

independent political action to put it into effect was made by each provincial organization. In the Parliament at Ottawa this New National Policy, promulgated by the organized farmers, was placed on Hansard at least twice by members of the House.

Political Action.

When the Canadian Council of Agriculture issued the draft copy of its platform in November, 1918, there was little or no expectation that on the strength of it a demand for direct political action would be made by the different farmers' associations at their annual conventions. The first clause in the constitution of the Council of Agriculture reads as follows: "To encourage the farm population of the Dominion to organize for the study of educational, economic, social and political problems having a bearing upon the happiness and material prosperity of the people." In the spirit of that clause, the draft of the Farmers' Platform was issued—to develop an intelligent, well-informed electorate rather than to create a political party. But the demand from the people who in reality had evolved the main planks of the platform from year to year for more than fifteen years, was irresistible. The delegates, at their annual conventions in 1919, with united voice, declared that they had waited long enough upon the two old parties to give them needed reforms. If the measures advocated in the Farmers' Platform were to be realized at all, it was felt that steps must be taken to launch a new political movement which would be free from all centralized autocratic influences, and whose elected representatives in Parliament would stand uncompromisingly by the New National Policy. The resignation of Hon. T. A. Crerar from the Union Government gave an added stimulus both to the Farmers' Platform and to the political movement, arising out of it. Mr. Crerar, a year later, became