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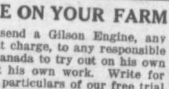

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Where the Farmers of Ontario Stand

National Platform for the Farmers of Canada, as Recommended by the Canadian Council of Agriculture, Adopted--Resolutions on Important Issues Passed

THE United Farmers of Ontario, assembled in convention in St. James' Parish Hall, Toronto, on March 1st, took up clause by clause the proposed National platform for the farmers of Canada as adopted by the Canadian Council of Agriculture last fall and endorsed by the United Farmers' organizations of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta in their conventions this winter. The platform was adopted in its entirety with the exception that a referendum was requested on the clause recommending the Parliament of Canada to adopt the reciprocity agreement of 19.1, which still remains on the United States statute books, and on the clause favoring the placing of all foodstuffs not included in the reciprocity agreement on the free list. Such action would help the poor in the cities and showed that the farmers are ready to look on such questions from the standpoint of the best interests of the country at large, and not solely in their own interests. The platform, as adopted, now stands as follows:

The Customs Tariff.

Be it resolved that we, the United Farmers of Ontario, as a means of bringing about much needed reforms, and at the same time reducing the high cost of living, now proving such a burden on the people of Canada, urge that our tariff laws should be amended as follows:

1.—By reducing the customs duty on goods imported from Great Britain to one half the rates charged under the general tariff and that further gradual, uniform reductions be made in the remaining tariff on British imports that will ensure complete free trade between Great Britain and Canada in five years.

2.—That the Reciprocity Agreement of 1911, which still remains on the United States statute books is hereby approved, and we demand also that all food stuffs not included in the reciprocity agreement be placed on the free list, and that these matters be submitted to a referendum by the people.

3.—That agricultural implements, farm machinery, vehicles, fertilizer, coal, lumber, cement, illuminating fuel and lubricating oils be placed on the free list.

4.—That the customs tariff on all the necessaries of life be materially reduced.

5.—That all tariff concessions granted to other countries be immediately extended to Great Britain.

Taxation for Revenue.

As these tariff reductions will very considerably reduce the national revenue derived from that source, the United Farmers of Ontario would recommend that in order to provide the necessary additional revenue for carrying on the government of the country and for the prosecution of the war to a successful conclusion, direct taxation be imposed in the following manner:—

1.—By a direct tax on unimproved land values, including all natural resources.

2.—By a sharply graduated income tax upon all incomes over $4,000 a year.

3.—By a heavy graduated inheritance tax on large estates.

4.—By a gradual income tax on the profits of corporations over ten per cent.

Other Necessary Reforms.

The United Farmers of Ontario desire to endorse also the following policies as in the best interests of the people of Canada:—

1.—The nationalization of all railway, telegraph and express companies.

2.—That no more natural resources be alienated from the crown, but brought into use only under short term leases, in which the interests of the public shall be properly safeguarded, such leases to be granted only by public auction.

3.—Direct legislation, including the initiative and referendum and the right of recall.

4.—Publicity of political campaign fund contributions and expenditures both before and after elections.

5.—The abolition of the patronage system.

6.—Full provincial autonomy in liquor legislation, including manufacture, export and import.

7.—That the extension of the franchise to women in any province shall automatically admit them to the federal franchise.

The following resolutions were reported by the Resolutions Committee and submitted to the meeting and approved.

The Needs of Agriculture.

Whereas the efforts of our Agricultural Departments along the lines of exhortation, investigation and technical instruction, demonstration, etc., admittedly useful and beneficial in themselves, have failed after many years of effort to solve our Rural Problem,

We therefore suggest that the Government and all interested in the solution of this grave problem, devote more attention to economic conditions under which the farmer is exploited for the benefit of other interests, and, whereas, the failure of these efforts is not sufficiently recognized, we therefore recommend that our Departments of Agriculture conduct investigations similar to those conducted in the United States to ascertain the revenues and expenditures of a large number of typical farms.

Conscription.

Since human life is more valuable than gold, this convention most solemnly protests against any proposal looking to the conscription of men for battle while leaving wealth exempt from the same measure of enforced service. It is a manifest and glaring injustice that Canadian mothers should be compelled to surrender boys around whom their dear-

(Continued on page 13.)