

POLITICAL ACTION THE QUESTION BEFORE THE GRAIN GROWERS ASSEMBLED IN CONVENTION

All Agree That There Must Be Political Action But Whether This Shall Be In Federal or Provincial Arenas or Both, Is Undecided—Mayor Dinsdale Extends Welcome on Behalf of City—Sessions Being Held in Gordon McKay Building—Large Attendance.

Whether or not the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association shall enter the realm of Federal or Provincial politics or both, is the paramount question to be decided at the annual convention of the Association which opened in the Gordon McKay building on Wednesday.

Discussion among the time members of the association shows that the convention will bring to head the feeling among many of the farmers that the time is ripe for independent political action.

During the past twelve months many local conventions have endorsed the idea of placing an out-and-out farmer candidate in every Federal constituency at the next election. Neither has the Government's announcement that its term of office will not expire for the next four years deterred the farmers from their stand.

"The time is right here and the question must be decided without any partisan camouflage," is how one prominent member of the association expressed himself.

The subject also occupies chief place of interest in the report of the secretary, W. R. Wood, presented to the convention.

May Change Name

There is also a strong feeling that the Grain Growers should change their name and become the United Farmers of Manitoba, which would put them in line with the United Farmers of Alberta and Ontario. There is a feeling that the present name leads outsiders to believe that the association is for grain growers only, whereas it embraces every kind of farmer. Several district conventions have endorsed the proposal.

The convention opened at 10:10 a.m. with a reception at the McKay building.

who filled the hall and proved the wisdom of the change from the City Hall. The President, J. L. Brown, was in the chair. Following the singing of the national anthem Rev. J. W. Churchill conducted the opening exercises instead of Rev. M. L. Orchard, who was stated to be out of the city.

Members of the board were asked to take places on the platform.

Mayor Dinsdale's Welcome

Mayor G. Dinsdale delivered an address of welcome on behalf of the city. He said he was at one time a farmer and speaking from experience could say that Brandon depended for her prosperity on the farmer.

It is with a great deal of pleasure and a feeling of privilege that I welcome you to the City of Brandon on the occasion of this your Annual Convention.

I need not say that the citizens of Brandon feel the honor you have done them in making this your convention City for so many years past, and trust that you will be able to still consider Brandon your convention home in the future.

While there is a certain limit to our means of accommodation, yet you may rest assured that anything humanly possible will be done by us in order to make your stay in the city a pleasant one, and any failure in this respect, if reported to me, will be dealt with promptly.

That through the medium of these conventions, the farmers are coming into their own, has I think been evidenced by the recent Ontario Elections, and I have no doubt personally that this will be still further emphasized at a later date in our own Province.

On behalf of our Citizens, I extend to you a sincere welcome to our City, and wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

Glad of Recognition

W. I. Ford, Swan River, replying to the Mayor, stated that the Association had always been well treated by Brandon, and he was glad that the citizens were now willing to recognize the farmers as their equals in the rights of citizenship. "We have," he said, "always been insufficiently represented in parliament and in the governing bodies of the country. The time has come for action, and I am sure the farmers are welcoming the opportunity for united action. I thank the Mayor and citizens of this city for their splendid welcome."

President's Address

Ladies and Gentlemen, fellow members of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association—again we meet in Annual Convention.

Circumstances, the general nature

of which are familiar to you all and into the details of which I shall not at this time enter have laid upon me the duty of delivering to you the President's address.

Your officers and board of directors have during the year been called upon to make some important decisions. They have had a keen sense of their responsibility; and whether their judgment has been wise or unwise rest assured they have not acted hastily and have sought, not personal interests but only the welfare of the great Farmers' Movement. Perhaps I should not say Farmers' Movement but rather People's Movement in and the strength of our organization are enabled to play a leading part.

Perhaps even a year ago, we were still so close to the war that there was a measure of justification for those who felt that the time was "not yet" to push our radical economic reforms.

It is now, however, nearly fourteen months since the last gun was fired on the Western front. The armies are demobilized. The war is a matter of history, but the aftermath remains. What do we find? Bankruptcy, starvation and threatened anarchy in continental Europe. In Britain, a disastrous coal strike and a narrowly averted railway strike have seriously impaired the national efficiency. In the United States, strikes among the coal miners and the steel workers have threatened the industrial life of the nation. While from end to end of Canada we have had industrial turmoil and unrest, culminating in the Winnipeg strike of the early summer. When we think of these conditions together with the fact that we have a national debt of two billion dollars, we may well feel that the time has come when we must act.

immensity of the problems that confront us. It would therefore seem to be the part of statesmanship to at once stop temporizing, to discard all methods of expediency in which we may have felt compelled to acquiesce while the war was still with us and to at once adopt a national policy based upon sound and righteous principles.

And let me say here, that the principles to which I wish to call your attention are not new principles. They are as old as the human race. They have been expounded by the world's greatest teachers. They are fundamental to any era of peace and good will among men.

The great evil of taxation through a customs tariff lies in the fact that it absolutely fails to distribute the burden equitably. Indeed it can easily be shown that it rests with undue heaviness upon those least able to bear it. But, when the customs tariff becomes not merely a means of collecting necessary revenue, a device which while theoretically indefensible may have some merits as a practical expedient, but becomes a means whereby privileged interests may extort blood money from those less privileged, it becomes an iniquity, that we cannot tolerate.

In regard to the proposition that comes from many quarters that there should be a levy on capital we can only say that while the object sought is eminently desirable, the difficulties in the way of devising any practicable scheme would seem to be almost insuperable.

There is a second principle that must be emphasized, it is stated thus: "We are all members of one body and if one member suffer we all suffer together." Warnings are coming to us from certain quarters against class legislation and class domination. So persistent are these warnings that one would almost think that class legislation and class domination had never been known in human history. Not only are these new things, but government by a class, for a class has always been one of the most prolific causes of unrest.

The lesson that we have been most emphatically taught by that strike, if we have the wisdom to learn it is that no section of the community can suffer without all suffering together.

It does seem to me that we have been making the mistake of concerning ourselves almost wholly with the way in which social and industrial unrest have made themselves manifest, and have given insufficient attention to the causes which have led to them. The seeds of Bolshevism, whatever that may be, or any other

dangerous "ism" are like wild oats—they will only grow when all the conditions are favorable; and even if we grant that Europe has furnished the seed we have for forty years at least been preparing the soil.

The work of our organization has in the past been largely a matter of having grievances redressed and of resisting the encroachments of predatory interests. We have felt and I think rightly, that agriculture has had to bear an undue share of the nation's burdens. There has been no such thing as our passing the burden on to any one else. But faced as we are with the possibility in the not distant future of having a controlling position in the councils of the nation, we may well inquire as to our purposes and ideals.

Let me indicate another principle. The long ago statement was in this form. "How much is a man better than a sheep?" And yet human life has been one of the cheapest things that the world has known and has been recklessly sacrificed on many altars. And law that ought to be synonymous with justice has spread its protecting wings over property rather than men.

To Bring Harmony

The work of the Grain Growers' Association as I conceive it to be is to help to bring commerce and industry into harmony with the higher laws of life. To this end we employ two different means. We come to this convention and we listen to addresses that ought to have for us both instruction and inspiration. We seek to carry the same gospel to all places where our evangelists go. Much of our work is of the same class as that of the teacher, the preacher, the journalist, the lawyer, the statesman, and we also believe in bringing our influence to bear upon legislation. We do not believe that everything in the way of reform can be accomplished through the operation of law; but we do believe that through the operation of law, conditions may be so changed that in a larger measure the common burden may be equitably distributed, and that all may have greater opportunities to enjoy all the blessings of our twentieth century civilization.

Political Situation

And now let me make a brief reference to the political situation. I have already referred to the importance that attaches to this convention. A great deal may depend upon the wisdom or lack of wisdom that characterizes our deliberations and conclusions here and our actions during the next few months. Canada is in a peculiar situation politically. We have at Ottawa a government, entrusted with power two years ago which seemed to have the confidence of the people to a degree that governments have seldom had; and yet today appearances indicate that that confidence has been almost completely withdrawn. An election held any time in the near future would probably return to parliament more different groups of members than have ever been seen in the Canadian House of Commons; and however these might agree or disagree on general policies they would probably by a large majority oppose the present government. There would be representatives of both the old parties and of the Unionists; although there are signs in the sky that indicate "fair weather" as far as one of the old parties and the Unionists are concerned. We will probably have a group of labor men and a large number, if not a majority pledged to the support of the Farmers' Platform. This might lead to a situation that would require even more delicate handling than the one in Ontario following the last election. A question for us to consider is this: "Are we justified in taking the responsibility of bringing about such a situation?" I think we are, no matter in which direction parliamentary government may develop. It may very well be that development lies along the line of the group system. If so, some very radical changes in the operation of the present system would seem to be involved. In which case it is eminently desirable that the men constituting these groups should be men of the largest calibre. If, however, the old bi-party system is to be maintained—and there are many who look with disfavor upon the group system, who hold that this is inevitable—we have

at least done this, we have helped to array men on the side of principle and also helped to secure a realignment according to principle rather than according to inherited prejudices. And even if we have distinctive party names such as Progressive and Conservative or any other names, they will for a time at least and in greater measure than in the past be correct designations of the men who bear them.

With these considerations in view the importance of the next Federal election ought to be clearly seen. We need in parliament perhaps as we never needed them before, men of vision, men of high ideals, of broad outlook, wide sympathies and the saving grace of common sense. To get these is the main concern of the nation during the time that intervenes between now and the next election.

President Women's Section

Mrs. J. S. Wood, President of the Women's Section, in her address stated that the last year has seen a great advance in the organization. "Our Association," she said, "with men and women as members, has become more attractive because political action has been put on our program. A long enduring electorate has been patiently waiting for something that will give them power to remedy their ills and in political action they see that power."

She said that they must use their influence wisely so that there would be a "veritable regeneration" of all political evils.

The Women's Section, she said, had worked along four special lines. The first the new Canadian schools, the second, young people's work in rural districts, the third, better medical facilities and rural clubs.

"Not only are the farm women united for work in our provinces but they are working inter-provincially to attain greater results," she stated.

The 1920 Policy

Mrs. Wood outlined the 1920 policy as follows:

"There is the subject of our great national war debt, and what part we are to take in lessening it. We will still continue the work of trying to make Canadian citizens of the non-English. These are the two great problems facing Canada today and together with these there are some of the objects of our associations we must study, such as promoting more interest in the education of our children, better legislation for our women, and children, developing a taste for the finer things of life and the strengthening of our association, for if we are to carry out our aims we want to have every member an active member. We must get ready for the place that waits us."

"Our Canadianism is the only kind of nation building which is worth while. It goes hand in hand with social reform, it aims in carrying on an active crusade for the health of the babies of the nation and citizens of tomorrow. It aims at taking the drudgery out of farm life and giving happiness to every citizen."

Before the morning session rose a resolution of sympathy was passed to R. J. Avison, of Gilbert Plains, on his recent critical illness.

It was announced that already 131 resolutions had been handed in.

P. A. Kennedy, President of the Board of Trade referred to this convention as the greatest of its kind ever held in Canada. He spoke of the benefits which the Board of Trade had secured for the farmers, and assured them of future co-operation.

Oil Pipe Exploded

Montreal, Jan. 18.—One man was killed outright and one died last night in the General hospital here, while twelve others are suffering from severe burns following the explosion of an oil pipe, and a fire which broke out afterwards at the plant of the Imperial Oil Company, Montreal East, Wednesday afternoon.

The dead last night were: Charles Bryant, 55 years old; Ludger Hebert, 36 years old.

UNITED FARMERS OF CANADA IS THE NEXT STEP

Toronto, Jan. 10.—A Dominion-wide farmers party is predicted by J. J. Morrison, Secretary of the United Farmers of Ontario, and one of the organizers of that body, Morrison who has just returned from the farmers' convention in Winnipeg, says, the "United Farmers of Canada," will be a hard fact in the near future.

GRAIN GROWERS' DIRECTORS' REPORT

Local Men as Organizers

During the fall months, organization has been very successfully carried on by the employment of local men from various districts who have been employed temporarily when and where opportunity offered. It would seem that the solution of the problem of local organization for the future may be along this line. It has the advantage of affording opportunity for practice and training for many workers to fit themselves for the democracy which we seek to promote.

Legislation Secured

Resolutions referring to provincial legislation were taken up with representatives of the Provincial Government and due consideration of the various items placed before them was promised and we now have, as a result of this consideration "an Act respecting the Sale of Farm Implements" in which the interests of the purchaser are safeguarded equally with those of the vendor. This legislation which we have been seeking for some time, was placed on the statutes and became law.

The Directors' report as presented at the Grain Growers' convention was, in part, as follows:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Your directors, in presenting this their sixteenth annual report, are pleased to be able to say that, judging by reports from various parts of the province, the prestige of our association and the estimation in which it is held, not only among the farmers but among the people of our province as a whole, is higher than it ever was before.

The work of the association, was very much hindered during the first part of the year owing to the epidemic of influenza which continued in many districts well into the Spring.

There have been held during the year four meetings of the full Board of Directors and in addition, four meetings of the executive. At the first meeting of the year, Messrs. Avison and Wright were elected to act with the officers as members of the executive. At this meeting also, the various resolutions passed at the convention were considered and dealt with as instructed.

law on the second day of June of 1919. There has also been placed on the statutes "an Act for the Regulation of Licensing of Produce Dealers" along the lines suggested by resolution of the convention.

has not yet become law but has been held over so that the farmers of the province may have opportunity to consider it. It will be submitted for the consideration of this convention and its provisions explained by Mr. August.

Care and Treatment of Mentally Diseased

At the same time Mrs. J. S. Wood and Miss Finch, representing the Women's section made representations to the Government on matters dealt with by the ladies, and we have resulting from their efforts in conjunction with the efforts of other similar organizations, "an Act respecting the care and treatment of mentally diseased persons" also placed on the statutes during the past year, and child welfare is yearly receiving more attention as is evidenced by the increased employment of public health nurses.

Transportation of Hay

Re transportation of hay into drought stricken areas under special tariff, we found that reduced rates were scheduled for carrying stock from these areas to areas where feed was obtainable and also to carry feed to stock still in these districts where extreme scarcity prevailed, and we understand that the same provisions are in force for the present year where similar conditions obtain. We are pleased to state also that the privilege granted to farmers in the reduction on seed grain has been renewed with respect to seed required for the 1920 crop under the same regulations as during the past few years.

At the meeting of the directors held on January 21st of last year, a request from the Dominion Government was presented asking that they nominate some one to act as a member of "The Qualification Committee" of the "Soldiers' Settlement Board." Your directors nominated Peter Wright, who has acted in that capacity since that time.

Advancing Farmers' Platform

A good deal of attention has been given by your directors throughout the year to the propagation of the principles expressed in the Farmers' Platform. At a meeting of the executive held on March 14th, the following resolution was passed, and our secretary instructed that it should be given for publication in daily papers and copies forwarded to our representatives at Ottawa.

"Whereas the historic policy of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association has been that of a general lowering of the customs tariff, looking to ultimate free trade with Britain and reduction in duties on goods imported from other countries with special emphasis on free importation of all implements, used in agriculture and other industries believing as we do that such policy would be to the best interest not of any particular class, but of all the people.

"And whereas, during the time that

Canada has been at war not only has there been no progress in the direction of giving effect to this policy but on the other hand an actual increase in duties on the whole circle of imports including many articles absolutely essential both in the industries and in the common life of our people.

"And whereas the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association has loyally and consistently supported the Government of Canada in all efforts looking to a successful prosecution of the war, recognizing that for the time the winning of the war was the supreme effort.

"And whereas, the war having been won, the supreme issue is now the making of adequate provision to meet its cost to the nation.

"And whereas, since agriculture is the basic industry of the Dominion, our financial standing at home and abroad can be best maintained by encouraging the greatest possible increase in the production of the fields.

"And whereas, it is not to be expected that the high level of prices for agricultural products that has prevailed during the last four years can longer be maintained, making it necessary to reduce the cost of production by every possible means and especially through the lessening of the cost of the implements of production.

"And whereas, it must be futile to attempt to place returned soldiers on the land unless economic conditions are secured which will free agriculture from the unjust burdens it has borne.

"And whereas, the exorbitant cost of living to the common people must be reduced if actual want is to be avoided.

Demand Definite Action

"Therefore, we submit that any further delay in dealing effectively with the evils resulting from the established tariff system must not be thought of by the Government. The time for relief is long overdue and Western Canada having formulated its views in the National Platform of the Canadian Council of Agriculture requires that the Government at the present session take definite action in the direction indicated therein.

We urge that since its principles are not only corrective but constructive there is no reason why substantial progress should not be made at once in putting them into effect.

And especially we urge that a substantial reduction in duties and the freeing of farm implements and household machinery are in the very forefront of the measures needed in the reconstruction of our economic life and urgently demanded by the great body of our people.

We look to Western members of the House of Commons for an inflexible stand on the Farmers' Platform.

Support Farmers' Platform

At a meeting of the board held on April 4th, a motion was passed that the attention of district associations be directed to the resolution passed at last convention re political action and urging them to give effect to that resolution in their various districts as far as compatible with conditions, without obtaining therein. And the committee appointed at a sub-meeting of last convention was endorsed as a Provincial Committee with a view to promoting action in support of the Farmers' Platform.

Disapprove Mr. Henders' Action

At a meeting of directors held in Brandon on July 23rd, this matter was again under consideration and the Political Committee, working in co-operation with the board was by resolution instructed that when 25 per cent of the districts in the province ask that a provincial convention be called they proceed to call such a convention. At this meeting resolutions received from district and local associations disapproving of Mr. Henders' attitude on the tariff as expressed in the budget debate and vote led to a discussion which showed the general opinion of the board to be in accord with the resolutions, after which Mr. Henders' tendered his resignation as president of the Association, and after consideration the board passed the following resolution:

"We the Board of Directors of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association while deeply regretting the circumstances which have necessitated the resignation of our President, R. C. Henders, and while we fully appreciate the long years of faithful service he has rendered our organization—yet after careful consideration we cannot in any degree accept his attitude on the tariff, in the recent budget debate and vote. We therefore, repudiate his stand, accept his resignation and reaffirm our adherence to the principles of the Farmers' Platform.

Adjustment of Claims

"Among other work taken up by our central office is the adjustment and enforcement of claims between individual farmers and corporations or firms in cases where otherwise the farmer would not be able to secure justice. A great deal of this work has been done in the past not only to the advantage of the individual farmer concerned but of the farmers generally. As the fact that the association is known to be behind the individual is

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likely to deter any corporation or firm that might be so inclined from any infraction of justice. To make more effective the services rendered in this connection there has been opened a legal department where advice and guidance can be secured in such cases.

Relative Values of Grades of Wheat

During the year your board has made an effort to secure information in regard to the milling and baking values in wheat and while we believe that the relative values of the different grades vary from year to year. From figures we have received we are convinced that, on the whole, the spread in prices between the grades is not warranted by the difference in the actual food value. We would recommend that a committee be appointed to prosecute this inquiry still further and that their findings be placed before the public for the education of all concerned.

More Direct Political Action

Since last convention we believe that considerable progress has been among our people towards more direct political action; in every district in the province there are evidences that such is the case. For years we have been trying to improve conditions and secure for farmers and other workers in this country a larger measure of economic justice. By resolutions, by deletions and by every means available, we have sought to influence Governments from the outside, but with little apparent success and it has been growing on every one that to be effective, this influence must be applied from within our legislative walls, and this is true all over the Dominion as evidenced by the conference held in Winnipeg yesterday and the sentiments expressed there.

A committee has been appointed consisting of Messrs. French, Edie, and our secretary, to investigate more fully the situation with regard to milk production.

MEN'S GET TOGETHER MEETING IN ST. MATTHEWS

On Tuesday night a large number of the men of St. Matthew's Church and members of other Brandon parishes met in the crypt of the church for a Forward Movement evening.

The ladies of the church served dinner at 6:45. The tables were arranged in the form of the letter "F," signifying "Forward," and were tastefully decorated. The dinner served indicated thought for service in every respect and was thoroughly enjoyed.

After dinner Rev. Walter M. Loucks, Director of the Anglican Forward Movement in the Diocese of Rupert's Land, most ably and clearly outlined the need for and the objects of the movement, touching upon its various phases. The thoughts of his audience were aroused and carried to the ultimate objective of those phases, prayer, service, the responsibility and rights of Stewardship. His appeal for service in behalf of the church, the need for workers and the preparation of the best young men for holy orders was telling and urgent. Personal experiences emphasized the points of his advice. Mr. Loucks shows a clear conception of his subject and his optimism and enthusiasm over the ultimate results of the Forward Movement of the church was imparted to his audience. He gave the parish a most encouraging send off on its intensive month and other meetings in this connection have been arranged. Canon Davidson of Regina will be the speaker at the meeting January 16th.

U. S. MARKET HAD TWO MILLION BUSHELS WHEAT FROM CANADA LAST MONTH

Ottawa, Ont., Jan. 9.—Figures made public by the Customs Department show that during November, before the American market was open for Canadian wheat, 258,263 bushels, valued at about \$841,242, entered the United States from Canada, as compared with 1,190,508 bushels, valued at \$2,590,509 in December.