

Macleod Farmers' Case

The following is the memorial presented to R. L. Borden by the organized farmers of Macleod, Alta.

"On the occasion of your visit to Alberta, we, the members of the United Farmers of Alberta living in the Macleod constituency of the Dominion House, wish to convey to you a most hearty greeting and welcome to our province and to thank you for the opportunity presented of placing our views before you.

"The Macleod constituency is a large one and is strictly rural, and therefore the large percentage of its population is farmers, so we as farmers are naturally interested in the different questions of the day. As your time is limited it is not our intention to bring before you a long series of addresses upon the different resolutions which we are presenting to you, but we would state that we have in the Macleod constituency 46 local branches of the United Farmers of Alberta with a total membership in these branches of 1,868, so that it can safely be said that we are representing public opinion to some extent at least.

For the Common Good

"We would state further, sir, that the views as expressed in our addresses and resolutions have not emanated from any one man, but are the result of the deliberations of a representative committee duly appointed to give expression to the wishes of our members as had been expressed at a district convention held at Macleod on May 25th last. We would also state that we are not affiliated with any political party but that we are working for the common good of our fair country and that nothing short of the demands which have been continually made for several years will ever satisfy the farmers of Western Canada. We are not asking for class legislation but are simply asking that we be given a square deal in the legislation of the country. We do not believe in lobbying and we are sure that our cause is such a just one that this practice is not necessary, and that our demands should be granted without the obstructions which they have met with in the past.

Curse of Party

"We know, sir, that such is the nature of our political parties and government of today that it is not possible for you to successfully initiate legislation, but we know also that you have the power by obstruction of preventing needed legislation from being placed upon the statute books of the Dominion. We have watched this obstruction and are sorry that it has tied up badly needed measures during the past session, and we cannot help but wonder why some legislation can go through the House with hardly any discussion while that in which the farmers are interested is blocked at every turn. We believe that a word from you would prevent a repetition of such blockades when the House reconvenes and trust you will have been convinced ere you return to Ottawa that it is necessary for the measures in which we are interested to become law, no matter by whom they are introduced, and that the game of party politics should be abandoned for the common welfare of the country.

Are Free Traders

"Dealing more specifically with the questions in which we are interested, the first one is, of course, that of the tariff. We are, on the whole, free traders, and we believe that it would be to the interest of Canada to kill that octopus which has grown up under our present protective tariff. You heard the views of the farmers as expressed at Ottawa on December 16th last, and which have been published in booklet form, partly, we understand, through your efforts. The statements made at that time were correct and are correct today. The views expressed at that time are our views and we believe that if they are acceded to the result would be beneficial to all.

"Sir, at the close of that convention it was reported that you had made the statement that for the first time since the year 1896 the treasury benches of the House had been occupied by men in whom you had the fullest confidence.

If this statement is correctly credited to you can you wonder why we are asking you to assist in passing the legislation to which we are interested, and wondering at the schemes which have been adopted in prevent same from being acted upon?

Tariff Must Go

"We are asking for reciprocal free trade between Canada and the United States in many of the commodities in which we are interested, for the increase of the British preference, and for a further gradual increase of this preference until in ten years' time there would be absolute free trade between Canada and the Motherland.

"We realize that it is upon the markets of the world, where there is free competition for all, that the prices of our products are fixed, and that to a large extent the export prices fix the prices for home consumption, while when we wish to purchase anything we have to do so in the restricted area decided on by the combines and trusts which have sprung up as the result of our protective tariff. We realize further that the tariff is used largely to enable mergers to be floated and to bring the water into these mergers upon which we, as consumers, have to pay the dividends. We are also aware that these interests do not pay any large amount of duty, but by the system of drawbacks

arguments either for or against this agreement, the resolution we are presenting to you contains our views and we therefore content ourselves with asking that the relief asked for and offered at the present time be allowed to become effective, and, further, that steps be taken to bring about the successful consummation of the wishes of the organized farmers of Canada, as expressed by them on December 16 last. We would only state further that the remarks which have been made about the farmers and the dismemberment of the Empire is an insult to us, that we are loyal to our own country and to the Mother country and we believe this loyalty can best be encouraged by introducing the policy of free trade into our country. We do not believe in flag flying and waving at every opportunity, but we do believe in that deep inbred loyalty which means so much for the success of our Empire.

The Elevator Question

"There are other questions on which we would like your co-operation. There is that of the government ownership of terminal elevators. The bill which was introduced into the Senate, known as the Canadian Grain Act, met with our approval provided that all the clauses of the act were enforced at once, and we would ask that you use your influence

"Another subject in which we are interested is that of the Hudson's Bay railway and the operation and control of railways generally. We are unhesitatingly opposed to the granting of bonuses to any company or to the guaranteeing of their bonds. We believe that the country is large and prosperous enough to enable railways to be built and operated successfully without having the country pay for them, and that if such is not the case that it would be better to operate all railways as a public utility under an independent commission. We are pleased to note the steps which have been taken in regard to the building of the Hudson's Bay railway, but we would urge that you use your influence to prevent this important outlet from getting into the control of any corporation. It is necessary to us that this road should remain in the control of the government and that it should be operated by them, as only by this means will we be able to secure an equitable adjustment of rates.

Railway Regulation

"We are also greatly interested in the amendments to the Railway Act which were introduced into Parliament just previous to the adjournment. These amendments were drafted at the direct request of the organized farmers and are necessary to enable us to secure a square deal from the railway companies. We had hoped, seeing that the amendments were drafted by the chairman of the board of railway commissioners and had been approved on our behalf by the president of the Canadian Council of Agriculture and endorsed by the associations affiliated with this council, that they would be allowed to go through the House without any interruption. Possibly it might be thought that we have not the influence to command attention and for this reason the amendments were opposed, but we would assure you, sir, that the present law is a rank injustice to the farmers and that the amendments introduced are absolutely necessary to us. Probably if we had the backing of big interests and asked for the government to pledge the credit of the country by guaranteeing the bonds of some enterprise, such as the building of a railway through new territory, there might be some reason for the objections, but seeing that we have only asked for amendments which were fair and just to all concerned we are at a loss to understand where the opposition is coming from and would ask you to use your influence with any recalcitrant member of your party so that this relief will be granted us immediately after the House reconvenes.

Chilled Meat Industry

"Hand in hand with the grain trade is that of the stock raiser. This industry is a very important one indeed and we have been trying for years to get some measure of relief whereby the producer would secure some fair returns for his labors. We have asked for a complete chilled meat system under the operation and control of the government, whereby the producers and the consumers would be adequately protected. We believe your interest and co-operation would go a long way toward securing this relief. It is necessary that some such assistance be granted before the meat industry of Canada will be placed upon a stable basis, and we are sure that only by such assistance will it be possible to break up the combine which now controls the industry. A statement was recently credited to the premier of New Zealand that before he will allow the big interests to control and cripple the meat industry of that Dominion he will introduce measures for the nationalization of the industry. Surely what can be done in that country, smaller and lacking the great natural resources of ours, can be done here. We can say without the slightest hesitation that there will not be much opportunity of placing the industry upon a permanent basis until the relief is granted, and we



Carman Grain Growers' Picnic

the net revenue to the government on the commodities absolutely necessary to us as tillers of the soil, the raw materials of our farms, for so the implements and machinery can be designated, is very small, and that the only advantage of the present fiscal system is that it enables the combines and mergers to fix the prices which we must pay for our needed supplies, to enable them to charge us with the duty and with their profit upon same and to stifle competition which might result from a free market. That such conditions can exist is an injustice to all and we ask that Special Privilege of this kind should be abolished and that all classes be placed upon an equal footing.

Approve Reciprocity Agreement

"We have been pressing for the widest possible measure of reciprocal trade with the United States, and we therefore welcomed the introduction of this reciprocity measure into the House. We regret that you have seen fit to prevent and obstruct the passage of this measure, and we trust that on your return to Ottawa you will be prepared to allow same to become law. We have endorsed the reciprocity agreement, not because we are satisfied with it in its entirety, for it is not broad or comprehensive enough to suit us, but because it is a step in the right direction and we can see in the consummation of same the first step towards the goal for which we are aiming, free trade.

"We do not intend to enter into any

to facilitate the passing of this bill at as early a date as possible so that we may have the benefit of its being in operation for this year's crop. The present prospects are that we shall have the largest crop in the history of Western Canada and the fullest possible machinery is necessary to enable the farmers' interests to be fully protected. We would further ask that you use your influence so that the financial provision for the grain commission to acquire all terminal elevators, either by purchase or lease, and operate them as a public utility be enforced at once, as we cannot believe that absolute control can be secured in any other way. We are prepared to bear our share of the cost of the system by the placing of charges upon our grain in passing through the terminal elevators, which will be sufficient to pay off the original cost, with interest, in a reasonable time.

"We would also point out to you the absolute necessity of further relief for us in Alberta by the opening up of the Western route and by the providing of proper terminal facilities at the Pacific Coast. The prospects of the blockade which will be facing us this fall is not at all promising and we believe this can be remedied by providing the necessary facilities at the Pacific Coast. We are committed to government ownership and operation and we ask for your assistance in securing same by allowing the grain bill to become law as speedily as possible when the House reconvenes.