

WARMAN PASSES RESOLUTIONS

At a regular meeting of the Warman Local S.G.G.A., held on Saturday, March 3, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted, with instructions that the secretary forward copies of same to the Central, with a request for publication in the Saskatchewan page of The Grain Growers' Guide.

Whereas, copies of the executive and financial reports of the S.G.G.A. are not distributed until the annual convention is in session; and, consequently, the locals have no opportunity of discussing same until the convention is over.

Therefore, we, the members of the Warman Local, respectfully recommend that in future every local secretary be provided with a copy of these reports, covering the full calendar year, 15 days prior to the holding of the annual convention.

Whereas, it has become customary at our annual convention to devote much valuable time to sight-seeing and pleasure with the inevitable result that many important questions are only briefly discussed, or not discussed at all, for lack of time.

Therefore, we, the members of the Warman Local, desire to enter strong protest against the prevailing system and we respectfully recommend that at all future conventions more time shall be devoted to business and less to pleasure.

Whereas, only one page of The Guide is allotted for Saskatchewan news, and, whereas, this limited space is under the close censorship of the central secretary, with the result that much dissatisfaction and disappointment is caused to members who, on account of their heterodox or unpopular opinions, cannot get their views published, lack of space being invariably pleaded.

Therefore, we, the members of the Warman Local, are of the opinion that more space should be available in The Guide for Saskatchewan news, in order that local secretaries and members may be able to express their opinions more freely and fully than is possible now.

See.—Treas., Warman Local.

Answer

Your interesting favor, enclosing copies of three resolutions, has come duly to hand and has been marked for publication in the Saskatchewan page of The Guide. I consider it incumbent upon me to publish with your resolutions some slight comment thereon.

(1). The financial year of the association ends December 31. According to our constitution the annual meeting has to be held some time in February and according to our practice of long standing we find it wise to hold the annual meeting as early in February as is possible. It would be quite impossible to prepare the financial statement in time to send them out to the locals before the convention and hold our convention as early as we have been in the habit of holding it. Indeed it is only with considerable pressure and a great deal of night work that the Central is able to get out a properly audited financial statement in time for our annual meeting as it now stands. Furthermore, these statements must be submitted to the directors of the association before they can be given out to the locals and published. The board of directors does not meet until the day preceding the convention. To hold a special meeting of the board of directors in order to deal with these statements would entail an expense of approximately \$500 each copy. None of the other farmers' organizations are in the habit of publishing their financial statements until they have been officially sanctioned, not only to their various boards, but also to their annual meeting, and this in spite of the fact that such companies as the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and The Grain Growers' Company allow themselves more than three months time between the close of their financial year and their respective annual meetings.

(2). Personally, I think that your premise is entirely wrong in this resolution. I do not think that it has become customary in our annual conventions to devote much valuable time to sight-seeing and pleasure. For many years we have found it wise to have a little relaxation and to have an entertainment of some kind at least one evening during the convention. The three hours of daylight which was devoted this year to business other than that directly connected with the convention was, in the judgment of many who attended the convention, of very great value. In former years it has

been our experience that considerable numbers of delegates have absented themselves from the various sessions of the convention to transact private business. We thought, therefore, that as we were unable to show the patriotic are moving picture films in the place of meeting and as two hours time was required for the showing of these films, it would be well to announce to our people that all their private business should be transacted during the three hours which were set apart for all these activities aside from the regular sessions. It is not reasonable to hold a four days' convention of twelve long sessions all devoted to business. The strain becomes too great, people become tired and irritable and the officers of the convention, particularly the president, are driven to the very edge of their powers of endurance.

(3). During the three years since the present secretary has been in office there has been only two or three letters presented for publication which have been refused publication because of the character of the matter which they contain. No amount of additional space would have made the slightest difference in the rejection of those particular letters, but I do not think that any of them came from Warman. If they did I shall be pleased to have my attention pointed to them.

The Mail Bag of The Guide is always open for even exceedingly "heterodox" opinions and I am sure that the letter recently published in the Saskatchewan page of The Guide from your own pen is considered "heterodox" by the great bulk of the members of this association. If there are any letters which you are anxious to have published in the Saskatchewan page of The Guide and which have been refused publication, I shall be very pleased if you will point my attention to them.

IS A CO-OP STORE ADVISABLE?

I am enclosing \$12.50 membership fees due the central. The association will soon want to become incorporated. If you have any suggestions of interest to the local, kindly have them sent on. What is your opinion of a local co-operative store? At a meeting held in Jasmin on Saturday last the manager from a local co-operative store was invited to attend and I supposed a store of the kind for the above village, as I see no direct benefit to the farmers in supporting it.

LOCAL SECRETARY.

Answer

Replying to your favor, in which you ask for my opinion with regard to opening a co-operative retail store at Jasmin, I have to state that without full information it would be impossible for me to express a really intelligent opinion on your particular case. I can, therefore, deal only with the matter in a general way.

On the whole I am firmly convinced that our people are not yet ready for the handling of a great many local co-operative stores in the ordinary manner in which retail stores are handled. When I presented to the convention at Moose Jaw three years ago last February the project of the entering of the central upon the business of wholesale distribution and the wide extension of the activities of the locals in this connection, I made it a point to state, and to state emphatically, that if any considerable saving in the business of retail distribution was to be effected it could not be effected by merely substituting machinery of our own for that which already existed under the control of the merchants, but that the saving could be effected only by the adoption of a cheaper method of distribution by collective purchasing, by ordering in wholesale quantities and by taking delivery either from the rail, the leading platform, or a cheap warehouse in unbroken packages by the farmers.

It was then as evident to me as it is today that the extending coefficients of retail distribution was due, not to the great profits taken by the retailer, but to the inefficiency of our method of dis-

tribution. In the first place we, as farmers, were principally to blame because we had fallen into the habit of expecting and accepting the service from the retailer which no community ought to expect from a retailer. We were financing on the retailer's capital instead of our own, and that added anywhere from ten to fifteen per cent. to the cost of our supplies. Then we were in the habit of buying in dinky quantities where we should, as farmers and heavy consumers, have been in the habit of buying in unbroken case lots in many lines of supplies, taking our goods directly from the merchant's warehouse instead of putting him to the expense of unpacking and shelving these goods and keeping a large and expensive staff employed dealing them out piecemeal over the counter and entering them through the books, all of which we have always been paying for. Now if the locals are merely going to duplicate the same kind of machinery which the retail merchants have had and if they are going to deal out their goods in the same manner, and especially if they are going to charge any of the goods that go out, even if it be for only twenty-four hours, I doubt that any very great saving in the cost of distribution can be effected.

There are a few districts in which the locals may be ripe for the ownership of a store of their own, but on general principles I would advise the utmost caution on the part of any of our locals in going into a retail store, particularly when they are doing so altogether independent of any central direction or central superintendence and inspection.

If the farmers in your district are prepared to put up sufficient cash capital to pay absolutely neat cash for all goods required with which to stock your store; if you will sell for good cash only, always getting the money before parting with the goods, and if your members are prepared to stay with your store absolutely, quite irrespective of whether or not a competitor runs competing lines in such manner as to discredit your store, then it may be that you are ripe for a store undertaking, but unless those conditions obtain, I advise extreme caution.

CENTRAL SECRETARY.

WYNARD LOCAL PROGRESSIVE

Replying to your recent letter I am today sending you list of members and fees collected by me up to date for 1917. I expect to get more shortly. Our officers are as follows: President, O. J. Hallstrom; vice-president, J. A. Walker; secretary, Frank Eliason (Organization); and E. J. Woppe (Treasurer). Officers for the women's association are as follows: President, Mrs. J. A. Walker; vice-president, John Ruessman; secretary, J. E. Rhinners. The two associations meet separately to discuss matters of interest to each but meet together to discuss anything of importance which concerns all the members.

I might say that the local here has been of immense benefit to the community during the past three or four years of its existence, but it takes a lot of time to get people to work together. I will mention a few of the things which we have accomplished.

First year, some buying in our lots. Organized a co-operative elevator and a women's section. Second year, more co-operative buying and nearly all farmers sold their grain to the co-operative elevator. In 1916 we established a co-operative retail store, affiliated with central. It had a turn-over of \$20,000 of goods during seven months of operation. We organized two rural telephone companies and have the central in Grain Growers' building, under the supervision of the local board who hires an operator. A livestock association was organized. The buyer is going to Winnipeg to purchase first class feed of livestock for shareholders tomorrow. We reorganized the agricultural society, which was defunct for a number of years and are working for reap from

mail delivery and a municipal hospital. We have had a picnic and several other entertainments, and a Grain Growers' Sunday. We also had a district convention last November.

Or. Dept., Wynard O.G.A.

OPPOSE CONSCRIPTION

We held our monthly meeting on March 10 and had a fair attendance. After the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting we took some orders and then had quite a political discussion. For my own personal part, I am neither Liberal nor Conservative. I am for putting up and supporting an independent man for this reason, Orits and Turles are going to work to one another benefit and it is high time that we had a complete change.

Another discussion at our meeting was regarding conscription in Canada on which the following resolution was passed: Resolved that we, the members of the Buffalo Horn O.G.A. declare our united opposition to conscription, military or industrial, and as British subjects and in pursuance of the precedent established in New Zealand and Australia, we maintain that it is the right of the citizens of Canada to decide by popular vote whether or not conscription shall be imposed on the male population of Canada. I think it would be a very good thing if more such resolutions were passed by the working people of the Canadian west.

WM. A. FLAVEL, Sec. Treas.
Buffalo Horn O.G.A.

APPRECIATION FOR CENTRAL

The following letter from J. H. Miller of Elbow, Sask., indicates appreciation in securing a settlement from the C.P.R.

The claim arose out of the destruction of a sleigh load of coal which was struck by one of the C.P.R. trains at a crossing in Elbow. The matter was taken up with the central and the facts brought to the attention of the C.P.R. and a settlement has been secured.

We claim against C.P.R. for sleigh, etc., the claims agent was here today and I accepted settlement for \$55. Will send you a remittance to cover your work and I thank you for handling the case and thus securing settlement for me.

J. H. MILLER, Pres.
Elbow O.G.A.

Kindly find enclosed one dollar for two more members. If it is not too much trouble would you please have the O.G.A. publish the following receipts received by this local by a box sent for the benefit of the Red Cross Society of Regina. The receipts were \$44, expenses \$14, leaving a balance of \$70 which was sent to the above named. There was also money raised to the amount of \$73 for the benefit of our local by the above means for the purpose of buying gopher poison from central. This shows that the Amelia local is alive. I consider this is very good for a hometown country.

A. F. BROWN, Sec. Treas.
Amelia O.G.A.

I am in receipt of your letter of April 3, advising me that the Saskatchewan O.G.A. has appropriated \$2,000 to the British Railways' Relief Fund. The appropriation of this amount is a splendid donation to a most deserving object, and on behalf of the local association of the British Railways' Relief Fund here, I beg to thank your association for their generous gift.

G. E. McCRAVEY, Pres.
I have pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of your letter of April 3, enclosing check value \$2,000 as a donation from your association towards the British Railways' Relief Fund. I can assure you that this splendid contribution will be heartily appreciated by this committee. Public acknowledgment will be made in the morning paper.

A. SPRATT.
Hon. Local Secy.

Owing to high cost of supplies and labor we consider farmers cannot raise wheat for less than one-fifty, local value.

E. L. LOVATT.

Bladworth.