

Convention of Union of B.C. Municipalities

Convention Recommend the Enactment of Legislation to Empower Municipalities to Invest Sinking Funds in Provincial Bonds and in Own Local Improvements Not to Exceed 50% of Amount in Sinking Funds.

The report of the Nanaimo delegates to the convention of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities follows in part:

In accordance with instructions, we attended the annual convention of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, which opened in the City of Kamloops at 10 a.m., Thursday, October 22nd. Sixty-one delegates presented credentials, and several more were added at following sessions. An immense amount of business was transacted, all of it important, and some vital to the success of the municipalities. Several very excellent addresses were delivered, a few good papers were read, and the discussions thereon were characterized mostly by sound judgment, practical common sense, and, in nearly every case, temperate language. In only one instance did the discussion become somewhat heated, but the admirable tact of President Robinson averted what might have developed into a political squabble, and enabled a satisfactory decision to be reached. This was in reference to the report of the solicitor, Mr. McDiarmid, which was objected to, not because of the subject matter, but because of the somewhat strong language. The conclusions arrived at by the solicitor were concurred in by the large majority of the delegates, but a resolution was adopted urging the Government to amend the Act where it restricts the free action of the municipal councils and places so much power in the hands of the Attorney-General. A large number of proposed amendments to the Municipal Clauses Act were considered, many of which were dropped. Some were referred to the executive or to the next convention, and a good many were adopted, and the Government will be urged to incorporate them in the Act at the next session of the Legislature. Amongst these, the most important were the elimination of the absolute control of municipalities by the Attorney-General's Department. The defining in the statute itself of the powers and duties of the inspector, providing for the election by the citizens of police and licensing commissioners and the nomination of police magistrates by the councils, the abolition of cumulative voting whereby corporations sometimes are able to dominate elections, restricting rate of interest on delinquent taxes to 8 per cent. That the Government issue debentures bearing interest at 4½ per cent. and for suitable terms in which stock municipalities may be permitted to invest sinking funds, also that they may be allowed to invest sinking funds in their own bonds. There were many other amendments to the Act recommended to the favorable consideration of the Government and the executive was instructed to urge their adoption. Probably some of them will be. Ald. Woodhouse of Vancouver read a very able paper re methods of dealing with the grave conditions created by the war. After a lively discussion it was resolved to urge upon the Government the necessity of taking measures to fully develop our natural resources and to promote the use of products of Provincial industries, meantime that municipal councils do

their utmost to promote local industries and that all be urged to help out by using wherever possible the products of local industry.

(The address of Mr. Baird, Inspector of Municipalities, is quoted in full in this issue.)

The convention visited the Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Tranquille and voted to increase their own subsidies for patients sent by 25%.

A resolution to close the saloons during the war was voted down, as also one to further restrict the hours when they should keep open. It is certain that the liquor question will be forced more and more prominently to the front, as it is plain there is a very strong opposition to the traffic in all the municipalities.

A resolution was adopted urging the Government to loan money to the farmers on long terms and at low rates, so as to enable all our food products to be raised in British Columbia.

A number of amendments to the constitution were adopted, and Chilliwack was selected for next year's convention.

The following officers were elected:

President—Mayor Gray of New Westminster.

Vice-President—Mayor Baxter of Vancouver.

Secretary-Treasurer—Ex-Reeve Bose of Surrey.

Solicitor—Mr. McDiarmid.

Executive—Mayor Crawford, Kamloops; Mayor Barber, Chilliwack; Mayor Stewart, Victoria; Mayor Wright, Armstrong; Reeve Kerr, South Vancouver; Reeve McGregor, Saanich; Councillor Bridgeman, North Vancouver.

Victoria has been selected for the next convention of the Union of Canadian Municipalities, to which ex-President Robinson was delegated as the representative of the Union of B. C. Municipalities.

We have to thank the council and citizens of Kamloops for their generous hospitality, and to say that the convention was a huge success, and that the Union of B. C. Municipalities is an institution deserving of support and a most effective means of voicing the needs and demonstrating the power of the municipalities of the Province.—Nanaimo Herald.

IMMIGRATION AND LAND SETTLEMENT

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disabilities attendant upon our efforts to place settlers upon our lands in any large numbers, and these disabilities must be removed to whatever extent may lie in our power. There can be no question that a new era is about opening in respect to the future of this Province in so far as the land settlement problem is concerned. We are going to have the settler knocking at our door, and we must get ready to receive him.

"I anticipate that one of the most important matters dealt with at the forthcoming session of the Legislature will be the whole question of land settlement and aids to agricultural development. To anticipate and appreciate the extent of the responsibility which rests upon us in this connection seems to me a prudent thing to do at this time."