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Farmers' Platform Launched

Endorsed by Manitoba Grain Growers at Brandon Convention

Fully 1,000 people crowded into the City Hall at Brandon to witness the first scene in the introduction of the Farmers' Political Platform before the organized Grain Growers of Western Canada. It was well staged and enthusiastically received. Its debut was successful. It has yet to be launched before the farmers of Alberta and Saskatchewan in annual convention, but its reception is assured. Too long have Western farmers been plundered and the future of Canada mortgaged by exploitation for these men to hope for relief by any means but organized political action thru men who will pledge themselves first and last to the support of a new "Bill of Rights."

To ensure the proper atmosphere for the debut of the "Platform," Thursday evening was set aside for "Free Trade" and three of the very ablest speakers in Canada on this subject preceded the introduction. They were T. A. Crerar, F. J. Dixon, M.L.A., and Dr. Salem Bland, all of Winnipeg. They certainly cleared the air of any "Protection" dust and anyone who could not think straight on the tariff after they got thru ought to be laid away in the vaults of the Toronto News or Montreal Star. They kicked the last stone from the path of Geo. F. Chipman, who introduced and moved the adoption of the platform, and W. R. Wood, M.L.A., who seconded it, and every plank in it was adopted and in most cases unanimously.

T. A. Crerar briefly sketched the policy of the old political parties on Protection. Since 1896 there had been practically no difference between them. He showed the pernicious action of the Canadian Customs Board in arbitrarily raising the valuation of machinery on which The Grain Growers' Grain Co. was already paying 20 to 25 or more per cent. on the cost, until the duty in many cases was over 50 per cent. and in one case as high as 78 per cent. There was no excuse for it by law much less by the rules of common justice. Only after a trip to Ottawa and special consultation with the board was the company able to have this arbitrary action stopped. Had it not been done then it would have been up to the 55,000 members of the Grain Growers' Associations as well as the other farmers of the West to have seen this high-handed action stopped and stopped quickly.

Mr. Crerar showed the fallacy of the "home market" cry for a country like Western Canada, which last year grew \$400,000,000 worth of produce, the greater part of which had to be sold on world's markets. It was a crime that men in Western Canada with many handicaps in natural conditions were subjected to a tax of 40 per cent. for articles vital to the means of production in this country.

Service the True Ideal

The corrupting influence of Protection on the government of Canada was tremendous. Both political parties came equally under its blighting influence. An organized lobby proceeded constantly at Ottawa. He knew of one man who was offered \$10,000 some years ago to keep silent when "the interests" wanted a lumber duty. There were too many members, like too many electors, out with the prime and often only main idea—make money. Service ought to be the ideal and not selfish money grabbing. At best the members, however, were but a reflection of the people and people who elected such men and long tolerated them were themselves woefully corrupt. The people do not now stand behind men ready to stand up for principle and such men quit and quit with a bitter feeling. The people ought to be willing to pay real salaries to such men, instead of the miserable allowances they now make to them.

The speaker instanced the case of English factories built under Free Trade tendering in the midst of the war for shell contracts in United States at \$200 a shell less than the lowest U.S. firm. Germany right now had a full measure of Protection and she didn't seem to enjoy it at all.

For years the farmers had been asking for freer trade within the Empire, but Canadian manufacturers with all their so-called loyalty had steadily and bitterly opposed any such move. They want to shut Great Britain off from our markets.

"The protective tariff," Mr. Crerar said, "sadly warps men's judgment on matters of national interest. We are fighting for the great principle of liberty today on the fields of Flanders, but there are other places also where the battle of freedom must be fought. As long as poverty is so prevalent, great wealth and degradation exist side by side the battle of liberty is on and it behoves everyone to range himself on the right side in this struggle."

F. J. Dixon Speaks

F. J. Dixon made a telling speech. He said: "Protection interferes with the right of property and permits the manufacturer to levy tribute on the farmer. When you encourage one industry by allowing it to levy tribute on another to the extent of \$10.00 you discourage the second industry to just that extent. That is what Protection does and therefore Protection should be destroyed. The man who buys abroad and pays his duty to the government performs a greater service than he who buys at home and pays his duty to the manufacturer. For every dollar that goes to the public treasury four dollars go into the pockets of the Canadian manufacturers. Protection costs the producers of Western Canada \$30,000,000 every year. The trouble is that we do not see it. If it were levied by a stamp tax and we had to lick stamps on everything we buy and found we were licking three for the manufacturers for every one we licked for the manufacturers, we would soon lick the manufacturers."

High tariff curtails revenue because it shuts off importations. Whereas in 1913 our revenue was \$114,000,000, in 1915 with a 7½ per cent. duty increase it was only \$87,000,000. But then manufacturers want not only to dictate where we shall buy, but also where we shall sell. They closed the market to the south. They set the prices wholesalers and retailers shall sell at and they dictate terms in no uncertain voice. Mr. Dixon instanced the Canadian Shredded Wheat Co., the Edwardsburg Starch Co. and the Borden Condensed Milk Co.

"The manufacturers also set the price of labor," continued Mr. Dixon. "When a general strike threatened among coal miners in Nova Scotia these manufacturers advertised in Russia for laborers at 14 to 15 cents per hour for 11 hour days at 'light' work." This and other instances quoted gave an element of truth to that boast of the secretary of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association in the Royal Alexandra Hotel in Winnipeg a few years ago when he said: "The Canadian Manufacturers' Association is like a young giant. It could paralyze industry in Canada and reduce the country to the verge of starvation." And it feeds on the meat of Protection.

Who is Canada?

Mr. Dixon said: "They tell us Canada is prosperous, but who is Canada? Is it the steel companies, the millers, the cotton and other bloated manufacturers or does Canada include the farmers, mechanics and laboring men? The average wage of the workers of Canada, according to the last High-Cost-of-Living report, is \$420 a year, \$1.40 a day. Today 80 per cent. of the farm land in Western Canada is mortgaged, and whereas 5 per cent. of the land in Manitoba was worked by tenants in 1911, today 12 per cent. is being operated by tenants. In 1871 our population was 76 per cent. rural and in 1911 only 55 per cent. rural."

"According to the report of the Made-in-Canada Committee of the Manufacturers' Association \$26,000 was spent in 1915 on a press campaign to promote protection. Our local papers are filled with it for they get it free, and papers that dare to oppose this power are boycotted in their advertising. We used to have the old robbers and knights of the road, now we have the new knights of the railroad. The medical doctors used to bleed the people for every ill and now our political doctors, 100 years behind the time, still bleed the people."

"The 100,000,000 acres of land in speculators' hands in Western Canada should be taken for returned soldiers. The farmers should be ready to spend part of their property to save the rest from confiscation by joining the Free

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SPECIAL OFFERS
OF
SEED WHEAT

	Stock No.	Per Bushel	Brand	Cal.
*Marquis, Choice Selected 1	K. 70	2.10
Northern				
Marquis, McKenzie's Gold	3188	2.75	2.75	
Standard	3208	3.10	3.10	
Marquis Registered				
Red Fife, McKenzie's Gold	3202	2.75	2.75	
Standard	3204	3.10	3.10	
Red Fife, Registered				

SEED OATS

*Banner	K. 74	.88
Banner, McKenzie's Special	3212	1.20	1.25	
Strain	3213	1.15	1.20	
Banner, Registered	K. 78	.91
Seger or Victory	3202	1.05	1.10	
Seger or Victory, Registered	3219	1.25	1.30	
Abundance	K. 72	.88
Abundance (Regenerated)	3217	1.05	1.15	
Gold Rain	K. 76	.85
Newmarket	3214	1.05	1.15	
Gordon's 22	3203	1.00	1.05	
60 Day or July	3215	1.10	1.25	

RYE

Spring—Produces abundant	3218	1.85	2.00	
hay crops	3219	1.50	1.50	
Winter				

BARLEY

O.A.C. 21	3206	1.50	1.55	
Mensury	3202	1.55	1.55	
Minnesota No. 105	3205	1.50	1.50	
Manchurian No. 371	3208	1.50	1.50	

FLAX

Common	3209	3.35	3.50	
N.D.R. No. 73	3209	3.50	4.00	
N.D.R. No. 114	3208	3.50	4.00	
Golden	3204	3.50	4.00	
Primet	3205	3.55	3.50	

† Per 100 lbs.

N.B.—Above stocks are not subject to market change, excepting Wheat, Marquis No. K. 70, which we offer on the following basis: When Fort William Ray price for commercial grade 1 Northern is under \$1.55, our price will be \$2.10 per bushel. Whenever Fort William price is \$1.55 or more, add to our price of \$2.10, 1c or fraction thereof per bushel concurrent with each advance of 1c or fraction thereof per bushel.

Prices quoted are for quantities of 10 bushels or more, for less quantities add 5c per bushel. Special quotations on carloads. Use stock number when ordering. Add 30c for Cotton Bags (wheat 2 bus., oats 2½ bus.) excepting those marked * which are put up in Jute sacks, 15c each.

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