



ALBERTA SECTION

This Section of The Guide is conducted officially for the United Farmers of Alberta by Edward J. Froom, Secretary, Calgary, Alta.

Official Circular No. 6, 1911

About ten months ago Western Canada was visited by the leader of the government, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and at that time he was met at various points by members of the farmers' associations of Western Canada and resolutions and addresses presented to him on various subjects. It is admitted that the work done at that time had splendid results, and that the farmers had every reason to be satisfied with the showing made by them at that time. The definite announcement has now been made that this summer the leader of the opposition, Mr. R. L. Borden, will visit the West, and it is only right and expedient that once more the organized farmers should be active and should present to this gentleman their views upon the various questions of the day.

While we are not in politics and for us to keep up the good work we are doing we must stay away from the active party political arena, still the subjects which we have been dealing with during the past few years are of vital importance to us, and we should therefore lose no opportunity to make our views public. We must not forget that, while the leader of the opposition is paid to oppose the government, that there is always a possibility of the present parties changing sides and, therefore, we should be ready to convince and convert the present opposition that the agricultural matters are of first interest and that all others are incidental thereto. Having this in view, it has been decided by your executive that the time is opportune to present the views of the United Farmers of Alberta to Mr. Borden and to endeavor to convince him that our demands are just and that it is to the interests of Canada that they should be accepted by not only the government, but the opposition also, and that the necessary legislation can therefore be introduced into Parliament and passed without the system of obstruction being adopted. So far the policy has always been to present the demands to the government only and the opposition has always been ignored, but in view of the fact that legislation which has been asked for has been ignored, or if introduced into the House has been blocked by the opposition, it seems desirable that the leader of the opposition should be met and that he should be requested to allow the proposed legislation to pass. This seems especially desirable when we consider what was done during the last week of Parliament, when, without any opposition or enquiry, a large concession was granted to a railway company. If the opposition can set the precedent of allowing certain legislation to go through the House without a contest, surely they can also allow legislation which will be of interest to the vast majority of the people of Canada, and which has been shown to be necessary, to pass, if not in the same manner, at least without a lot of useless obstruction and delay.

I have therefore been instructed by your executive to draw this matter to your attention and to ask you to repeat the good work which you did last year, to request that you will arrange for deputations to meet Mr. Borden at every place he stays at in Alberta and to once more make public your views on the questions which were brought forward last year. The time is short and, therefore, early action is necessary. It is probable that the executive will meet Mr. Borden at some point in Alberta, but the place has not yet been chosen. This will be announced at a later date. But with the executive presenting a case on behalf of the association the work will not be done. It is necessary to show that the farmers are unanimous in all parts of the province, and, therefore, the local deputations are necessary.

The itinerary of Mr. Borden's tour in Alberta is as follows:

Friday, June 23rd, evening, Medicine Hat.
Saturday, June 24th, afternoon, Macleod.
Saturday, June 24th, evening, Lethbridge.

Monday, June 26th, afternoon, High River.

Monday, June 26th, evening, Calgary.

Tuesday, June 27th, evening, Red Deer.

Wednesday, June 28th, afternoon, Wetaskiwin.

Wednesday, June 28th, evening, Edmonton.

Thursday, June 29th, afternoon, Vegreville.

Thursday, June 29th, evening, Lloydminster.

All afternoon meetings will be held at two o'clock, with the exception of Vegreville, which will start at 1:30, while the evening meetings will be held at eight o'clock.

As it is Mr. Borden's intention to cover more ground, in a shorter time, than Sir Wilfrid Laurier and, as shorter notice of the meetings has been given, it is necessary for prompt action to be taken and for arrangements for deputations to be made at once. I would suggest that, wherever possible, the members and unions adjacent to the announced place of meeting should take it up themselves to get into communication with the other unions in that neighborhood and to arrange for a joint meeting of representatives from those unions, where definite action and plan of presentation can be decided upon. As a complete list of the unions was published in the Alberta section of The Guide on May 14th, it will be possible for this to be done at a very early date. One point must not be forgotten. With two meetings a day it will be necessary for the presentation to be brief and to the point in every instance. As to what shall be taken up, possibly it is well to stick to the platform laid down at the Ottawa convention. This has been ratified by all the associations affiliated with the Canadian Council of Agriculture, and can, therefore, be taken as the authoritative views of the organized farmers of Canada. This platform is as follows:

Terminal Elevators

Whereas, we are convinced that the terminal elevators, as now operated are detrimental to the interests of both the producer and consumer, as proved by recent investigations and testimony of important bodies; We therefore, request that the Dominion government acquire and operate as a public utility under an independent commission, the terminal elevators at Fort William and Port Arthur, and immediately establish such terminal facilities and conditions at the Pacific Coast and provide same at Hudson Bay when necessary; also such transfer and other elevators necessary to safeguard the quality of export grain.

The Chilled Meat Industry

Whereas, it is of very great importance to the whole of Canada that prompt government action be taken towards establishing a complete chilled meat system on a sound and permanent basis, with the interests of the producers adequately protected; and, whereas, the live stock industry of Canada has been neglected; and if the neglect is continued it will soon result in impoverished farms, and the live stock industry of the country will make no headway until it is worth the farmers' while to produce and furnish more and better stock; and, whereas, the farmers are on account of the unsatisfactory market going out of the meat-producing business, and will not again take it up until the market is placed upon a stable basis, and further, that under the present system of exporting there is always a danger of the markets of the world being closed to us, which would result in ruin to many; and, whereas, on account of the danger of encouraging monopolies the farmers cannot be satisfied with anything short of a meat curing and chilling process inaugurated by the Dominion government, and operated in such a way that will guarantee to the producers the value of the animals they produce; therefore, be it resolved, that the government be urgently requested to erect the necessary works, and operate a modern and up-to-date method of exporting our meat animals. We suggest that a system

owned and operated by the government as a public utility, or a system of co-operation by the producers through the government would supply the funds necessary to first install the system and provide for the gradual repayment of these funds and interest by a charge on the product passing through the system, would give the relief needed, and make Canada one of the most prosperous meat producing countries in the world.

Hudson's Bay Railway

Whereas, the necessity of the Hudson's Bay Railway as the natural and most economic outlet for placing the products of the Western prairies on the European markets has been emphasized by the Western people for the past generation; and, whereas, the Dominion government has recognized the need and importance of the Hudson's Bay Railway and has pledged itself to its immediate construction, and has provided the necessary funds entirely from the sale of Western lands; and, whereas, the chief benefits to be derived from the Hudson's Bay Railway will be a reduction in freight rates in Western Canada due to actual competition, which could be secured only through government ownership and operation of the Hudson's Bay Railway; and, whereas, anything short of absolute public ownership and operation of the Hudson's Bay Railway will defeat the purpose for which the road is advocated and without which it would be in the interests of Western Canada that the building of the road should be deferred; therefore, be it resolved, that in the opinion of this convention that the Hudson's Bay Railway, and all terminal facilities connected therewith, should be constructed, owned and operated in perpetuity by the Dominion government under an independent commission.

Co-operative Legislation

Resolved, that in the opinion of this convention it is desirable that cheap and efficient machinery for the incorporation of co-operative societies should be provided by federal legislation during the present session of Parliament.

Railway Legislation

Although a formal resolution on this question was not adopted by the convention, still a very efficient paper was read on the subject by Mr. Bower, and the summary of this paper was: That the order of the board of railway commissioners relating to the fencing of the right-of-way be made effective, with the addition that the presence of uncontrolled animals on railway property be prima facie evidence that the fences or guards are not suitable and sufficient. That the onus of proof shall be placed upon the railway company instead of upon the individual suffering the loss. That the railway company should be compelled to keep in proper repair the fences along the right-of-way. In regard to traffic the following suggestions were made: That the principle of fixing the tariffs in accordance with the competition of other roads or the density of traffic or volume of business handled be disallowed. That a true physical valuation be taken of all railways operating in Canada, this valuation to be used as a basis of fixing the rates, and the information to be available to the public. That the board of railway commissioners be given complete jurisdiction in these matters as well as in all other matters of dispute between the railways and the people, and to enable them to do this that the law be more clearly defined.

The Bank Act

Whereas, it is generally believed that the Bank Act forming as it does the charter of all Canadian banks for a ten year term, by its present phrasing prevents any amendment, involving curtailment of their powers enjoyed by virtue of the provisions of such charter; Be it resolved, that this Ottawa convention of delegates desire that the new Bank Act be so worded, so as to permit the Act to be amended at any time in any particular.

The Customs Tariff

That we strongly favor reciprocal free trade between Canada and the United States in all horticultural, agricultural and animal products, spraying machines,

UNITED FARMERS OF ALBERTA

President: James Bower - Red Deer
Vice-President: W. J. Tringham - Calgary
Secretary-Treasurer: E. J. Froom - Calgary

Directors at Large: James Bower, Foothold; D. W. Warner, Edmonton; J. Quincey, N. W. District Directors: P. E. Austin, Banff; George Long, Nanton; J. R. Pender, Strathmore; E. C. Cox, W. Foothold; M. E. R. Strathmore; R. W. Buchanan, Cochrane; J. E. Ostrander, Lethbridge.

fertilizers, illuminating, fuel and lubricating oils, cement, fish and lumber. Reciprocal free trade between the two countries in all agricultural implements, machinery, vehicles and parts of each of these; and, in the event of a favorable arrangement being reached, it be carried into effect through the independent action of the respective governments, rather than by the hard and fast requirements of a treaty. We also favor the principle of the British preferential tariff, and urge an immediate lowering of the duties on all British goods, to one-half the rates charged, under the general tariff schedule, whatever that may be, and that any trade advantages given to the United States in reciprocal trade relations be extended to Great Britain. For such further gradual reduction of the remaining preferential tariff as will ensure the establishment of complete free trade between Canada and the Motherland within ten years. That the farmers of this country are willing to face direct taxation in such form as may be advisable to make up the revenue required under new tariff conditions.

Declaration of Principles

The above, then, formed the declaration of principles laid down by the Ottawa delegation, and while some change will be necessary still these resolutions can be taken as the foundation upon which the structure for presentation to Mr. Borden shall be built.

It might be as well to give a brief report of the action which has been taken on these resolutions. A new bill has been introduced into the House, called the Grain Act, which provides for the appointment of a commission to control the grain trade. We believe that while this is a step in advance it will not relieve the present situation to a large extent and that the further step to government ownership and operation should be made. Machinery is provided in the new bill for this step to be taken when necessary. We think that the time is now and that the money for the purchase of all terminal facilities, and for the erection of new facilities where required, should be provided at once. We would like to know whether Mr. Borden is prepared to take this further step and give us the complete government ownership and operation asked for.

On the Hudson's Bay Railway the government has announced that same will be built by the government at once, but that the matter of operation will be left in abeyance at the present. We should know whether Mr. Borden is prepared to stand firm for government ownership and operation under an independent commission.

On the chilled meat industry a promise that the matter should be investigated was received, but nothing has been done. Mr. Borden should be asked what he is prepared to do in the matter.

On the co-operative legislation, for the second time bills which would have given the relief asked for were smothered in committee. Will Mr. Borden be prepared to give the relief asked for?

Concerning railway legislation, some of the relief asked for has been promised, and amendments to the Railway Act will be introduced when Parliament reconvenes. Mr. Borden should be asked to support this legislation so that it will go through Parliament as quickly as the C. N. R. Guarantee of Bonds bill did, and at the same time he should be asked to state his position in the matter of granting relief by seeing that rates are reduced to an equitable basis, not only on the railways but with express companies, and possibly on this point it would not be amiss to ask his opinion on the subject of establishing a parcel post system.

May 31, 1

The tariff We are strenuously opposing it is not a short step to for the poor accepted the should do all into law of I secure a p possible, th by the farm adopted, an shall be tak producers a all people r should have the differ pay the pip shall reign a bear in mind to us every s build, and D grain who g Let us then asking Mr do on the ta This, then at the pres Canada mad on to Ottawa keep on mak of Mr. Bord making even Farmers of every man s you prepare be pleased to information o this circular o other busin promptly att time to lose now. It was ular should the establish in Alberta, l as it is, will month. The executive, fo matter, and l ceeful series aimed. Your s

ED
Calgary, May

SOMETH

About Dec farmers met. Halmavst pu the advisabil After an int milling propo found its way tion. It was much interes close of the to talk organi literature was on February Rowland pres of the organi reens was tak organization w best farmers pencil and d called to orde members were Conner, presi dent; Geo. B Misenol, se F. Whytite, E. H. Rains. By this time was decided t k. The gener after this mee been taken in mutual benefi for all farme four meetings. to the next one expecting a vis feel sure that h information on elevator propo taken consider ropy party, Sir Wilfrid La were very pron tion reached its the acknowledged There are man derived from th our local shipp purchased thro Grain Compa making a savi bushel on eleva thinking strongl and any inform organization of l question would