

OFFICIAL CIRCULAR No. 2

To the Officers and Members of.....

Local No.

Ladies and Gentlemen:—Our ninth annual convention is over and the majority of our delegates, except those travelling over the C.N.R., have reached home and had time to think somewhat over the work that has been done. I think there will be very little difference of opinion as to the truth of the statement that the convention which has just closed was the most important as well as the most successful that we have ever held. Not only was the attendance, both as regards visitors and delegates, a record, but the actual work initiated, covering legislative as well as internal reorganization reforms, if successfully carried out by your board of directors and adequately backed up by the local union will have a most important effect on the future development of our organization. I trust that all our members and unions will realize the significance of the work which we have before us and will give the Central office the assistance and support which it is necessary that we should receive if the work is to be carried thru to a successful issue.

As far as it is possible for me to do, you will be kept in close touch with the developments that take place from time to time by means of special circulars, which it is important should be brought before our unions, so that every member may learn just what is being done and what they can do to complete the work of the Central office.

In this first general circular I wish to draw your attention to one or two matters in which you can follow up the work of the convention and give us the assistance financially, of which we will be in sore need for the next few weeks.

Grain Growers' Guide

Prior to the report of your finance committee to the convention your attention had already been drawn to the proposal to substitute the union as agent for The Guide in place of the old style individual canvasser. I want to emphasize the fact that if this principle was adopted generally, it would be one of the most practical ways in which you could strengthen our finances as well as contributing to the treasury of your local union, quite aside from the added strength that it would give us in other directions. The majority of our members are already subscribers to the Grain Growers' Guide, and all of them should be. To get into the habit of turning your subscription into the local union and thus benefiting the whole organization instead of waiting for a canvasser to call on you is surely not asking very much of our members or suggesting anything that is very reactionary in character. I have no information as to what the result of my previous circular has been, but I want to take this opportunity of asking every union to consider the proposition and discuss it so that I may have some indication as to whether it is your intention to take hold of the suggestion and put it into effect. Please take the matter up right at this meeting before you adjourn, and instruct your secretary to advise me, yes or no, as to whether we can count on your assistance in this matter. I take it that it was the sentiment of our convention that something would have to be done to improve the condition of our finances, and I think also that it is your opinion as well as mine that it is a humiliating and regrettable state of affairs when there is even a hint of justification for the incident which occurred at our recent convention, when, before our visitors and the public at large, a collection was taken up in order to help us defray the expenses of the convention. I sincerely hope that it will not be necessary for us to again have to admit in public that an organization which has reached the stage that we have and which is engaged in doing such important work is unable to pay its own way. Personally, I feel the matter very keenly, and hope that if you cannot assist us by taking hold of the suggestions that are sent you from time to time, you will at least let us know why you cannot, so that we can modify the original proposal or substitute something else for it.

Alberta

This Section of The Guide is conducted officially for the United Farmers of Alberta by P. P. Woodbridge, Secretary, Calgary, Alberta, to whom all communications for this page should be sent.

As last year we will continue to take orders for the large group photograph of the convention, which was on display at Edmonton. The photograph is larger than ever and is generally conceded to be the best that we have yet been able to secure. Every union should secure one of these photographs from year to year as a souvenir. They can be framed very easily at a slight cost in your own home. Send one to your friends in the Old Country or down East. The Central office gets 10 per cent. for handling these photographs. Turn in your order to your secretary at once and he will fill out the order form enclosed with this circular. The cost of the photograph is \$1.25, post prepaid.

Hail Insurance

As a result of the publicity given by our finance committee at the convention, your Central office has already received one or two propositions from good reliable hail insurance companies for this coming season. There is every indication that satisfactory arrangements can be made, and I hope that we will be able to send you a special circular on this matter in the very near future.

Membership Dues

Under our constitution, all membership dues become payable the first of each year. We hope that renewals are being paid in as rapidly as possible, as well as every effort being made to secure new members. There is no time of the year when the Central office is in more urgent need of funds than in the first three months. Please get your dues in as rapidly as possible and forward to the Central office, so that we may not be handicapped on account of lack of funds in doing our best to carry out the work you have turned over to us.

Our Annual Report

As announced at the convention, we propose again to issue an enlarged annual report, which I am now in a position to assure you will be an improvement even on last year's effort. Our report for the year 1916 will be issued in book form, running to a matter of 200 pages, and will consist, among other items, of the reports given at the convention, the minutes of the meeting with a summary of the discussions and debates which took place. This latter will be an entirely new feature, as we have not hitherto been able to get a verbatim report of the convention. We have that this year, and as a result we shall be in a position to give as complete a report as space will permit. We intend to put all the information that we can into our annual report, and the size is only limited on account of the fact that we cannot secure more than a certain amount of paper stock for its issue. It is possible that we may have to pre-rotate the orders received if each union is to receive its share. We expect to have the complete issue off the press by February 26. A charge of five cents per copy will be made to cover the cost of postage or express. If you can see your way clear to send us ten cents per copy, as many did last year, we will greatly appreciate it. An order form is enclosed with this circular. Send in your requirements at once and we will endeavor to give you the best service of which we are capable.

Declaration of Principles

You will find enclosed herewith a copy of the platform which was adopted by our convention as a declaration of principles, for which we as an organization working in the interests of the farmers as a class and the people in general should stand. The idea, as I understand it, is that all candidates for election, whether provincial or Dominion, should be asked to express their views on these questions when appealing to the electors, and the full platform should therefore be laid before your local for the information of your members, so that they may avail them-

selves of the opportunity whenever it presents itself, to get an expression from candidates. Some items in the platform are, of course, purely Dominion, but as a principle is a principle wherever you may be, and as public thought must begin to crystallize within the province before it becomes a Dominion affair, there is no good reason why any or all of the principles laid down in our platform should not be a fit subject for the questioning of a candidate for provincial honors.

I trust that the success of the year just past will be but an inspiration to further success in the year which lies before us.—P. P. WOODBRIDGE

EDWELL ANNUAL MEETING

F. J. Powell, secretary of Edwell Local No. 53 reports: With the thermometer standing at 26 degrees below a number of the members of this live union turned out to the Annual General meeting held on December 28, which goes to show that there are some who are sufficiently loyal to the U.F.A. and who take an interest in the affairs of their local to be out in such weather. Before proceeding with the election of officers for 1917, the Secretary read a number of official communications and other matter. Two new members were elected for the new year, viz.: Lytton Hayward, of Pine Lake and Otto Rector, of Edwell. It is anticipated that this Local will corral several new members and thus strengthen their standing. A statement of account was read by the secretary, which after some discussion was adopted.

The election of officers for 1917 resulted as follows:—President, F. Ellis; Vice-President, T. J. Walton; Secretary-Treasurer, F. J. Powell, also six directors. All these officers are well known for their loyalty to the U.F.A. and this local is to be congratulated on its choice of their directorate and it is hoped that every member will do his utmost to make the Edwell Local one of the best for the year 1917, not only in point of number of members, but also in the matter of "Doing Things."

INTEREST IN TRING DISTRICT

Mrs. M. E. Graham, secretary of Tring Local Union, No. 24, reports as follows: It is with pleasure that I report the Union meeting held in Tring School on January 6 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. as the most successful gathering ever held in this part of Alberta. The Stretton and Tring Locals were among the earlier associations in Alberta and no doubt their work and influence had their effect in many reforms that have been effected for the benefit of the farmers, but this is the first time they have united their forces in local work. Belcamp, an off-shoot of Tring, and Riverton, an adjoining Local, were also represented at the meeting. These four have now united in a district association and livestock shipping association. The officers elected were:—President, F. A. Hancock, of Kitscoty; Secretary-Treasurer, T. B. Goodall, Tring; Directors (one from each local), W. Skinner, Riverton; T. Farie, Belcamp; P. Marfleet, Marwayne; J. C. Dale, Tring. The Association, to be known as Tring District Association, meets again on February 10, and afterwards every three months, when all members of the several locals will have a chance to hear and discuss important topics. The problems already before the district are Rural Telephone, Rural Mail Delivery, Consolidated Schools and the handling of livestock and other produce. A car of salt is being ordered. No one participates in the benefits except the members of some local U.F.A. and each local is assessed twenty-five cents per member for carrying on district work.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLE

The following resolution and platform was unanimously endorsed by the United Farmers of Alberta, assembled

in their ninth annual convention at Edmonton, January 22-26, 1917: Resolved, that the following principles be endorsed by us as an association and embodied into a farmers' platform. Further, that a copy of this platform be sent by the Central office to every member of the provincial and Dominion parliaments, also to every candidate offering himself for election, either federal or provincial, with a request that he express his views in regard to the various principles laid down therein, and, further, that the board of directors be authorized to give such publicity to the answers received as they may deem advisable.

The Platform—The Tariff

Resolved, that our tariff laws be amended as follows:—1. By an immediate reduction of the customs duty on all goods imported from Great Britain to one-half the rates at present charged under the general tariff, and that further uniform reductions be made which will ensure complete free trade with the mother country within five years.

2. That the reciprocity agreement of 1911, which still remains on the United States statute books, be accepted by Canada.

3. That all foodstuffs, not included in the reciprocity agreement, be placed on the free list.

4. That agricultural implements, farm machinery, vehicles, fertilizer, coal, lumber, cement and illuminating fuel and lubricating oils be placed on the free list.

5. That the customs tariff on all the necessities of life be materially reduced.

6. That all tariff concessions granted to other countries be immediately extended to Great Britain.

Taxation

Resolved, that in order to replace the loss of revenue created by tariff reduction, we are in favor of direct taxation as follows: 1. By a direct tax on unimproved land values, including all natural resources.

2. By a sharply graduated income tax upon all incomes over \$4,000 a year.

3. By a heavy graduated inheritance tax on large estates.

4. By a graduated income tax on the net profits of all corporations whose earnings amount to more than ten per cent. in any one year on their paid up capital.

Elections

Resolved, that we favor the following principles in all election campaigns, both federal and provincial: 1. The system of ballot to be by proportional representation, preferably the Hare or single transferable vote system.

2. Women to have equal franchise with men.

3. Full publicity of all political campaign funds, contributions and their expenditure, both before and after elections.

4. The abolition of the present regulations in regard to election deposits.

5. The right of Recall.

General

Resolved, that we would also favor and endorse the following principles as being in the best interests of the people: 1. The abolition of the patronage system.

2. Competitive examination for all civil service appointments.

3. Full provincial autonomy in liquor legislation, including manufacture, import and export.

4. The Initiative and Referendum by Direct Legislation.

5. That no more natural resources be alienated from the Crown, but brought into use only under short term leases, in which the interests of the public shall be properly safeguarded, such leases to be granted only by public auction.

6. Full provincial control of natural resources, thereby placing Alberta and Saskatchewan on a par with the other provinces.

7. Nationalization of all railway, telegraph and express companies.

The above questions are being sent to all candidates for re-election as follows:—To All Candidates: Dear Sir,—Kindly express your views in the space allotted for your answer after each clause as to whether you favor the adoption of the above reforms and principles into the political life of our country. (Please sign here).....