw.

#### Vice-President:

Chas. A. Dunning, Beaverdale.

#### Secretary-Treasurer:

Fred W. Green, Moose Jaw.

#### Directors at Large:

E. A. Partridge, Sintaluta; F. W. Green, Moose Jaw; George Langley, Maymont; A. G. Hawkes, Percival; F. C. Tate, Grand Coulee; John Evans, Nutana.

#### District Directors:

No. 1—Jas. Robinson, Walpole; No. 2—J. R. Symons, Fairville; No. 3—T. Wood, Covington; No. 4—C. A. Dunning, Beaverdale; No. 5—W. B. Fels, Dundurn; No. 6—Dr. T. Hill, Kinley; No. 7—Thos. Cochrane, Melfort; No. 8—A. Knox, Prince Albert; No. 9—A. J. Grimsell, Denholm.

governments did too. At the first convention his resolution calling for Dominion government ownership was carried. It also carried at the next convention. Mr. Green went in detail into the negotiations with the provincial premiers leading up to the memorial which he presented to the Saskatchewan legislature. The result of the action of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers was that the Manitoba government came down, by express train to Brandon to let the Grain Growers' convention know they would go one better. So whatever they had got in Manitoba was started here. The directors there spent week after week in preparing a bill.

The action of the Manitoba government entirely changed the situation, because if they had not done what they had done, Saskatchewan would have had to go on experimenting. The government there had got hold of 163 elevators and they were in a position to know how their scheme was going to work out. The commission there knew the cost, also Mr. McCuaig had not told that convention what he had paid for the farmers' and line elevators. It was very important to know what the initial cost of the system was in trying to ascertain what the cost of running the system would be. The chairman of the commission had told them that a good deal of the experiment was as yet uncertain. The speaker thought Saskatchewan could well afford to go easy. They had got the elevator fellows on the run pretty well. They were buying wheat and giving the farmers number one price for number two and track price for street wheat. Mr. Green outlined the situation at the time the inter-provincial

After the convention was over, however, he changed his mind and had the whole of the correspondence printed. This was sent to the secretaries of the local organizations with instructions to bring it before their members. "It was all printed," said Mr. Green, "including that nasty thing The Standard said. A few of the secretaries returned the printed matter to me but the greater number did not."

The speaker then took up several of the points made by Mr. Partridge, of Sintaluta, earlier in the day. He quoted from a pamphlet, the production of Mr. Partridge, on the Hudson Bay railway, in which the author had expressed his sentiments on the members of the federal house. Mr. Green said he agreed with the sentiments expressed in Mr. Partridge's pamphlet.

## Some Personal Experience

Touching a personal note, Mr. Green remarked that he had been in the country for a good many years, and he did not think there was any man who worked harder than he had nor had handled more bushels of grain nor had loaded more cars over the loading platform, and he questioned whether any man had put more grain in the elevators than he had. He had \$500 stock in one of the best farmers' elevators in this country. They had several in their neighborhood doing co-operative buying and selling and they found it very successful and beneficial. They bought grain from those who wanted to sell, they shipped grain, they did every kind of business that the ordinary line elevator did, except the— (Loud

laughter.) They bought twine, flour, farm implements, every mortal thing. They were getting on very well. They paid for their elevator, but not out of one and three-quarter cents a bushel for handling grain. He questioned very much whether they could find anyone to get up and say he had made an elevator successful along that line.

## Spread of Co-operative Idea

The co-operative idea was spreading abroad over the province. People wanted to get into something that helped them along. Under a government ownership system their hands would be tied and their operations limited. He submitted that under the proposition outlined in the Elevator Bill, the farmers could get control if they wished of the entire elevator system of the province without one cent of capital being put up as cash. The Joint Stock Companies Ordinance permitted a minimum of fifteen per cent of paid-up stock. They could pay fifteen per cent, subscribe for enough stock to build the elevator, borrow money from the bank to pay for it and liquidate the debt by the proceeds of grain passing through the elevator. If they wanted to go into this thing and get possession of the elevators, they could lick the elevator men to a finish under this plan. The love of gain on their part of which Mr. Partridge had spoken would create the little spark of loyalty, and the association would go on. If they did not look after themselves in that business the other fellow was not very likely to.

He thought they might well apply to the elevator scheme the principles set out by Mr. Partridge in the pamphlet from which he had quoted. If the government backed them up in this thing and the Opposition joined hands with them and they quit that miserable, contemptible bickering in order to work together, they could bring to a successful issue the best proposition he ever saw put to the public in all his born days, a proposition of eighty-five cents on every dollar. Could not they show their belief in the scheme to the extent of fifteen cents on the hundred? (Cries of "Yes.") Well, if they could not, he would tell them that he did not want to have anything to do with any proposition they put up. Let the Grain Growers get together and any terms of the Elevator Bill to which they objected could soon be put right. Their great object was to keep the association acting unanimously. He did not want the government to get any credit for the scheme—there was none coming to them—and he did not want the Opposition to make anything out of it for there was nothing coming to them either.

## Absolutely Independent

A good deal had been said about an independent commission. Under the scheme proposed by the elevator bill they could employ whom they liked. If that was not good enough he did not know what else they wanted. He thought he knew as much about what the people of this country thought as any other man and he was satisfied that if they were willing to buckle in and give the scheme a trial, it would be a success; but if they did not want it, it could not be done. The government was willing to put up eighty-five cents on every dollar if they would take it. Mr. Green proceeded to explain the provisions of the scheme and submitted that under it they could buy elevators for half of what the people of Manitoba paid for theirs.

Question: Why would you buy them at all?

Mr. Green: Well, sir, we could just do as we blamed pleased when we got this thing going. (Laughter.) Other advantages of the scheme, continued Mr. Green, were that the farmers need not purchase old elevators unless they wished to; that they would avoid political cleavages; that they need not commence to build elevators until they were ready to do so; that they would be more permanent than a voluntary association; that the cost of creating such a system (to quote Mr. Partridge) must be paid for out of the commodity handled, whether it be provided by individuals, companies or governments; that their companies could erect a terminal if necessary, which would be a much more difficult proposition under

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