

Epitome of a Triumphant Year

Report of Directors of United Farmers of Alberta, a Record of achievements throughout. Their endeavors have been ceaseless to obtain much needed reform
Presented at U.F. A. Convention

We have the honor to present this, our first annual report. Since our last annual convention many matters affecting the growth and work of the association have been considered by your directors and by the executive committee appointed by your directors.

Immediately after the last convention your directors received an invitation from Premier Rutherford to attend a convention to discuss the Western Grain Route. Your directors accepted this invitation and at the request of the premier appointed 25 delegates to officially represent the association. This convention was a large and representative one, the matter of western shipments being discussed from the standpoint of all interests, and the result being that a committee was appointed to lay the findings of the convention before the Hon. Sir Richard Cartwright, Minister of Trade and Commerce. This committee proceeded to Ottawa in April and met with a very favorable reception, and there presented a report asking for government ownership of terminal elevators, with an alternative of railway ownership and government control, the establishment of a new inspection division to consist of the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, two car order books, one for eastern and one for western shipments, and that the provisions of the Manitoba Grain Act be made to apply to all western, as well as eastern, shipments.

The delegation was informed that the government would not undertake the ownership of terminals and then asked that as an alternative the railways be compelled to operate their special facilities for handling grain, i.e., their terminal elevators, on the same basis as their other freight warehouses. This request was favorably received, although nothing has been done in the matter so far. In regard to the other requests, the committee was informed that if they met with the approval, the officers in charge of the working of the act they would be granted, and it is now announced that all arrangements are completed for the establishment of a survey board at Calgary, this being the total work accomplished so far by the committee. On returning westward an interview was arranged with Mr. Whyte, second vice-president of the C.P.R., and the matter of western shipments taken up with him.

Private Concern Turned Down

Mr. Whyte promised that the C.P.R. would erect a terminal elevator at Vancouver with a capacity of 250,000 bushels, and capable of being added to as the trade demanded it, the elevator to be built in time for the 1909 business. Mr. Whyte has not seen fit to keep his promise and therefore the western shipment movement is not in as flourishing a condition as was expected would be the case. Your directors have been approached by individuals to consent to the formation of a company to erect terminals on the Pacific coast, and then to approach the provincial governments to guarantee the bonds of this company, but have refused positively to have anything to do with such a proposition, believing that it was to the best interests of the farmers of Alberta to see that the terminals were in safe hands from the start. For this reason, nothing has been done and your directors would ask for an expression of opinion from you in regard to the subject, and whether their stand in the matter of a private company was the correct one.

Your directors have also taken up the matter of suggested changes in the Manitoba Grain Act up with the Dominion government and received an answer that it was not the intention of the government to bring in any amendments to the act at the present session of parliament. In accordance with your instructions at the last annual meeting, your directors appointed a transportation committee, consisting of Messrs. Bower, Woolford and Ottewill. This committee will present a separate report on the work undertaken during the year. A legislative committee, consisting of the president, vice-president and secretary, was

also appointed, and although the work of this committee was not strenuous it was able to do some good work, as will be reported later.

Organization Plans

Your directors, early in the year, took up the matter of organization and appointed each director official organizer for his own district, but this was found to be not altogether satisfactory, and at the last meeting held it was decided to try and arrange for a permanent organizer to take charge of the whole work. This is urgently needed and if a satisfactory scheme can be outlined, there is every reason to expect that the membership will be doubled in a very short time. Your directors decided to have the constitution printed in English and in German and the work of distributing the latter was left in the hands of Mr. von Mielecki, the director for the Calgary district. It was also decided to order a large supply of stationery, receipt books and buttons and supply them to the local unions at cost price.

Your directors appointed the president to attend the convention of Saskatchewan Grain Growers held at Weyburn in February last, and he was accompanied by the vice-president to attend a meeting of the Inter-Provincial Council. This meeting recommended the organization of the council on a permanent basis, and also took up the matter of government ownership of initial elevators, which has been brought to such a successful conclusion in Manitoba. The matter of terminal elevators was also considered, and at a later date your secretary had the privilege of serving on the delegation from Manitoba and Saskatchewan in presenting the petition to the Dominion government.

The Pork Packing Plant

As was to be expected, the most serious proposition before your directors this year was that of the government pork packing plant. Your directors are unanimous on the question, in fact it might safely be said that all the farmers are unanimous, and have done everything to bring this to a successful conclusion, even going so far as to send out a petition to the unions with the result that a number of petitions were sent in to the Live Stock Commissioner signed by farmers and guaranteeing a supply of over 20,000 hogs. The executive committee waited upon the premier in May and asked to have the matter settled, but nothing has been done. The fuller report of the interviews with the government will be given by the legislative committee. Your directors feel that it will be advisable for the delegates at the annual convention to express their views on the subject, as it is feared that there may be an attempt to block this scheme, which, when in full operation, will be a blow to certain business interests, and it may be that their influence is being used against the proposition. In any event, a whole year has gone since the report of the pork packing commission was accepted, and nothing has been done.

The matter of hail insurance is also receiving attention and this will be dealt with by the legislative committee in their report.

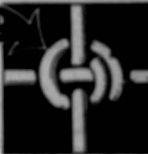
Your directors have received numerous requests asking for assistance in the matter of the gopher pest, and have, during the last few months, had under consideration and investigation a scheme originated by a firm of druggists in Chicago. Your directors have, however, come to the conclusion that the scheme is too vague and unsatisfactory at present and therefore it cannot be recommended. At present the only sure plan seems to be the scheme of co-operation as laid down in the Local Improvement Act.

At the request of East Clover Bar union, your directors took up the matter of the inadequate system of inspection of weights and measures, with the result that the district was sub-divided and an additional inspector appointed. The full concessions asked for were not secured, but a step in the right direction has been made.

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