

The Grain Growers' Guide

Winnipeg, Wednesday, November 28, 1917

The Honor of Canada

Nowhere in Canada in recent years has the condemnation of party politics been more severe than among the organized farmers of the prairie provinces. The spirit of independence and non-partizanship has been growing rapidly. Today for the first time the people have the opportunity to support a non-party government. The union government is strictly non-party. It is composed of almost equal numbers of the leading Conservatives and Liberals together with representatives of labor and the organized farmers. Under no circumstances can the tactics and objectionable actions of the ordinary party be continued by the Union government. While not truly a national government, it is the nearest to what the organized farmers have been demanding that it was possible to secure.

The charge that the Liberals who joined the Union government or are supporting it have sold themselves to the big interests is the meanest kind of falsehood. Who are some of them? Fielding, the father of reciprocity, which was so strongly supported by the Western farmers, has been elected by acclamation as a Union candidate in Nova Scotia. P. P. Pardee, the chief Liberal whip is another. Then there is Rowell the Liberal leader of Ontario, Crerar of the Grain Growers, Calder of Saskatchewan and Sifton of Alberta. Furthermore the leading Liberals of every province except Quebec are supporting the Union government. Never in the history of Canada was there such united support behind one government.

Aside from the tariff question, the program of the Union government is decidedly progressive. Neither party has a good record on the tariff. During his fifteen years of power, Sir Wilfrid Laurier failed to fulfil his tariff pledges. There is just as much hope of tariff reduction from the Union government as from Sir Wilfrid. It will depend in either case upon the pressure of public opinion. The organized farmers will need to be on the alert and make their voices heard to secure justice from any government.

But the big issue in this election is the honor and safety of Canada. If the Allies are defeated the Iron Heel of Germany will be felt in Canada. Our homes, our property and our women will receive the same treatment that was dealt out to Belgium and Serbia and Northern France. Canada went into the war by the unanimous voice of parliament. To slink out of it now and leave our soldiers unsupported would be a national disgrace.

To save the world from German brutality, to protect our homes, our women and our children, and to keep faith with our boys sleeping beneath the sod in France and Flanders, who gave their lives for our protection, Canada must stay in the war to the end. If the Union government is returned with a big majority it will be another proof to the German Kaiser that the Anglo-Saxons are not quitters. It will hasten the end of the war and save the lives of many of our boys at the front. No man need betray any principle, nor forego any of his rights in supporting the Union government in the hour of the nation's need. It is the path of national duty, national patriotism and national honor to keep in power a government pledged to stand side by side with Great Britain, France, Belgium and the United States in the support of everything we hold dear and dear.

The Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture has been hard hit by the war. Lieutenant J. C. Smith, livestock commissioner for the province is the fifth man from the department to make the supreme sacrifice.

Military Service and Production

Reports from the country indicate very strong feeling throughout the prairie provinces against the action of the military tribunals in refusing bona fide farmers and farmers' sons exemption from military service. These reports indicate that a very large number of farmers and farmers' sons, many of whom are operating farms of their own, have been refused exemption. For the past year or more, farmers have been told that it was their patriotic duty to produce food. We have had on the authority of no less than Lloyd-George and a host of other minor authorities, that food is as essential as men in the winning of the war. We are informed that with United States in the war, that country cannot produce surplus food more than enough to feed her own army and to help France and Italy, and that Great Britain must look to Canada for food requirements. Furthermore, the Dominion Department of Agriculture at the present moment is putting on a big campaign for greater food production. In the face of all these undeniable facts it is most extraordinary that the exemption tribunals are refusing exemption to farmers and taking them away from their farms.

So acute has become the situation, that many protests have been sent to Ottawa and Sir Robert Borden last week issued a public statement in regard to it. In discussing the Military Service Act and the reinforcements for the army, he states as follows:—

"It was the intention of parliament that those who could serve their country more usefully and effectively by continuing in essential work in which they were engaged, should continue therein, and should be exempt from military service. This intention was not founded upon consideration for the individual as such, but in furtherance of the paramount national interest. The instructions issued to the tribunals emphasized the importance of production, and especially the production of food and munitions. From reports received by the prime minister, it appears that in some instances, tribunals have refused exemption where the circumstances distinctly required that it should be granted; as, for example, in cases where exemption has been refused to men long engaged in agricultural production, without whose labor such production could not be continued."

Here we have it on the definite statement of the prime minister that exemption tribunals were instructed that men engaged in essential agricultural production were not to be drafted into the army. This is quite at variance with some of the statements that have been made by certain military authorities. The premier, in his statement, recommends that farmers who have been refused exemption should appeal at once to the central tribunal. Although three days is the time allowed for appeal, he points out that this time can be extended upon application to the appeal tribunal or upon application to the Minister of Justice. Therefore, every farmer or farmer's son who has been refused exemption should immediately appeal by addressing a letter as follows according to the province in which he resides.

In Manitoba—to the Registrar under the Military Service Act, Winnipeg. In Saskatchewan—to the Registrar under the Military Service Act, Regina, Sask. In Alberta—to the Registrar under the Military Service Act, Calgary, Alta.

These appeals need only be in the form of an ordinary letter stating the case and giving the serial number assigned to the person to whom exemption has been refused. The appeal tribunals are composed of county court judges, and the applicant in making the appeal is permitted to have a lawyer to support his case if he desires it. It is therefore, imperative that the appeals should be put in at once and it is evident that very careful instructions will be issued to the appeal tribunals and with more likelihood of their being adhered to than

has been the case with the exemption tribunals. As individuals, farmers are no more entitled to exemption than any other class of people, but for almost the first time in the history of Canada, agricultural production has become almost absolutely essential to the safe-guarding of the Empire. If the Allied armies are to win in this war, there must be more food produced in Canada. That food can only be produced by farmers working on their farms. If we read and can understand the statements of the world's foremost authorities, the farmers of Western Canada are serving the Empire better by producing food than by becoming soldiers at the present time. Premier Borden's statement supports these views.

Eighty Per Cent. Flavelle

Some months ago a great sensation was created when Mr. O'Connor, the high cost of living commissioner, announced that the Wm. Davies Co. and the Matthews-Blackwell Co. had been making enormous profits out of bacon. Sir Joseph Flavelle, president of the Wm. Davies Co., chairman of the munitions board and multi-millionaire, was very indignant and sorrowful. He immediately denied it and asked the government to appoint a special commission to investigate. Then at tremendous expense he placed a huge advertising campaign in nearly all the papers in Canada showing his profits and tried to prove that they had not been large. The government took him at his word and appointed a commission which reported two weeks ago. Sir Joseph must derive very little consolation from the report because it shows that his company in 1916 made a profit of 80 per cent. on its capital. This profit was shown to be made entirely out of war business and mostly out of contracts with the British government. This is the same Sir Joseph who was honored with a title by the King for his services to the Empire. It begins to look as though his services came pretty high. The popularity of the government is not increased by retaining Sir Joseph as Minister of Munitions. This 80 per cent. stuff in war time does not go down well with the general public. It is true that packers' profits are being taxed in the future, but it will be well to make an example of Sir Joseph and at least dismiss him from the public service.

Get On The Voters' List

Be certain you get on the voters' list. If you do not, you may not be surprised if the returning officer tells you on polling day that you have no vote. Under the War Time Elections Act enumerators are appointed to prepare lists of voters in each polling division in an electoral district. These enumerators are now preparing the lists. They are empowered to adopt as a basis for these lists under certain conditions defined in the Act part or parts of any provincial or municipal lists of voters in force now or last in force which may be applicable to that particular polling division. They may add to or take from these lists the names of persons they find qualified or not qualified to vote. These lists are to be completed and signed by December 2. Two copies are to be immediately posted up in two of the most public places in the polling division, one of which is to be the post office. A copy of the list must also be forwarded to each candidate. Attached to the copies posted must be the name and location of a place where the enumerator may conveniently be found for at least two successive hours on each day except Sunday for ten days before December 17, which is polling day, and also where he may be found on polling day. Names may be added to this list up