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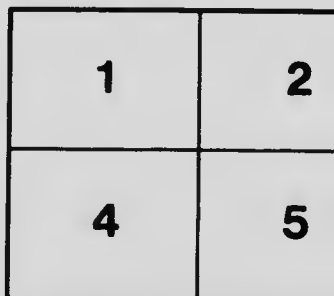
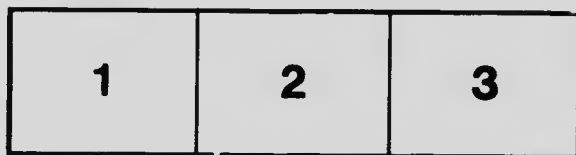
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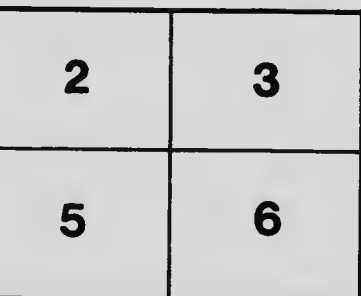
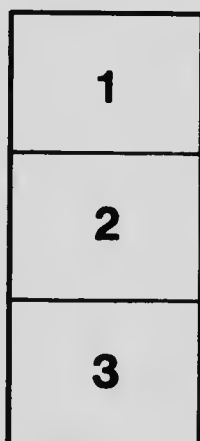
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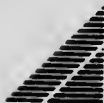
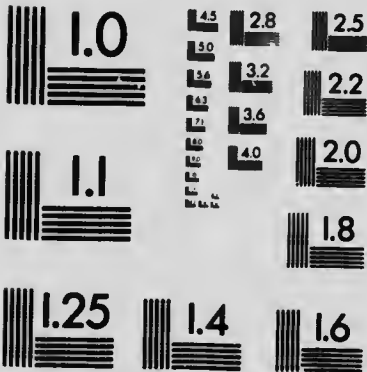
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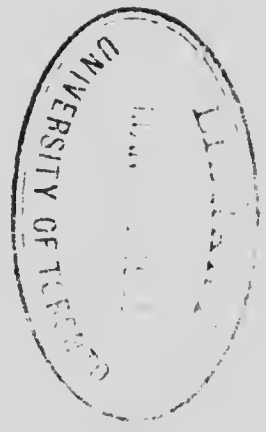
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Canadian Reconstruction Assoc
[1919]

Co-operation or Conflict



Republished from
The Toronto Daily News
By the
**Canadian
Reconstruction
Association**
March 18, 1919

WITH each successive morning the organized Grain Growers make a new demand upon Parliament. At a meeting of the Council of Agriculture at Winnipeg a few weeks ago it was decided to revive the trade agreement with Washington which the country rejected seven years ago, and to have free trade with Great Britain in rapid marches. The organized farmers of Ontario took a step beyond their Western associates. They adopted the whole Western platform, and also decided that any offer of free trade from Washington must have instant acceptance at Ottawa.

This looks very like an invitation to Washington to make a tariff for Canada, or at least to determine, wholly without regard to Canadian interests, in what articles and products American manufacturers and producers may want the free run of the Canadian market. Still more revolutionary proposals were adopted by the Manitoba Grain Growers at Brandon. It was resolved to demand immediate pledges from members of the House of Commons that they would work and vote at the next session of Parliament to give effect in legislation to the Grain Growers' platform, unless some great national issue which would supersede all domestic issues should arise. It was further resolved that against members who should refuse to give the pledges required, the District Associations should at once call conventions and make all necessary arrangements to nominate, finance and elect candidates who would support the farmers' platform to the last letter.

This reads very like coercion. The Manitoba Grain Growers not only determine to elect members upon their platform, but to control members who have been elected upon other questions and who perhaps entertain old, inherited notions about the freedom of British institutions, the right of independent judgment and the responsibility of elected representatives to all elements of the people. It is de-

manded that members shall effect a fiscal revolution in Canada without consultation with the constituencies, without consideration for the soldiers, for labor, for manufacturers or for merchants, and that they shall absolutely surrender the right of private judgment to a single class organization. One does not believe that these demands express the general feeling of Canadian farmers or even of Western Grain Growers. The war has demonstrated that national feeling is as active, as self-reliant, and as dominant in the West as in the old Provinces. If we can find where lies the national interest there will be as patriotic co-operation for peace as there was for war. But if we begin in the spirit of conflict we shall not discover the common bond of union. If either East or West believes that its true welfare is to be sacrificed to class or national interests, only disaster can result. Does any intelligent Canadian really believe that the manufacturers are a league of robbers, or the Western farmers unpatriotic and irresponsible destructionists?

There could be no more inopportune time for fiscal uncertainty and confusion in Canada. Between 250,000 and 300,000 workers have just been released, or will shortly be released, from munition factories and war contracts. As many soldiers are coming back from Europe to be re-established in industrial and other pursuits. At best the industries face a difficult period. They must adjust themselves to peace conditions and make large expenditures in the process. If they fail to run on full time, fail to find a home market for their goods, or fail to secure export orders, tens of thousands of workers must go without employment and wages must sink to lower levels. If the industries are inactive, merchants must suffer, and clerks, teachers, ministers and all persons on fixed salaries must suffer still more severely by the high cost of living from which farmers derive some advantage. For the farmers still enjoy good prices.

their products and are at least as prosperous as the professional classes and the great body of industrial workers.

Threatened with such radical tariff changes as the farmers' leaders would put into effect, manufacturers may hesitate to expand their industries to ensure employment for returning soldiers. The labor which the industries could give if reasonable stability were assured, may have to be provided by the Governments and the municipalities and the cost laid upon the taxpayers. For soldiers and workers must be employed either in the natural activities of the country or upon undertakings at public expense. Indeed, the immediate adoption of the Grain Growers' platform would produce a situation in Canada in which only Bolsheviks would be employed and they only until their production produced its inevitable collapse. The Grain Growers profess to have an alliance with organized labor and yet, in a period full of hazard and uncertainty, wings of their organization urge the instant adoption of a programme which would throw a multitude of workers upon the streets and introduce the soldiers to a country paralyzed by industrial uncertainty and confusion. It is thoughtlessly suggested that after four years of war, with the universal disturbance and dislocation which the war has produced, there should be revolutionary fiscal changes which at any time and under the most favorable conditions would be infinitely perplexing and disturbing. It is inconceivable that the Grain Growers would press their revolutionary demands at this time if they had ever seriously considered the certain consequences of their proposals.

This is a time for co-operation and not for conflict, for stability, and not for industrial anarchy. Before the tariff is revised there should be frank and full enquiry into the situation of the industries and thorough consideration of future economic policy. Great Britain, devoted to

free trade for two generations, has decided to establish preferential duties in favor of the Dominions, to protect key industries and to legislate against dumping to the injury of British labor. Australia is firmly and radically protectionist. Japan is guarding and developing her industries with a single concern for Japanese national interests. In South Africa there is a movement for higher duties. Brazil is taking measures to develop home markets and extend and strengthen domestic industries. In the United States there is not only no movement for tariff reduction, but it is certain that the Republican Party, which now controls Congress, is favorable to moderate tariff increases, and will firmly adhere to protection in the next Presidential contest.

Fortunately at Washington they have a Tariff Board which informs Congress and ensures that legislation for or against the industries of the country will not be rashly enacted. We need some such Board in Canada, not to instruct, but to inform Parliament, and not representing any single interest, but concerned only to provide facts and show actual conditions. The national welfare is the only sound test of legislation, and to that test manufacturers, organized workers and Grain Growers should willingly submit. But it is inconceivable that under existing conditions in Canada, with hundreds of thousands of soldiers and workers to be re-employed, with farmers prosperous and heavy taxation upon incomes and upon industrial and commercial companies, with the fiscal policies of other countries unsettled, and with Great Britain readjusting her commercial relations to the Dominions and to other nations, the Parliament of Canada, without enquiry or adequate knowledge and without reference to the constituencies, should be stampeded by one group or interest, however powerful, into a precipitate and revolutionary reversal of fiscal policy.

Unity—Stability—Prosperity

ARE THE AIMS OF THE

Canadian Reconstruction Association

ITS NATIONAL PROGRAMME IS:

1. To support a tariff adequate to develop Canadian industries and to ensure employment for Canadian workers.
2. To create a good economic understanding between East and West and to show the necessity for industrial stability in order that excessive taxation may not fall upon farmers and workers.
3. To co-operate in movements to increase agricultural production and improve rural conditions.
4. To maintain national credit and to encourage investment in Canada.
5. To stimulate the development of natural resources, to promote the utilization of Canadian raw materials, and to encourage final processes of manufacture in Canada.
6. To develop domestic and foreign trade and to promote necessary industrial organization.
7. To facilitate the adaptation of war industries to peace conditions and to ensure employment for war veterans and war workers.
8. To improve the relations between capital and labor and to emphasize the advantages of consultation and co-operation.
9. To encourage scientific research in the interests of Canadian producers and manufacturers.
10. To improve the economic and industrial position of women.

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THE FARMERS' PLATFORM

Organized farmers—through the Canadian Council of Agriculture representing the Provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario—have adopted a platform which demands:—

- (1) An immediate and substantial all-round reduction of the customs tariff.
- (2) The reduction of the customs duty on goods imported from Great Britain to one-half the rates charged under the general tariff, with such further gradual uniform reductions in the remaining tariff on British imports as will ensure complete free trade between Great Britain and Canada in five years.
- (3) The acceptance of the Reciprocity Agreement of 1911 and the placing of all food-stuffs not included in the agreement on the free list.
(The Manitoba Grain Growers and the United Farmers of Ontario also demand that any further reduction of the tariff of the United States towards Canada be met by a similar reduction of the Canadian tariff towards the United States.)
- (4) The placing of all agricultural implements, farm machinery, vehicles, fertilizers, coal, lumber, cement, illuminating fuel and lubricating oils, and of all raw materials and machinery used in their manufacture, on the free list.
- (5) The immediate extension to Great Britain of all tariff concessions granted to other countries.
- (6) The compulsory annual publication of comprehensive and accurate statements of their earnings by all corporations manufacturing products protected by the customs tariff.
- (7) The public hearing before a special committee of Parliament of every claim for tariff protection by any industry.
- (8) The public ownership and control of all railway, water and aerial transportation, telephone, telegraph, and express systems; all projects in the development of natural power; and of the coal mining industry.

To offset loss in revenue, the following taxes are recommended:—

- (1) A direct tax on unimproved lands, including all natural resources.
- (2) A graduated personal income tax.
- (3) A graduated inheritance tax on large estates.
- (4) A graduated income tax on profits of corporations.
- (5) The retention by the Crown of all natural resources and their use only under short term leases, such leases to be granted only by public auction.
- (6) The levy and collection of the business profits tax only upon the basis of the actual cash invested and without consideration for what is popularly known as "watered stock."

ISSUED BY

THE CANADIAN RECONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION
Royal Bank Building, Toronto



