

U. C. M. CONVENTION (Continued).

Mr. Lighthall submitted the following resolution embodying his recommendations:

Whereas, the investigations of the Committee of the House of Commons has adequately proven the popular allegation that profiteering existed in the handling of the necessities of life;

Be it Resolved, that the Union of Canadian Municipalities, speaking for the citizens of their communities, urge that the greatest efforts be made to solve this pressing question of the H.C. of L. without delay in view of the great hardships resulting to the common people and the bitter and dangerous feelings in evidence towards classes and individuals thought to be responsible for the same;

That the machinery provided for investigation by municipalities is cumbersome and unworkable, and further, that in the opinion of this convention, such investigations should be at the cost of the Federal Government; and,

Further, that the government should see that the new Commerce Court or some other body properly constituted and with an adequate supply of funds should properly investigate the cost and profits in the case of all necessities of life without any delay and where profiteering is found adequate means should be provided for the prosecution and punishment of those responsible;

Further, this convention demands that the statements recently made by Dr. McFall, if true, be followed by immediate action on the part of the government.

Resolved, That the President and Secretary of each Provincial Union shall each be ex-officio a Provincial Vice-President of the Union for his Province, and their names shall be inscribed as such on the lists of officers of this Union; and that the Constitution of the Union be amended accordingly.—Carried.

MAYOR HARDIE.

"I am not a Bolshevik as it is practiced in Russia," declared Mayor W. D. L. Hardie of Lethbridge as he rose to continue the discussion, "but insofar as they stand for equal opportunity for all I am with them. I don't want any wealthy man to be able to despoil any person of his living." He sounded the warning that unless something were done before next Winter to better their conditions the people would compel the government to take action and that the returned soldiers would make themselves felt as well as the civilians. Shortage of food, he believed, bred Bolsheviks and he declared that the cost of living had to be investigated by experts who could see through manufacturers' camouflage.

Mr. Hardie declared that he had absolutely no confidence in most courts because he believed that poor men could not get justice and he recommended that all lawyers be "hamstringing." Moreover, he declared that the first Bolsheviks are the wives who continually nag at their husbands for more money to cover the household expenses and who eventually drive their husbands to distraction.

Rising to defend the courts from the attack of Mayor Hardie Ald. Grant of Edmonton contended that the courts administered the law that had been passed in the legislatures by the representatives of the people and that as a consequence of justice that was received was of the people's making.

With reference to the cost of living he referred to the investigations of the government which, he said, had proved conclusively that there was profiteering. He believed that the government was "passing the buck" in the matter of responsibility for remedying the conditions and he referred to the legislation which threw the onus of investigation upon the municipalities. This he condemned in strong terms and urged that the remedy must lie in an act of parliament which would take in the Dominion and not a few small municipalities. Finally he declared that the Board of Commerce must investigate and regulate profits and that those who are profiteering must be punished.

Mayor Elson of St. Catharines believed that there was an ulterior and more pressing cause for the high cost of

living than profiteering. He believed that the condition was a natural concomitant of irregularities caused by the war which had forced economic laws to be felt as never before. He pointed out that between four and five hundred thousand Canadians were withdrawn from productive pursuits during the war to be destroyers and consumers of goods, and asked his hearers to try to realize the effect of the withdrawal of many millions.

He believed that the remedy could be secured only if there was more production which in turn would eliminate profiteering. He urged that municipal councils, individuals and the press advocate production as the salvation from the evils of the high cost of living.

Moreover, he felt that no court could reduce prices without more production on the part of the people. In addition he urged that people must be more modest in their living and readjust the basis upon which they are now making expenditures. Economy, frugality and thrift with more production would alone reduce the high cost of living.

Ald. David Kyle, Longueuil, Que., drew attention to the fact that tons of food was going to waste in cold storage plants and that the prime necessity was for government commissions to investigate the state of affairs and make the owners release the foodstuffs.

Hon. A. G. McKay, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Alberta, believed that Dr. McFall, Cost of Living Commissioner, should be compelled to forward the facts upon which he based his reports to the attorney-generals of the provinces who could take action if anything illegal was being done.

Mayor Harold Fisher of Ottawa, agreed with Mayor Elson to a certain extent in the matter of advocating production and thrift but he also pointed out that the laws should be enforced. He explained that some combines were merely for the purpose of fixing a fair price and that it should be the duty of all to fight not the combines but the prices. He declared that some advances in prices were legitimate and that the fundamental causes for the high cost of living were not local.

Ald. J. K. Edwards, Sherbrooke, Que., switched off the discussion for a moment to express the opinion that one way to reduce the cost of living was to ask that professional men reduce the amount of their fees.

Mr. E. T. Sampson, Outremont, Que., added that in some cases poor men were discriminated against by the process of law which required a considerable amount of money to pay the costs of carrying cases to higher courts.

Ald. Grant believed that farmers should stay on the land if the country was to be prosperous. The tariff, he thought, was responsible for some of the high living costs and he pointed out that Canadian manufacturers must be making undue profits when Americans can ship in goods and pay the duty and compete with Canadian made goods.

Mayor Hardie of Lethbridge rose to say that he did not believe in the reduction of the tariff as there must be manufacturing as well as agriculture if the country is to be prosperous. He urged investigations to expose who were acting illegally.

Ald Common of Westmount believed that the Government should heavily penalize those who allowed foodstuffs to rot.

Dr. N. C. Costello of Calgary was of the opinion that the government should not pass on the duty of looking after the unrest and the high cost of living.

Mrs. John Macgillivray, representing the National Council of Women, Kingston, agreed with Ald. Common and added that production was useless while the necessities of life were being allowed to decay.

Mayor Alex. Thurber of Longueuil, Que., maintained that the advance in prices was due to the exportation of Canadian goods. He asked for a longer discussion of the subject and the meeting adjourned at 12.30.

In the afternoon the delegates were the guests of the city in an excursion on the St. Lawrence.