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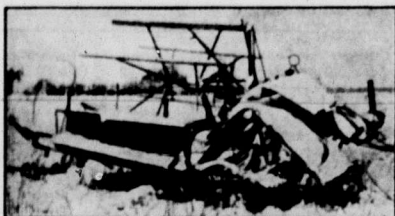
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WHEN WRITING TO ADVERTISERS PLEASE MENTION THE GUIDE

The Co-operative Union

A conference of the Ontario section of the Co-operative Union of Canada was held at Peterboro on Victoria Day, the chairman of the section, Manager Dickson, of the Galt society, presiding. Delegates were present from societies at Peterboro, Ottawa, Galt, Preston, Guelph and Welland.

The chairman, in his opening address, said this was the third sectional conference they had held. By meeting together they had at previous conferences acquired knowledge for their mutual advantage. They were assembled again to see what they could do by collective effort to propagate the doctrines of co-operation in the province, and exchange views on questions relating to the business side of the movement. He had had long experience as a manager in Scotland, and had been told many times by co-operative leaders in the old land that the co-operative name in Canada was held in very low repute. As the result of his experience here, he was of opinion that the principal cause was the existence of so many fake societies, which periodically were foisted on the public by promoters for their private advantage, and which inevitably failed with great loss to people honestly desirous of applying co-operative principles, consequently causing widespread discouragement. Sometimes societies honestly organized, thru lack of experience, got into difficulties and failed. He knew from his personal experience that those societies could be saved and put on a strong foundation if, instead of allowing themselves secretly to drift into the hands of creditors and their debt collectors, they consulted and followed the advice of the Co-operative Union immediately such financial difficulties presented themselves. The great difficulty was the engagement of inexperienced managers. If societies were to escape the rocks of bankruptcy, co-operatively trained managers would have to be imported until such time as we were able to train our own.

A Dominion Congress

The question of the adequate financing of the union was introduced by Mr. Harrison, of Galt, who pointed out that for years past the general secretary of the union had not only given his services without payment, but had been compelled to advance money out of his own pocket to meet expenses, and there was always a considerable amount due to him. It was unfair to him and humiliating to themselves. They should carry their own financial responsibilities, and not throw the whole weight on one individual. Eventually it was resolved that the Ontario section ask that a Dominion congress be held on Labor Day, and the rules amended requiring every society to contribute annually twenty-five cents for each of their members, which it was thought would meet the difficulty. An annual per capita tax of two cents was levied to meet the Ontario expenses.

Organization and Audit

General Secretary Keen, of the Co-operative Union of Canada, addressed the delegates on "The organization and financial oversight of societies in Ontario." He said that, in recent years, there had been a rapidly growing sentiment thruout Canada in favor of co-operative principles. That sentiment rarely crystallized into economic fact. Few enquiries as to the formation of societies sent to him by representative farmers and workmen assumed substantial shape. This was because the union had no machinery for organization to direct along right channels the energies of the people concerned. In addition, for a similar reason, the mortality of societies actually organized was unnecessarily high. With business-like treatment of the problem, failures would be almost impossible. To meet the situation in Ontario, what was needed was the incorporation and financing, on an investment basis, of an organization and auditing society which would probably be self-sustaining from the commencement.

Unless a considerable number of societies were organized in town and rural districts, the ratio of development of individual societies would be affected.

Their progress would be very slow and financial savings small. Economies were not so much dependent upon what each individual society could itself do as upon the organization, under co-operative auspices, of the demand for merchandise of a considerable proportion of the people of the province.

Farmers and Workingmen

It was necessary to get the workingmen and farmers to co-operate for the purpose of purchasing those supplies which were common to both sections, and for workingmen's societies to get from the farmers' societies direct the produce of the farms required by the people in the cities, thereby eliminating intermediate profit charges. The enormous savings in European co-operation, and the growth of the individual societies had coincided with, and been occasioned by, the growth of the wholesale societies. Before one could be established in Ontario with reasonable hope of success, a considerable increase of well managed retail societies would be necessary. The farmers of Ontario were experimenting with centralized distribution thru farmers' clubs as the local unit. Within twelve months they had discovered its impracticability except for extensive individual purchases and large supplies needed for the purposes of their industry. They would, logically, as in other countries, in due time gravitate to the co-operative agricultural store as the only practical method of acquiring the greater portion of their supplies.

Expert Management Necessary

The success of such agricultural stores, as of those of workingmen, would depend upon scientific organization and expert management. In the early years, in both town and country, men necessarily inexperienced would man the committees in control of the societies, and permanency and success would depend upon the continuous and systematic guidance which could be given them by outside co-operative bodies. He felt that in anticipation thereof there should be in connection with the suggested organizing institution an auditing branch, that the Ontario section should agree upon a common form of balance sheet, that balance sheets and auditors' reports should be submitted periodically to a board of experts appointed by the Ontario section, that inexperienced committees should be required to abandon dangerous business and financial policies immediately they are pointed out to them, and consult with the provincial board in the selection of expert managers, and that failure to adopt the recommendation should, for the good name and credit of the movement, be punished by exclusion from the union.

It was necessary to move more rapidly, but soundly and scientifically, and as co-operative institutions were developed, co-operators would have an ever increasing number of workingmen and farmers educated in co-operative principles, and experienced in sound business methods. The conference resolved to refer the proposition to the sectional board for consideration, with instructions to report thereon to the next meeting.

Resolutions Passed

Resolutions were passed that British co-operative newspapers be requested to warn co-operative employees, owing to numerous bogus societies in Canada, not to accept employment offered to them in this country without first consulting the general secretary of the Canadian union; to make representations to the Ontario attorney-general as to illegal conspiracies of wholesale merchants to deprive properly incorporated co-operative societies of the goods of their trade; and to hold the next conference at Guelph.

MORE MANITOBA CHARGES

Leaders of Both Parties Accused of Corrupt Deal in Change of Government

A new sensation was sprung in the Manitoba political situation on Monday, June 21, when charges were made before the Royal Commission investigating the Parliament Buildings scandal to the effect that the resignation of the Roblin government was the result of a deal in which it

was agreed that the enquiry was to be dropped and no criminal proceedings taken in consideration of the Liberals being placed in power and paid \$50,000.

The Charges

The charges were made by C. P. Fullerton, K.C., acting for fourteen private members of the Conservative party in the legislature, and in substance were as follows:—

That a deal was made, whereby the Roblin government resigned office and permitted the Norris government to step in, for financial and other considerations;

That the Royal Commission's investigation into the Parliament Buildings graft scandal was to be stifled and switched into a civil suit against Thomas Kelly & Sons;

That a sufficient number of Conservatives were to resign, to give the Liberals a majority in the House and that the same number of Liberals were to be elected unopposed;

That the Liberals agreed, in consideration of the sum of \$50,000, to abandon the legal protests they had entered for the purpose of unseating certain Conservatives elected to the legislature at the last provincial election.

That the charges can be established, and that the following persons can testify as to the deal, viz.: Lieutenant-Governor Sir Douglas Cameron; Chief Justice M. J. Howell; Premier Norris; Hon. Thos. H. Johnson; Hon. A. B. Hudson; Hon. Sir Rodmond Roblin; Hon. James H. Howden; Frank H. Phinpen, K.C.; L. P. Tilley; A. J. Andrews, K.C.; C. P. Wilson, K.C.; H. J. Symington and J. B. Coyne.

The deal, if such was made, was not carried out, but it is alleged that \$25,000 was paid and the new government was unable to carry out its promises because of public opinion.

Mr. Fullerton asked the Royal Commission to permit him to call witnesses to prove his charges, but the Commission after consideration decided that this matter lay outside of their power unless it could be shown that the \$50,000 spoken of came from the Parliament Buildings contract. Mr. Fullerton said he could not prove this, altho he had a shrewd suspicion that it was so. Counsel for the late government, A. J. Andrews, strongly objected to the commission enquiring into the matter, while the Liberal counsel expressed willingness to have anything and everything gone into.

Will be Investigated

Next day the government announced that if the commission so desired, its powers would be enlarged so as to enable it to undertake the enquiry. Mr. Fullerton stated, however, that he would prefer a separate commission, intimating that he might desire to call Chief Justice Mathers, chairman of the original Commission, as a witness. Meanwhile, the Winnipeg Telegram has been demanding the appointment of a Royal Commission by the Dominion government to supercede the existing provincial commission, suggesting the name of Sir Charles Fitzpatrick, Chief Justice of Canada.

The appointment of a second Commission to investigate the charges made by Mr. Fullerton was announced by the provincial government on Thursday, Mr. Justice Perdue, of the Court of Appeal, Mr. Justice Gault, of the King's Bench Court, and Hon. H. A. Robson, Public Utilities Commissioner, being appointed. The new Commission met on Monday, June 28, and made arrangements to at once proceed with the hearing of Mr. Fullerton's witnesses.

"Whisky, my friend, has killed more men than bullets."

"That may be, sir; but, bejabbers, I'd rather be full of whisky than bullets."—London Opinion.

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