WESTERN FARMERS OPPOSE OPEN WHEAT MARKET

Meeting of Canadian Council of Agriculture Also Criticizes Tax Exemption of War Bonds and Report of Cost of Living Committee

A FINAL meeting of the Canadian Council of Agriculture held a few days ago in Winnipeg went on record against the opening of the Canadian market to unrestricted trading in wheat and also emphasized their opinion that the appeal board which is to act under the Grain Act should be located in Winnipeg. Referring also to the crop situation in Southern Alberta, the council urged that the Dominion government complete the surveys in connection with the irrigation project in order that development work might be commenced as soon as possible.

The resolution dealing with the wheat market is as follows:—

"Understanding that the government of Canada has taken no action to control the marketing of the Canadian wheat crop of 1919, and in view of the following facts: (1) That the entire importation of wheat into European countries is under government control. (2) That the United States, Canada's principal competitor in the sale of wheat, has created a highly organized and well financed corporation under government direction, to dispose of its exportable surplus of wheat. (3) That it is imperative in the national interest that Canada should secure the maximum return for its wheat crop, and further (1) That the opening of the markets for unrestricted trading in wheat on the Canadian grain exchanges, as is in immediate prospect, would promote speculative rather than legitimate trading. (2) That because the true function of grain exchanges can be performed only when international operations are completely possible in an unrestricted way, they would entirely fail to provide means for disposing successfully of the wheat crop. (3) That trading under such conditions with their attendant risks would provide a market at country points for the farmers wheat only at prices much below its real value, and at times would be bound to result in their being no country market at all.

"Therefore, the Canadian Council of Agriculture is strongly opposed to the opening of the Canadian markets for unrestricted trading in wheat and would reiterate its recommendation of August, 1918, that the government of Canada create, without delay, a body similar to the United States Grain corporation, with like powers and functions and with the financial accommodation adequate to its operations."

Want no Exemptions

Regarding the exemption of war bonds and the report of the cost of living committee of the House of Commons, the council expressed itself in the following terms:—

"Whereas, it is estimated, the war debt of Canada at the end of the present year will be approximately $2,000,000,000, or nearly $250 per capita, and the annual interest charge on this debt will be about $11,500,000 or $14 per capita, which enormous indebtedness will tax the resources of the nation to the utmost.

"And whereas, the war bonds issued by the government of Canada, exempt from taxation, are steadily becoming concentrated in the possession of a few individuals and corporations, who are thus escaping the payment of their fair share of taxation.

"Therefore be it resolved that the Council of Agriculture recommends to the federal government, that the income from war bonds shall be made subject to the regular taxes imposed upon ordinary incomes."

Wheat Price and Living Costs

"Resolved that the Canadian Council of Agriculture is unable to discover either in the evidence given by the witnesses before the cost of living committee at Ottawa, or anywhere in the report made by that committee to the House of Commons, anything which justifiably can be made to serve as a foundation for the outstanding importance given in that report to the present price of wheat as a factor in the cost of living. The committee is careful to point out that it makes no attempt to say whether the price of wheat fixed by the government was fair and just; it is also careful to say nothing at all about the fact that the fixing was done not to keep the price of wheat up, but to hold it down. Competent authorities have stated that if there had been no such action taken by the government, the price would have risen to nearly double the figure at which it was fixed. In that event there would have been a high rate of profit to the wheat growers, indeed, but not nearly as high as the rate of profit actually realized by some of the tariff protected manufacturers on necessaries of life. The manner in which the committee's report touches upon those exorbitant profits and also upon the excessive elaboration and costliness of distribution methods can only be characterized as lenient in contrast with the vigor of the endeavor made to give the fixed price to which wheat has been held down a disproportionate magnitude among the factors in the cost of living in anada at the present time."

BUILDING PERMITS MORE THAN DOUBLE

April building permits in 35 large cities of Canada were more than double those for March, or for April, 1918. In view of the continued high prices of building materials and of labor, this increase can be considered large. Details are as follows:—

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR FIGURES	March 1919	April 1919	April 1918	April, 1919, compared with April, 1918. Increase + Decrease — Amount	Per Cent.
CITIES	$	$	$	$	
Nova Scotia	282,230	418,835	328,103	+90,732	+27.85
Halifax	256,775	363,735	306,850	+ 56 885	+ 18.54
Sydney	25,455	55,100	21,253	+ 33,847	+159.26
New Brunswick	42,625	742.02	47,925	+694,100	+1,448.30
Moncton	19,375	742,025	12,550	+729,475	+5,812.55
St. John	23,250	....	35,375	− 35,375	....
Quebec	379,250	839,124	825,629	+13,495	+1.63
Montreal, Maisonneuve	228,208	446,470	648,510	−202,040	− 31.15
Quebec	96,467	270,125	109,044	+161,081	+147.72
Sherbrooke	25,700	23,500	800	+ 22,700	+2.837.50
Three Rivers	14,250	40,800	48,275	− 7,475	− 15.48
Westmount	14,625	58,229	19,000	+ 39,229	+206.49
Ontario	1,777,947	3,229,997	1,239,493	+1,990,504	+160.59
Brantford	20,955	131,205	24,830	+106,375	+428.41
Fort William	1,275	7,450	5,940	+ 1,510	+ 25.42
Guelph	4,720	53,385	26,310	+ 27,075	+102.91
Hamilton	231,120	483,310	241,200	+242,110	+ 96.00
Kingston	8,535	204,595	40,849	+163,746	+400.86
Kitchener	21,880	58,405	12,620	+ 45,785	+362.80
London	58,520	137,000	86,260	+ 50,740	+ 58 82
Ottawa	234,540	199,920	42,846	+157,074	+366.60
Peterborough	2,990	17,790	12,760	+ 5,030	+ 39.42
Port Arthur	5,457	35,271	11,216	+ 24,055	+214.47
Stratford	4,690	9,223	12,655	− 3,432	− 27.12
St. Catharines	23,820	82,282	53,990	+ 28,292	+ 52.40
St. Thomas	9,960	69,725	6,355	+ 63,370	+997.17
Toronto	1,005,560	1,620,996	570,532	+1,050,464	+184.12
Windsor	143,925	119,440	91,130	+ 28,310	+ 31.07
Manitoba	63,900	243,975	174,975	+69,000	+39.43
Brandon	21,200	4,375	1,075	+ 3,300	+306.98
Winnipeg	42,700	239,600	173,900	+ 65,700	+ 37.78
Saskatchewan	119,400	343,060	154,525	+188,535	+122.01
Moose Jaw	27,300	44,215	30,130	+ 14,085	+ 46.75
Regina	40,700	187,480	29,310	+158,170	+539.65
Saskatoon	51,400	111,365	95,085	+ 16,280	+ 17.12
Alberta	197,600	407,825	72,175	+335,650	+465.05
Calgary	195,400	343,000	56,400	+286,600	+508.16
Edmonton	2,200	64,825	15,775	+ 49,050	+310.94
British Columbia	151,413	233,065	184,480	+48,585	+26.34
New Westminst'r	9,700	14,200	13,350	+ 850	+ 6.37
Vancouver	119,013	206,840	163,230	+ 43,610	+ 26.72
Victoria	22,700	12 025	7,900	+ 4,125	+ 52.22
Total	$3,014,365	$6,457,906	$3,027,305	+$3,430,601	+113.32

The commission appointed by the Alberta government to carry out the act recently passed to assist municipalities has taken an office in the court house, Edmonton. The secretary is Major Nash.