

Special Meeting of U.C.M.—Continued

The delegates have been invited to be the guests of the city of Toronto on Friday. We have also been invited to be the guests of the city of Niagara Falls.

The meetings of our Executive will conclude to-morrow afternoon.

In conclusion, I wish to express the opinion that the municipalities are to be congratulated on the way they have been able to carry on their affairs since the war broke out, and on having done their part to promote a patriotism and production campaign with a view to keeping business going as usual. A great responsibility devolves upon the municipal councils at the present to keep the flag flying, and to do their bit for King and country. We have not been found wanting so far, and we should confer all the honors possible on the brave men who are representing our people and country in the overseas contingents. Their memory will never fade. Our heroes will be an honor and credit to us, and to future generations, for the sacrifices they have made.

The address was moved and second to be filed.—Carried.

The next business was the reading of correspondence which was accepted and ordered to be filed.

REPORTS.

Mr. Fred Cook, the Union's representative at Ottawa, presented his report, which was adopted.

(For report see page 272.)

The Hon. Sec.-Treasurer (W. D. Lighthall, K.C.) presented his financial statement, which was adopted.

GOOD ROADS.

The first discussion was on "Good Roads," the President thought the present was the time to build good roads, but Alderman Bessette, of Outremont, thought it perhaps unwise to press a measure that might embarrass the Government in the present national crisis.

Mayor Walters of Hamilton, thought unemployment and good roads should not be taken together at the present time. He dwelt on the importance of good roads, and thought the association should go on record in support of the good roads question. He was asked to put his suggestion in the form of a resolution, which was seconded by Mayor Stevenson of London.—The resolution reads as follows:—

"That the Provincial Governments be requested to appoint permanent highway Commissioners, who shall serve without salary with a view to planning for the construction of a general system to include a national inter-provincial highway and that the Dominion Government be petitioned to co-operate as far as may be practicable in such undertakings.—Carried.

It was also decided to ask the Federal Government to introduce its "Good Roads" Bill.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

The meeting then proceeded to consider unemployment under the following heads:

(a) Report of the meeting of mayors at Ottawa; (b) established information; (c) the unemployed; (d) propositions of the Dominion Government; (e) relieved soldiers; (f) immigration.

Mayor Walters moved for a discussion, clause by clause. His motion carried.

The Secretary read the suggestions made to the Dominion Government by the mayors' meeting at Ottawa last fall, and the Government's reply that it had its hands full with the war and that the municipalities must meet the bulk of the burden of the unemployed.

Alderman Blumenthal, Montreal, suggested that the Government be asked to finance the bonds of the municipalities in order that they might provide work in making necessary improvements. Montreal had been fortunate financially, and had been able to give a lot of work to idle men, but some other municipalities had not been so fortunate. The principal thing was to find the capital. It was easy to find the work.

Alderman Boyd, Montreal, thought the question of the Government marketing the bonds or guaranteeing the interest of the bonds of the municipalities required serious consideration. The Government might not be able to do it. The physical condition of the unemployed must also be considered. Many of them were not fit to do hard work.

The President thought the first thing to be considered was not what the Government might do, but what the municipalities were going to do themselves. There should be co-operation and registration, so that the unemployed could be kept track of. There were in Toronto 15,000 or 20,000 families who could each take care of another family. They should be given a proper opportunity to do their duty.

Reeve MacDonald, representing the Manitoba Union of Municipalities, moved that the immigration authorities be asked to so supervise and direct incomers towards farms that the poverty and destitution of cities will be lessened.

Mr. MacDonald presented a resolution of his Union which was adopted by the meeting.—The resolution read as follows:—

At a meeting of the Executive of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities held on July 8th, at the city of Winnipeg, the following resolution was passed:

"That in the opinion of the Executive of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, representation should be made to the Immigration Department of Canada by the Executive of the Canadian Union of Municipalities with the object of having further supervision and help for the immigrant who has come to Canada with the intention of going on the land, so that he may be encouraged in this intention.

"Further, that if this be done there will be fewer unemployed in our towns and cities, two-thirds of whom come to Canada with the intention of farming."

Controller Fisher of Ottawa reminded the committee that the man who wants work wants to create profits and should not be treated as a subject of charity. He declared that no municipality can take care of its unemployed, because a large number of them invariably flock into cities and towns from outside places. "We should inaugurate a back-to-the-land movement. Let us draft a comprehensive plan and submit it to the Government." There were one thousand families in Ottawa who could be moved bodily to the land if the money were available.

Mayor Walters, asked that inquiry be made of the Canadian Minister of Agriculture as to what, if anything, had been done towards placing the unemployed on vacant land, as requested by the mayors last fall. He urged that the Department of Agriculture should be asked to appoint a commission of three to consider the details of a practical back-to-the-land movement. He succeeded in having the following motion adopted:—

"That inasmuch as it is the opinion of this body that the final solution of the unemployment conditions in Canada must come through placing the idle agriculturist on the land, to this end we would strongly urge that immediate steps be taken to select suitable agricultural districts throughout the Dominion, where conditions are favorable for settlement, settlers to be allotted not more than 40 acres each, and to receive from the Government by way of a loan sufficient money to purchase stock, and such implements as are required, and to assist settlers until such time as they can become self-sustaining, such advances to be a charge against the land, and to be repayable in instalments covering a period of years."

Alderman Blumenthal had found in the west certain companies who placed men on their farms as shareholders. This appealed to him as a suggestion to the Government. He thought also the Government should get after speculators, who hold vacant lands to be sold as town lots. He had seen miles of this land at Calgary, and they also had lots of it around Montreal. The Government and the municipalities should join hands and make the owners use the land for something. He traced the high cost of food to speculating in land instead of cultivating it. The speculators should be made to pay a proportionate tax.

Mayor Church asked how the Government was going to carry out these elaborate suggestions while it was busy with the war?

Mayor Walters, Hamilton, suggested a town-planning commission to keep down speculative land holding. "A Town Planning Commission should be appointed and given sufficient power to prevent subdivision of land until reasonable development demands it."

Mayor Church said the Dominion Department of Agriculture was deeply interested in the land and might be receptive of land suggestions.

Alderman Evelyn, of Verdun, said that the present need was for temporary not permanent relief. There was a hard winter coming, and the land had no attraction for the great mass of unemployed in the cities. The municipalities should borrow such money as they could get, to get work going.

Mayor Stevenson, of London, said: "We are asking the Government to change the whole policy of the country at one stroke." It would take a lot of money to get the land alone. When the war is over is the time to sort out and help immigrants. He could not see how any Government could say at the present time, "Yes, we'll do it" to any

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