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Farmers and Quacks

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MANY are the phrases, catch words and slogans that are used these days to camouflage the real and only issue that stands between the farmers and other members of the working class and their emancipation.

I have here before me the official organ of the United Farmers of Alberta, namely the U. F. A., of February 1st, 1923. It contains a full report of the seventh annual address of President H. W. Wood, also a summary, or diary, as they call it, of the annual Convention held in Calgary January 16th to 19th, of this year. I will deal with some passages of the President's address first, as he is "the" leading light of the farmers' organization, the U. F. A. And let us all take note of the veritable bunk that emanates from this highly esteemed leader of the blind.

After dealing slightly with the crisis in Agriculture in the first paragraph, the second runs: "In fact there are those who believe that a complete collapse is imminent, that the violent abuse from quack doctoring of our economic system has gone so far that a general breaking down is unavoidable, and that on the wreckage of our present Mammonistic financial system a new one will have to be slowly and laboriously built."

Quack doctoring is right. We have only to view the past political somersaults of Messrs. Crearer & Co., leading lights in the U. G. G., i.e., the financial foster mother of the U. F. A. Again, Mr. Wood says: "We are beginning this year with a world-wide economic condition in which agriculture is prostrate, trade tottering, industrial activities arrested, while poverty and misery are world-wide and increasing; all because the blind Samson of finance has seen fit to put his strength against the supporting pillars of industrialism, and the structure is tottering to a fall." Here we have more quackery! Putting the sole blame of industrial world-wide chaos on the financial mechanism of capitalism alone without explanation. Why Mr. Samson should do anything so base and cruel is not disclosed.

He again innocently remarks: "Why not look the situation squarely in the face, and at least admit that our financial and economic structure needs a thorough systematic, and scientific investigation with the view of finding and correcting flaws and defects? By this method and no other can we hope to establish a firm and stable basis for optimism regarding the future of civilization." I am sure that Mr. Wood should know full well that scientific and systematic investigation has been going on by the master class for ages, as to the best and most effective methods to fleece the farmers and the wage workers of the surplus they produce. On the other hand, if he expects the ruling class to stop fleecing by investigation, etc., then he is expecting something beyond reason. The fleecing of the slaves can't be stopped by such methods, nor by social reforms and palliatives, but by the understanding by the people of the underlying social and economic laws that rule and govern human conduct.

The U. F. A. and the U. G. G. and the labor fakirs are not interested in educating the farmers and the working class along scientific lines. They evade the real issue of exploitation and skinning as they would poison. Financial Reform is the latest dope

they try to inoculate into our systems. Major Douglas's book on "Economic Democracy." "Credit Power and Democracy," "The New Economics" by Cumberland and Harrison, and various others who try to discredit the labor theory of Surplus Value and raise anew on a higher pedestal old theories garbed in new language that have been relegated to the scrap heap of bunk years ago. These gentry try to tell the Farmer and other slaves that the Bankers are the real robbers. The mortgage companies, oil trusts, steel trusts, machinery and engineering combines, who heap and conjure billions of dollars every year out of "gall and thin air" are all right; they don't exploit labor. The laborer is not exploited at all by these gentry; they (the capitalists) are really benefactors, benevolent, kind hearted folk who are interested solely in having prosperous times to keep the poor workers and their wives and babies in a grub stake—altruistic, kindly disposed gentlemen that they are!

But may we ask Mr. Wood, Mr. Douglas, et. al.—Why? If the financiers are fleecing the poor farmers, and the industrial workers who own no finances practically and can borrow next to nothing as they are nearly always broke, with the exception of 3 per cent of the farmers, and less than that of the industrial workers which is not worth speaking of, there must be a tremendous amount of skinning and fleecing taking place all the time by the naughty financiers of those who own real property, such as the big capitalistic concerns, etc., railroad and steamship outfits, etc, etc.

I am afraid it is from some of the bigger interests that the voice of Economic Democracy is coming. They will use the workers to do the squealing and kicking, as they have always done in the past!

Reverting back to Mr. H. W. Wood and the U. F. A. Convention. He says: "Political democracy and political autocracy are irreconcilable, and we find all the adherents of political autocracy fighting against political democracy, even though in an extremity they may have to fight together." I am sure they will fight together; if they may have political petty squabbles there will be no blood spilt. They will all join together in defence of private property, and in trying to rear the derelict structure of capitalism on a foundation of sand, that the farm and industrial slaves may again be more effectively exploited. But it can't be done. Economic forces inherent in the present social order can no longer harmonize with the glad song of rent, interest and profit.

Further on in his speech he deals with immigration, and bewails the fact that the land is unsettled. He says: "That it is in the best interest of all concerned that any country should be settled to a normal degree of density would hardly be questioned by anyone."

Surely anyone with a modicum of knowledge of economics will not agree that a denser settlement than we have now will be favourable to the Western farmer. A few million more settlers on the Western prairies will simply mean a few million more bushels of wheat, and thousands more of cattle, sheep and swine to swell an already glutted world market. The wail of all our politicians, bourgeois econom-

ists, press, and the U. F. A. is for markets. Still Wood & Company hearken to their master's voice for more cheap slaves to increase the ranks of an ever swelling, industrial reserve army.

The greater the volume of farm commodities produced, according to the law of supply and demand, the cheaper these commodities will become, which will mean more starvation and misery to the farmers. In order to be logical Mr. Wood ought to be advocating a curtailment of farm production, such as is being advocated by the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, in their special sphere of production.

Further on, Mr. Wood after giving facts and figures on immigration shows there is something wrong as the settlers refuse to settle after they get on the land. He does not tell us what the cause of this state of affairs is. Neither does he tell us of 15 to 20 years ago, when this great and glorious west was being settled, when slaves from across the pond were forced to leave their happy homes and their relatives and friends, and come to a cold country, and suffer privation and hardships that no dumb animals could patiently endure. This story can hardly be crammed in a short article. Volumes could be written on the tears and blood and sweat and cold and hunger of those who did the pioneering work, and out of whom fortunes have been extracted. Today they are still slaves, poor, wretched, and cast adrift in the foul stinking mess of the Capitalist system, still victims of strange delusions, ready to lend a listening ear to all kinds of freaks and quacks who talk of reforms, and co-operation, wheat pools, group governments, farmers' banks and other piffle that is supposed to deliver them out of their wretched misery into the promised land, where life will be one continual round of pleasure.

WHAT THE CONVENTION DID (Copied from U. F. A. official organ.)

Asked Alberta Legislature to create provincial wheat pool, if efforts to establish Federal pool should not succeed.

Urged Dominion Government to establish adequate grain storage facilities at Pacific Coast, and to abolish discrimination in west bound freight rates.

Re-indorsed resolutions asking for Province owned Bank and Federal Loan department, but rejected proposal that Alberta Government should issue Provincial Bonds to liquidate farmers' debts under a funding plan.

Adopted proposition of new constitution.

Proposed creation of Dominion wide organization to be known as "The United Farmers of Canada."

Approved livestock pooling plan as outlined by the U. G. G.

Asked Federal Government to assist needy settlers by providing seed grain for new land or land under summer fallow, and feed for the necessary horse power.

Asked Alberta Government to make the Drought Relief Commissioner official assignee in rural districts.

I leave it to Clarion readers to judge if this is an honest effort to emancipate the farmers from the yoke of capitalism.

Conditions will prevail in the near future when quacks and quackery will not satisfy the needs, wants and desires of the farmer. He will seek another route whereby he can get relief. That route is understanding of the forces that are keeping them chained to a master class; he will make common cause with his brother wage slave.