

# U.F.A. Convention Proceedings

Alberta Farmers' Organization Holds Enthusiastic Convention in Edmonton

The seventh annual convention of the United Farmers of Alberta was held at Edmonton on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of last week. Seven hundred delegates, representing U. F. A. locals in every part of Alberta, were present, and all were keenly interested in the many vital questions affecting the welfare of the country in general and the farming community in particular which came before the convention. The Alberta farmers' parliament did not follow the example of the federal and provincial legislative bodies in avoiding controversial questions and such matters as the pork packing plant, the handling of livestock, the relation of the U.F.A. and of the Co-operative Elevator Company and the wisdom of permitting the same individuals to hold office in more than one company or organization were the subjects of lively debate. The convention took a somewhat drastic step in this last question, passing by a large majority a resolution strongly opposed to the principle of interlocking directorates both in private corporations and in the farmers' own organizations. The convention assembled in the Albion Hall, which seats 650 people, but this proved inadequate and, after the first session, the McDougall Memorial Methodist Church, one of the finest churches in the West, was secured.

## Death of the President

D. W. Warner, first Vice-President, called the convention to order and in his opening words referred feelingly to the loss which the organization had suffered in the death of the President, W. J. Tregillus. He spoke of the great work Mr. Tregillus had done for the U.F.A. and said the efforts he had made in the interests of the farmers had probably hastened his untimely death. At the suggestion of Mr. Warner, a committee was named to prepare a resolution of condolence with the family of the late president.

Sidney Tregillus, of Calgary, brother of the late President, thanked the convention on behalf of the family for the many kind resolutions of sympathy they had received from the different branches of the U.F.A. His brother had been proud, as any man would be, to serve such a great organization as the U.F.A., and he personally wished the convention the greatest success in its important deliberations.

Mayor Henry welcomed the convention on behalf of the City of Edmonton. The Mayor confessed that he knew absolutely nothing about farming and, therefore, could not give them any advice on agricultural matters, but he was deeply interested in questions of finance and the problem of poverty and unemployment. The City of Edmonton was feeding 5,000 people at the present time and was endeavoring to find means of giving them employment, and if the farmers could help them to find a solution of that difficulty, they would be doing a valuable service to the country. D. W. Warner was appointed chairman of the convention.

## Back to the Land

Hon. Duncan Marshall, Minister of Agriculture for the Province of Alberta, was given an opportunity to address the convention and in the course of his remarks spoke of the large number of schemes that were being submitted to him by ex-board of trade secretaries and real estate dealers for placing men on the land. These schemes, of course, were all to be financed by the Provincial Government (laughter). His reply to these people was that the best way for a man to get back to the land was to put his bundle over his shoulder and walk out from the city till he met a farmer who wanted a hired man. Let him work on a farm for six months and then he would know whether he really wanted to get back to the land or whether he wanted to get his back to the land (laughter). He assured the convention of his desire to co-operate with the farmers in the improvement of agricultural conditions and complimented them on the success of the business organizations they had

created for the marketing of their grain and livestock. Speaking of the conflict in Europe, Mr. Marshall said it had proved the fallacy of the idea that to preserve the peace a nation must prepare for war. He hoped the world would now learn that lesson and that in future the nations would give their efforts to the building of happy, prosperous homes instead of in training men to kill one another (applause).

## Resolutions

The convention then began the consideration of resolutions left over from the last convention, beginning with one from Sunnyvale Union, condemning the C.P.R. for its alleged practice of holding lands not near its own line at a higher price than those served by its system. This resolution was laid on the table, a number of delegates expressing the opinion that it would be an unwarranted interference with the business of the company.

Thos. Acheson, agricultural agent of the C.P.R., said as a matter of fact the Company did not discriminate in the way suggested by the resolution.

## James Speakman, President

The election of James Speakman, of Penhold, as President, and the passage of a number of resolutions dealing with such important questions as cheaper money, free trade, international peace, war relief and the establishment of a co-operative wholesale society were a part of the work accomplished on the second day of the Edmonton convention. Another

union, and then offered as the gift of the United Farmers of Alberta to the British authorities, to be used by them in the way that seems to them most needful."

The stand of the Alberta farmers for international peace was also clearly defined by a resolution in the following terms: "We, the representatives of the United Farmers of Alberta, assembled in our annual convention, in view of the awful destruction of life and property and the infinite misery resulting from the present war, desire to express our deep conviction that when the terms of peace are settled at the end, the chief aim must be to make future wars between civilized nations impossible, and to effect this, the peace should be arranged, not on lines of conquest and national humiliation, leaving a rankling soreness and bitterness and planting the seeds of future wars, but on lines aiming at satisfying all legitimate national aspirations, destroying militarism in all countries, bringing about general disarmament and abolishing all manufacturing of arms and munitions of war in private factories, so that no man can derive profit from the slaughter of his fellowmen."

This motion was passed by a standing vote which appeared to be unanimous and the enthusiastic singing of God Save the King gave expression to the feeling of the convention, that the resolution was prompted by true patriotism.

## Free Trade

Free trade with Britain was advocated by the following resolution, moved by

mercy of the manufacturer. He maintained that the only just condition was one that would allow every man to sell in the dearest market and buy in the cheapest market. G. F. Chipman specially commended the proposal for free trade with Great Britain, saying it would put to a severe test the sincerity of the manufacturers who were always proclaiming their devoted patriotism. The resolution was carried with barely half a dozen contrary votes.

## Agricultural Credit

A warm discussion took place on the question of agricultural credit. From a number of notices of motion a consolidated resolution was submitted: "Resolved that the government be asked to provide legislation whereby the farmer may secure cheaper money and a better line of credit, which we believe can be secured by means of co-operative credit associations." W. R. Ball made a strong appeal to the convention to ask definitely for government loans under the New Zealand plan. The New Zealand government, he said, lent money to the settlers on the security of their land at 4½ per cent., the principle being repayable over a long period of years. W. Lowe, a former resident of New Zealand, supported, and others spoke favorably of the scheme. It was pointed out, however, that the report of Dr. Torry on the enquiry he had made on agricultural credits for the Alberta Government had only just been printed and merited consideration before a decision was arrived at and eventually the resolution was adopted.

## Co-operative Wholesale

Another interesting discussion was that on the question of establishing a co-operative wholesale society, which resulted in the passing of a resolution as follows: "Whereas we believe that the organization of a wholesale distributing society, on a purely co-operative basis, owned and controlled by the local unions of the U. F. A., would be a great benefit to the farmers in this province, as well as a source of strength to our organization; therefore, be it resolved that this convention instruct the incoming board of directors to arrange for the incorporation at the earliest possible date of a purely co-operative wholesale society, consisting entirely of U. F. A. members, with the object in view of providing a central organization, the organization to have power to assist local unions in the purchasing of their supplies and the selling of their produce strictly on a commission basis."

The discussions of resolutions again occupied the convention on Thursday, with an occasional break for nominations and ballots in connection with the election of officers. Two resolutions dealing with the election of the board of directors and the establishment of district conventions were referred to the directorate.

With the utmost enthusiasm and unanimity the convention reaffirmed its stand in favor of Woman Suffrage and demanded a provincial plebiscite on the question. Instruction was given to the board of directors to draft a dower law to protect the women in their property rights and to bring it before the legislature. Several resolutions on the cattle guard question were referred to the board of directors.

## Support for Guide

The convention expressed itself unanimously in support of the Grain Growers' Guide as the official organ of the U.F.A. The discussion arose out of a suggestion that a provincial paper be established to supplement the work of The Guide.

G. F. Chipman, editor of The Guide, was asked to give his opinion, and he explained that The Guide was restricted at present in the service it was performing on account of the fact that the subscription price was too low. He pointed out that it cost \$3 for each sub-

Continued on Page 15

## U.F.A. Officers for 1915

The following are the Officers of the United Farmers for the year 1915:

Honorary President	D. W. Warner, Edmonton
President	James Speakman, Penhold
Vice-Presidents:	
H. W. Wood, Carstairs	S. S. Dunham, Lethbridge
Rice Sheppard, Edmonton	W. D. Trego, Gleichen
District Directors:	
Victoria District	P. S. Austin, Ranfurly
Edmonton District	George Long, Namao
Strathcona District	H. G. Vickery, Strome
MacLeod District	G. W. Buchanan, Cowley
Calgary District	J. A. Bishop, Beddington
Red Deer District	D. Buckingham, Stettler
Medicine Hat District	E. E. Sparks, Jenner

resolution which was discussed was one to reduce the size of future conventions by allowing representation from the locals in the ratio of one for the first ten members and one for every twenty-five members over that number, instead of one for every ten as at present. This resolution was introduced by Pandora Union, but found little favor, it being felt that a large convention carried more weight with other bodies and that it was desirable that as many as possible of the U. F. A. members should take advantage of the education to be gained by attending a convention.

A resolution from Strathmore Union providing for the use of a ballot box in the election of officers was adopted.

## Aid for War Sufferers

The determination of the U. F. A. to do its share in relieving the distress caused by the war was expressed in the following resolution carried unanimously without discussion: "We, the representatives of the United Farmers of Alberta, assembled in our annual convention, desirous to do all in our power to help our country, and to give relief to the sufferers in the present war, especially to the people of Belgium, pledge ourselves to call together our unions as soon as possible after our return home and to appeal to them for subscriptions in money and farm products, such gifts to be placed at the disposal of our Central Office in the name of each

R. M. Fee: "We, the representatives of the United Farmers of Alberta, assembled in our annual convention, request the government and parliament of Canada, in the next session of Parliament, to abolish the customs tariff between Great Britain and Canada, so as to give the same free entry to British goods coming into Canada as Canadian goods have in going into Great Britain, a measure which we consider to be in the best interests of the people of Canada, as well as a fitting expression of imperial unity in the present crisis." At the suggestion of James Miner it was made to embrace free trade with the world by the addition of the words "and further, that we want free trade with all countries."

The resolution, however, was not adopted unanimously. John Francis, of Tofield, said he did not think free trade would be good for Canada. No country, he said, could prosper on agriculture alone and they must build up a home market by encouraging manufactures. Another delegate suggested that the convention should confine itself to advocating the free entry of agricultural produce to every country in the world and not interfere with the affairs of other industries. James Speakman pointed out that that kind of free trade would compel the Canadian farmer to sell his products in open competition with the world, and buy his manufactured goods in a protected market where he was at the