

A STUDY OF THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE

1910 - 1930

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FOREWORD

A sub-title to this work, expressing the thesis, might well be 'The Story of an Agricultural Pressure Group in Canada.' For two decades the Canadian Council of Agriculture acted as the national farmers organization of Canada. This study deals with the rise, course and decline of the Council during the period of its lifetime, 1910 - 1930.

The list is long of those to whom the writer is indebted in the preparation of this study. Thanks are gratefully acknowledged to Dean W. J. Waines and Professor H. S. Ferns of the University of Manitoba for their untiring service and assistance, to Professor W. L. Morton of the same University and Professor V. C. Powke of the University of Saskatchewan, who gave freely of their wide knowledge of Canadian affairs, to Dr. D. A. MacGibbon for his wise counsel.

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"Canada is here to stay. The beginning of this century marks an epoch of phenomenal progress in British North America. The 19th century was the century of the United States. The 20th century is Canada's century." 1.

The turn of the 20th century saw the world reaping the benefits of the changes begun in the 1800's with the Industrial Revolution. Advance and expansion keynote the various economies in the early years of the century.

World population was increasing. Between 1891 and 1927 the population of the United Kingdom increased from 37 millions to 45 millions, a growth generally typical of other countries of the world. Canada's population rose from 4.8 millions in 1891 to 8.7 millions in 1921. As world population increased so did the tendency towards industrialization and urbanization. Needed manpower for industries became increasingly available while population tended to concentrate in the industrial centres. The demand for foodstuffs increased as population grew and became engaged more and more in industrial production.

Technological advances made in the preceding century were now bearing fruit. In transportation, railroads were supplementing roads and canals linking the older countries together and developing the newer ones. The automobile began to challenge the control of the railway, still further

(1) Attorney General Longley of Nova Scotia speaking before the Canadian Club of Boston on April 8, 1902, and reported in the Toronto Globe April 12, 1902, p. 16.

improving methods of transportation. By 1925, about 25,000,000 cars and trucks were in use throughout the world. On the sea the steam turbine introduced a new era in shipping until 1914, when oil began replacing coal, increasing the speed efficiency of transport by sea. The opening of the Panama Canal in 1915 helped to bring the regions of the world closer together. In communications, advances were made through the development early in the century of the wireless, while improvements were made in the telephone. The technological changes in means of transportation and communication freed trade and commerce from geographical and climatic limitations. Reasonable speed and safety for passengers and goods were assured. Bulky or perishable goods could now be taken long distances at relatively low costs. New regions of world sources of raw materials and foodstuffs could be developed.

Forms of business organization were changing as well. The joint stock company of limited liability, through its method of gathering together the savings of small investors, was making possible the rapid development of the world's resources. The enormous flow of capital from Europe to the less developed parts of the world, which marked the 19th century, continued in even greater volume. All the leading nations of Europe participated, Great Britain being in the lead with 20 billion dollars or $\frac{1}{4}$ of her national wealth invested overseas. Only about $\frac{1}{12}$ of this sum was in Europe: the remainder had gone into the development of

the Empire and regions in other continents.

The banking systems of the world had developed to meet the expanding needs of international trade. Checks and deposits, short and long term loans, bills of exchange, the Gold Standard and central banks were all part of the European commercial structure. In the United States independent banks continued to spring up all over the country, while in Canada the branch banking system² expanded steadily. No central bank was established in either nation until 1914 when the Federal Reserve System came into being.

Consumers' cooperation, begun at Rochdale, England, in 1844, made great strides in the new century, until by 1923 cooperative societies in Great Britain and Ireland alone possessed over 4.6 million members. By 1900 businessmen as well had begun to cooperate but in a different manner--cooperation to limit free competition. Agreements as to prices and terms of sale were becoming common among associations in Europe and the United States in almost every kind of trade and service. A further development, cartels, or central selling bureaus for industries, were first established in Germany, where by 1906 nearly 400 of them were in existence, a number which twenty years later had risen to over 2,000. The 20th century saw the rise of amalgamations and combinations, an American contribution to business which spread quickly to Canada and the rest of the world. In 1891 Great Britain had 37 banks, a number reduced by the process of merging to 6 in number by 1914.

2. Heaton, H., A History of Trade and Commerce (Toronto, 1928), Chapter VI.

In the early decades of the 20th century Canada had more reason than any other nation, with the possible exception of the United States, to look to the future with confidence and high hopes. Always a good indication of external development and prosperity is the growth of a country's trade. Between 1900 and 1918 the aggregate value of Canadian exports increased seven fold. In the same period the volume of business expanded to 3 times its former size. Growth and expansion were evident in every field of endeavor. The nation had at last been linked together from sea to sea by rail. The boom of 1895 was still on the upward trend. Canadian manufacturing had at last managed to break away from its dependence on staples and commenced a period of rapid expansion. The extent of Canada's resources was coming to be more and more generally realized. While the value of all the minerals mined in 1900 was 47 millions, this total had increased by 1917 to 193 millions. During the same period the total value of sea and lake fisheries rose from 19 millions to 52 millions.

Expansion and development were most pronounced in Western Canada. The early years of the century were marked by a great increase in the population of the prairies. Of the nearly 3 million immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1900 and 1914, 1.2 millions sought the West. The following table illustrates the increases.

	1901	1906	1911	1916
Manitoba	255,211	365,688	455,614	553,860
Saskatchewan	91,279/	257,763	492,432	647,835
Alberta	73,022/	185,412	374,663	496,525

(/ the areas later comprising these provinces)

(3) Data from Canada Year Book, 1918.

(4) Currie, A.W., Canadian Economic Development, (Toronto 1942), p.41.

Introduction

The West was particularly favored in immigration both from foreign nations and from sister provinces.

Land in seemingly endless quantities formed the great attraction. In the United States free land was becoming scarce while in Europe land hunger existed as always. With the virtual disappearance of the American frontier after 1890 the tide of settlement turned to the Canadian prairies. The great immigration, coming mostly from Europe, provided the manpower needed for the expansion of the West. Many of the hopeful Europeans returned home disappointed or passed on to the United States. Similarly a small percentage of the American farmers who came north left in disgust. But the great majority of immigrants stayed in Western Canada.

With the influx of people came capital. The immigrants themselves provided part of the new wealth. A farmer, if from the United States, usually brought his farm equipment and other capital goods with him across the border. In 1909 alone Americans brought with them over \$60 millions in cash and possessions. If from Europe or the British Isles, the immigrant brought money with which to establish himself.

In addition capital flowed from East to West through the agencies of the governments, the railways, elevator companies and private investors. For example, in one connection alone the C.P.R. expended \$15 millions--provision of means of watering for 2 million acres the company had been granted. Prairie governments raised great sums for expansion and development. "Capital came...in flood after flood."⁵

(5) Heaton, H., op. cit., p.283.

Advances in transportation techniques and efficiency hastened the process of Western expansion. In the period from the turn of the century to the outbreak of the World War, the C.P.R. built branch lines on a wide scale while the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific were both under construction. During that period the track mileage in the area now comprising the provinces rose from 3,716 miles to 11,710 miles. Grain growers were helped by reductions in freight rates. In 1899 the C.P.R. cut the rates on export grain en route to Fort William by 3¢ a bushel--a reduction on the average amounting to 20 per cent. At the same time, rates from Eastern Canada on certain requirements such as implements and building materials were lowered by similar amounts.

The production of grain, the great staple of the prairie economy, increased tremendously. In 1903 the development of Marquis wheat made possible increased yields per acre. Since the new cross-bred wheat ripened about a week earlier than older varieties, the area available for wheat production widened. Exports increased as world demand increased and as facilities for handling grain improved. At the Head of the Lakes, the C.P.R. had erected terminal elevators while after 1900 country elevators began mushrooming up along the railway replacing the small, flat warehouses. Better loading facilities at country points and lower rates on grain freights operating on the Great Lakes further reduced costs of production. On the land itself, improvements in techniques were made through summer-fallowing and the increased use of machinery.

In the field of marketing facilities, the Winnipeg Grain and Produce Exchange, more commonly known as the Grain Exchange, had operated since 1887 as a medium for the marketing of grain. In the late years of the 19th century, legislation had been enacted to regulate the western grain trade. Acts relating to the inspection and weighing of grain were passed in 1885 and 1891 and after 1899 all grain passing through Winnipeg had to be inspected there by government inspectors. The following year the Manitoba Grain Act was passed by the Dominion Parliament and hailed at the time as the Magna Carta of grain growers. Railways and elevator companies were to be regulated and a Warehouse Commissioner appointed with wide powers of supervision and control over the grain trade to ensure justice to all, including the producers.

"By 1900 the western grain trade had established itself in the world's markets and had built up a solid reputation for the excellence of western wheat." ⁶ Grain production and the production of flour expanded to meet the demand. ⁷ The following table illustrates the increase:

	Total Grain Production*	Wheat Production*	Wheat and flour exports*
1900	55,572,000	9,739,758	14,773,908
1910	132,078,000	48,442,780	62,398,113
1920	226,508,000	136,968,832	166,315,443

* in bushels

Western Canada entered the 20th century on a tide of prosperity

(6) MacGibbon, D.A., The Canadian Grain Trade (Toronto, 1932)
 p. 37
 (7) Ibid., p.82.

and at the beginning of a period of expansion and development.

But the western horizon was not altogether clear--small but significant black clouds were becoming apparent by 1900. Discontent with their lot was increasing among grain growers.

Grievances were basically of an economic nature.

As a farmer long active in the grain growers' movement has expressed it: "This western movement had its origins in a protest against existing economic conditions, which denied the farmer any control over the machinery of the marketing, financing and transportation of his crop and allowed selfish interests to interpose themselves between him and his markets and to exact a toll quite out of proportion to any services rendered by them."⁸ The farmer, sitting atop a wagonload of wheat hauled many miles from the isolated farm where for months he had toiled and worried over his crop, looked forth on an economy apparently allied against him.

From farther afield, eastern industrialists, through tariffs imposed under the National Policy, exploited the western farmer through forcing him to pay high prices for his agricultural implements and other necessities. To westerners, protection seemed manifestly unfair; yet it was on the statute books of the Dominion and remained in force whether a Liberal or Conservative government was in power. A great merger movement was underway in Canadian industry with 244 concerns being absorbed between 1900 and 1910 inclusive to form 39 larger consolidations. In the latter year

(8) Crerar, T.A., My Confession of Faith, Grain Growers' Guide, February 23, 1921. P.275.

alone 22 mergers were effected with an authorized capitalization of \$157 millions. The growth of amalgamations in the Canadian economy, protected by the tariff wall, promised little but more extensive exploitation to the western farmer.⁹

But injustices closer home hurt more. The area and volume of grain production had increased much more rapidly than the facilities for handling the grain. In years of good harvest there were simply not enough freight cars to get the grain out of the country before the Great Lakes closed to shipping in the fall. A terrific seasonal strain was placed on transportation and storage facilities with especial gravity at the bottlenecks--compulsory inspection at Winnipeg and the terminal elevators at Fort William. At country points there were insufficient loading platforms to speed transfer of the grain from wagons to freight cars.

The grain grower saw himself faced with a three-way alliance of the C.P.R., the elevator companies, and the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. In order to relieve the seasonal strain on its rolling stock through the erection of standard elevators at country points, the railway offered free leases of sites and a monopoly on freight cars to those who would undertake to build the elevators. The farmer thereby lost his right to load grain himself from wagon to freight car by

(9) Stapells, H.G., The Recent Consolidation Movement in Canadian Industry, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1922. p.13.

means of the loading platform. The elevator companies charged for this service and generally charged more than the farmer considered it was worth. The grain grower now had to accept the grade given him by the local elevator agent rather than an official grade by a government inspector since his grain lost its identity in the bulk storage system of the elevator companies. Feeling soon spread among farmers that they were being exploited by the elevator companies through their wheat being undergraded and through excess dockage--the portion of the wheat considered unacceptable because of dirt, weeds or broken kernels.

But exploitation did not end there. Since providing storage alone did not result in good sized profits, the companies who controlled the majority of line elevators throughout the West began to buy and sell grain on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. Now an elevator agent could not only force the farmer to accept any dockage and gross he wished to allow but could set the price as well. In such a combine or monopoly opportunities for exploitation were great. Such opportunities were undoubtedly seized upon and used to the great profit of the elevator companies and grain dealers. To the grain grower it seemed he was being ruthlessly exploited by a monopoly and combine in the hands of private enterprise.

Yet when appeal was made to the Federal Government for rectification of these abuses, little real aid was received.

Private enterprise as exemplified in the C.P.R. and the elevator companies, seemed so strong and powerful as to be able to ignore the provisions of the Manitoba Grain Act of 1900. The section of the act outlawing discrimination by the railway in the distribution of cars to elevators and to individual farmers was being ignored to the benefit of the companies. While complaints on the provincial level to the Manitoba government appeared to have some effect, farmers to the west of the Manitoba border could appeal only to the Council of the North-West Territories. Agrarian desire for provincial governments closer to the problems of the areas afterwards comprising Saskatchewan and Alberta was a factor of consequence in later efforts of the farmers to organize themselves.

Thus after 1900 there existed in Western Canada a hard core of discontent with the railroad, the elevator companies and the Grain Exchange. When the malpractices and exploitation continued, it became apparent to many farmers that legislation was not enough. If other interests in the economy combined against the farmer, then farmers must combine among themselves to secure justice. The time for united action on the part of grain growers had arrived.

CHAPTER II - Early Farmers' Organizations.

"We have got to find means that will enable the farmer to raise his product at a fair profit to himself and enable him to retain a fair share of the product of his labor--he who is the foundation of the nation."¹⁰

A farmers' organization first appeared in Canada in 1872 with the coming from the United States of the Grange, or as it was more formally known, the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry.¹¹ The Grange was a secret, non-political body giving the farmer opportunity to unite with his fellows 'to better himself in the art of husbandry and in worldly goods'. Subordinate granges, similar to the locals of later day farmers' associations, met to debate and pass resolutions on matters of agricultural interest. The resolutions were then brought forward at the annual meeting of the Dominion Grange, for discussion and action.

Credit is given to the Grange as the basic farmers' organization in Canada, "the tap root from which all other movements have subsequently developed."¹² The Order reached its zenith in 1879 and declined rapidly due to outside antagonism and to the effects. By the end of the Century, the organization had reached the low point in its career; thereafter improvement occurred. The Grange gave its members, the

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- (10) A.J. McPhail, as quoted in W.P. Davisson - Pooling Wheat in Canada, Ottawa, 1927, page 55.
- (11) Isolated farmers' clubs existed in Eastern Canada before this date but without federation or central organization.
- (12) L.A. Wood, A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada, (Toronto, 1914), page 13.

great majority of whom lived in Eastern Canada, the chance to gain experience in united action. The way was pointed out for the future.

A second American farmers' organization crossed the border to Canada in 1890. The order of Patrons of Industry operated on much the same lines as the Grange but encouraged political activity by its members. In the field of politics the Patrons achieved some successes; however the decline of the order was due to the antagonism and internal dissension caused by its participation in politics. Once again the way for the future was marked out, this time the way for political action by organized farmers.

By 1900 both the national farmers' organizations were at the lowest points in their respective careers. At this time the farmers of Western Canada turned to organization. It is interesting before following the new line of action to note the active work done in the early national organizations by men later prominent in the grain growers' movement.

E.A. Partridge, the founder of the Grain Growers Grain Company, worked as a Patrons of Industry organizer in the West.

D.W. McCuaig, first president of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, stood in Manitoba as a Patron candidate in the election of 1896. The first secretary of the Council,

E.C. Drury was long prominent in the Grange and in the Farmers' Association of Ontario, as had been J.J. Morrison. The experience gained by these men in the early farmers' organizations helped them later to come to the fore in the farmers' movement.

(13) Information obtained from an unpublished manuscript by A.T. Hunter, Farmers' Movements in Western Canada, (Records of Regina Historical Society) page 6.

No longer was the grain grower prepared to allow the excesses of the private enterprise system of marketing to go unchallenged. The Manitoba Grain Act of 1900 had soon appeared to be less of a Magna Carta for farmers than it had at first been regarded. As well, the mulcting of Western Canada by Eastern manufacturers, through the customs tariff, must cease. Organization among the farmers themselves had now become necessary.

In 1901 the first western grain growers' organization came into being. On December 18th of that year, at Indian Head, Saskatchewan, the Territorial Grain Growers Association was formed. In a later speech on the subject, the Hon. W. R. Motherwell, the prime mover and first President of the new body, set forth the objects of the Association. "With the farmers righteously indignant over their inability to dispose of the 1901 crop, the time seemed to be ripe for the commencement of a movement looking towards a permanent organization whose duty it would be to press persistently and insistently for an improvement in marketing conditions, transportation, warehousing, and for the introduction of new and amended legislation from time to time as the rapidly changing character of the country seemed to warrant it." ¹⁴ Key men in the formation of the Territorial Grain Growers Association were W.R. Motherwell and Peter Dayman of Abernethy, Saskatchewan and John Millar ¹⁶ of Indian Head. All were on the first executive.

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- (14) Statutes of Canada, 63 & 64 Victoria, (1900) c.39.
(15) Speech quoted by N. Lambert, How the Grain Growers Grew, Grain Growers' Guide, June 26, 1918, page 5.
(16) The story of the beginnings of the Territorial Grain Growers Association is told in H. Moorhouse, Deep Furrows (Winnipeg, 1918), L.A. Wood, op cit., and H. Boyd, New Breaking (Toronto, 1938)

The new organization early showed its teeth. In 1902 the Association, in the Sintaluta Test Case, succeeded in having the Canadian Pacific Railway agent at Sintaluta convicted of a violation of the Grain Act. The agent had not followed the priority system of the car-order book as set up in the Act. Discrimination in favor of the elevator companies had been shown. Farmers of the district were virtually forced to sell their grain to the elevator companies at the companies' grade and price instead of shipping on consignment at their own instructions. The effect of the successful court action was far-reaching. Henceforth the railway company acted in accordance with the law where the allocation of grain cars was concerned. More important, Western farmers glimpsed for the first time the possibilities of united action.

When it became known that the Association had been instrumental as well in securing the amendments of 1902 to the Grain Act, membership boomed. By the end of that year twenty-seven branches of locals had been formed with four agricultural societies affiliating with the parent body.

Manitoba farmers were the next to organize. Early in 1903 a local association was formed at Virden and later in the year the Manitoba Grain Growers Association came into being. The first executive included J.W. Scallion, R.C. Henders, R. McKenzie, and D.W. McCuaig, all of whom later became prominent in the affairs of the Canada Council of Agriculture.

The two farmers' associations cooperated closely. A reading of the minutes of their early conventions reveals that attention centred on the Grain Act. Frequent representations were made jointly and by each body to the Federal Government. The amendments of 1903 to the Manitoba Grain Act may be re-

garded as a direct result of the discussions and representations of the Western Associations. ¹⁷

The move to organize spread westward rapidly. Unlike the Territorial and Manitoba Associations, the Alberta organization sprang from American origins. The Canadian Society of Equity was established in Alberta in 1905. The locals which resulted were unable to get together effectively and dissension soon split the organizations. One of the locals formed the Farmers Association of Alberta the same year. The province then had two farmers' organizations, neither of them strong. Finally, in 1909, the two united to form the United Farmers of Alberta. Meanwhile, after the creation of the province of Saskatchewan, the Territorial Grain Growers Association broke up in 1906 into provincial sections with the largest group from the old body coming together to form the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association.

As well as organizing themselves in associations to discuss their grievances and make representations for their removal, the farmers started the first cooperative business in Western Canada. The Grain Growers Grain Company, organized in 1906 was a direct offspring of the Territorial Grain Growers Association in general and E.A. Partridge in particular. The company early undertook educational work among the farmers of Western Canada. From 1908 on substantial grants were made to the grain growers' associations and like bodies to assist ¹⁸ in their work.

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- (17) See Report of Annual Meeting of the Territorial Grain Growers Association, Dec. 4-5, 1902, Proceedings and Resolutions of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association, Mrch 3-4, 1903, Statutes of Canada, 3 Edward VII (1903) c33.
- (18) See The Grain Growers Record 1906 to 1943 (the United Grain Growers Ltd. 1943) p.65

The Farmers' Company later took a prominent part in the activities of the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

"Provincial associations led to an interprovincial
19
alliance..." In 1907 came the Interprovincial Council of
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Farmers' Associations. The Council met as a joint executive
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appointed by the three Provincial Associations.

The objects of the Council as set forth in the constitution, were:

1. To form a bond of Union and to assist in harmonizing views of the several Provincial Associations on matters relating to the common weal of Agriculturists.
2. To deal with and promote legislation that is Interprovincial in its scope and character.
3. To exercise its influence to secure to any of its members legislation that affects anyone of its members directly or locally.
4. To deal with any matter that may be referred to it by any one of the Provincial Associations.²²

Actually the Interprovincial Council concentrated its energies on the question of government ownership of elevators. The provincial Associations and the Council felt that the elevator situation in the West and at the lakehead badly needed redress. They saw "the existence of an oppressive combine among grain dealers with artificially controlled prices and extinguished competition...the real strength of the combine lay in the

(19) H. Boyd. op. cit. p38

(20) Also known as the Interprovincial Council of Grain Growers and Farmers' Associations. Mr. E. Porritt in his Sixty Years of Protection in Canada, 1846-1912, (Winnipeg, 1913) and his Revolt in Canada against the New Feudalism (London, 1911) gives 1908 as the date of the founding of the Council. Other authorities and the evidence indicate 1907.

(21) The Manitoba Grain Growers Association, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association and the Alberta Farmers Association. The Society of Equity was not represented.

(22) Report of Council Meeting, in the Grain Growers Guide, March, 1909, p.38.

possession of practically all the storage facilities throughout the West by a few strong corporations..."²³ The solution urged by the Council involved ownership and operation by the respective provincial governments of all country elevators and by the Federal Government of the terminal elevators. Lengthy negotiations to this end with the governments was conducted by the Interprovincial Council and the provincial bodies with considerable eventual success.

The Council was interested in all matters of common interest to farmers including the railways, grain regulations and appointments to government boards.²⁴ It was from this body that the Canadian Council of Agriculture sprang in 1910. The Interprovincial Council showed to farmers the advantages of concentrated action in interprovincial matters. If a purely provincial or local matter were taken up by the Council, then added weight and prestige were lent to its cause. The Council provided training ground for men later prominent in the national Council. Such names as James Bower, D.W. McCuaig, R. McKenzie, R.C. Henders and J.S. Wood are all to be found in the minutes. Both the entry of the three provincial governments into the field of elevator ownership and operation and the Canada Grain Act of 1912 were results, in part, of the representations of the associations and their medium of concerted action, the Interprovincial Council. More important, the Council pointed the way for a national farmers' organization. With the example set by the interprovincial body, the movement for a national Council found success not too difficult.

(23) Grain Growers' Guide, April 1909, p.23

(24) See Report of Council Meeting, Grain Growers' Guide, March 1909, p.38.

Important in the events leading up to the establishment of the Canadian Council of Agriculture was the publishing, from 1908, of the Grain Growers' Guide. It was only fitting that the first editor should be the Sintaluta farmer and philosopher, E.A. Partridge.²⁵ The Guide was published as the official organ of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association. Soon the other provincial associations, as well as the Interprovincial Council, had adopted it as their 'voice'. The frontispiece of the first issue set forth the objective of the new farmers' magazine, objectives long adhered to and in great measure achieved: "Devoted to the work of organizing the farmers for their mutual protection and advantage, keeping them accurately informed on all matters and movements of importance to them as Farmers and furnishing a medium through which they may exchange ideas and information to their mutual benefit, and the building up of an enlightened public opinion on economic and social questions!"²⁶ The Guide was destined to play an important role in the life of the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

Before Agriculture organized on even an interprovincial basis, Labor and Industry had organized nationally. The Canadian Manufacturers Association came into being in 1887 although industrialists had been organized nominally on a national basis for the previous two decades. The energies of the C.M.A. were immediately concentrated on the maintenance of the National Policy. The association was reorganized in 1900 in a successful attempt to broaden the membership to include manufacturers west of the Head of the Lakes.

Labor's first attempt to establish a central organization came from the United States in 1881 when a branch of

(25) E.A. Partridge resigned after one issue, to be succeeded by R. McKenzie.
(26) Frontispiece, Grain Growers' Guide, June 1908

the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor was established. The Knights were organized as an industrial rather than a craft union: it is interesting to note that only bankers, lawyers and saloon keepers were excluded! The Noble Order achieved small success in Canada and a second attempt was made in 1883 with the creation of an organization which, one decade later, came to be known as the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada. In 1908, dissident elements formed the Canadian Federation of Labor thus giving the ranks of labor two national organizations.

Both the Canadian Manufacturers Association and the national labor groups were designed as pressure groups to influence legislation. Agriculture could no longer afford not to have a national organization. Alarmed by the growth of the pressure groups of Labor and Industry and encouraged by the success of the Interprovincial Council, farmers set about the task of establishing a dominion wide association to represent those who were considered to be the 'foundation of the nation.'

Chapter III - The Formation of the Canadian Council of Agriculture

"The day of weakness and division among farmers is passing: the day of union and strength is at hand." (Editorial comment of the Weekly Sun, organ of the Dominion Grange on the occasion of the founding of the Council.)²⁷

The Canadian Council of Agriculture formally came into being in 1910. The new western associations had been watching for some years the progress of farmers' organizations in Eastern Canada. The Grange had survived the nadir of 1900 and, after amalgamation in 1907 with the Ontario Farmers' Association, entered upon a period of better fortunes. The Patrons of Industry had faded into nothingness by this time with the remnants entering the amalgamated group, the Dominion Grange and Farmers' Association.

The initiative for a national organization came from the West. To the more recently-formed provincial associations there the possibilities of the future appeared to be without limit. Out West were the driving forces of Canadian agriculture in the period - such men as Partridge, McKenzie, Bower, Scallion and McCuaig. On the prairies there was little diversification of occupation to weaken a farmers' movement. The distance from the industrial and political centres of Canada was great and their influence therefore less. The grievances of the Western farmer were more glaring and real; organization for their redress was easier. It was only natural that the impetus should come from the West.

During the first decade of the century, Western farm leaders had been, on occasion, in attendance as guests or

(27) The Grain Growers' Guide, Jan. 5, 1910, p.5.

fraternal delegates at annual meetings of the Grange. In 1909, three of the most prominent men in the Western associations journeyed to the Grange annual meeting in Toronto, Nov. 24th and 25th, to appeal for united action. The prairie organizations had seen the advantages of combination and concerted effort on an interprovincial scale. There seemed to be no reason why even greater advantages should not be possible on a national scale.

That a similar thought was in the minds of the Grange members is evident from the cordial welcome extended to the Western fraternal delegates. The guests, E.A. Partridge, R. McKenzie and D.W. McCuaig, "were made honorary life members of the Dominion Grange and were initiated into the secret rites of the organization." ²⁹ The West had sent its best to the meeting and they were received as such. E.A. Partridge had been the founder and first President of the Grain Growers Grain Company and long a power in the affairs of the Territorial and Saskatchewan Associations. Roderick McKenzie was the Secretary of the Interprovincial Council while McCuaig presided over the affairs of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association.

East and West were brought together by the belief that united action on questions of national scope would bear fruit. There was no thought of superseding the provincial associations. Rather the idea appears to have been to supplement their work on national questions where obviously a body speaking for organized farmers throughout the Dominion would have added weight.

(28) See M.H. Staples, The Challenge of Agriculture, (Toronto, 1921), p.30.

(29) Grain Growers' Guide, Dec. 22, 1909, p.17.

As Roderick McKenzie stated in addressing the convention:

"Our views on economic questions are the same, and if we bring our united forces to bear, we shall obtain for ourselves the influence in the matter of legislation which we should have." ³⁰

The tariff question had lain dormant since the hearings of the Tariff Commission of 1905-6. With the impending federal election, interest in the question revived. Here was a matter on which farmers' organizations could stand together. Opposition to tariffs would provide the cement to hold together a national organization.

Canadian farmers were beginning to realize the value and possibilities of the cooperative method. A national association might do much to further this method of exchange. The draft constitution listed as one of the objects of the Council: "to urge the adoption of cooperative methods by our members, (but outside our association), in the purchase and sale of commodities that equity may be established in the business of exchange." ³¹

Other factors were present in the organization of the Council. The year 1910 was not a good crop year in Western Canada as compared with the previous few years. ³² It is in the bad years that the farmer tends to give more serious thought to his problems and grievances. It will be noted that the C.C.F. party in Canada is a direct product of the bad years of the 'thirties'. It is probable that the delegates

By this time farmers in Ontario and the West were with the approval of the other associations and the new body came to be

(30) L.A. Wood, A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada, (Toronto, 1924), p.205.

(31) Draft Constitution, see Appendix I.

(32) J.C. Hopkins, Canadian Annual Review, 1910(Toronto,1911)p.477.

coming to have some idea of their influence in matters of legislation. In 1905 the Fielding tariff scheme had been killed partly by the opposition of the farmers' associations in Ontario and the Territories. The Grange appealed successfully to the federal government to take action in the matter of trusts and combines. The Western associations had been instrumental in effecting changes in the Grain Act. The Council was set up "to formulate our demands for legislation and present them through the officers of the association to the notice of parliament and our different legislative bodies."³³

The Grange meeting greeted with enthusiasm the appeal of the Western delegates for united action. A joint committee was struck to draft a constitution at once. The Grange immediately adopted the draft constitution which was then referred to the Western associations for consideration and acceptance. The constitution was approved by the Manitoba Grain Growers Association in December of 1909, by the United Farmers of Alberta in the following month and by the organized farmers of Saskatchewan in February, 1910. At the close of the meeting of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association, the Council held its first meeting.

The constitution passed by the Grange provided for the name of the Dominion farmers' organization to be the Canadian National Council of Agriculture. The Manitoba association passed an amendment omitting the word 'National'. No explanation for the amendment can be found. It is probable that the delegates simply felt that the word was unnecessary. The amendment met with the approval of the other associations and the new body came to be

(33) Draft Constitution, see Appendix I.

known as the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

The objects of the organization were set forth in the Preamble to the constitution. These included organization of the farm population for the study of social and economic problems and the collection of materials and records for this purpose - educational work. Provision was made for the formulation and presentation of the demands and views of the organized farmers on legislative matters. A significant clause is that relating to political activity: "To encourage the entry of our farmers into active membership in one or other of the political associations according to individual predisposition as a means to make the political parties without distinction responsive to and representative of the demands of the people who form the bulk of the population."³⁴

There existed no intention of having the Council act as a political body or party. The example of the Patrons of Industry was still too recent in the past. Nor had the crusaders who later formed the Progressive Party yet risen to the fore. Rather, the object was to encourage farmers to participate in political activity, with any party, to achieve their ends. At that time farm groups still believed that existing political parties could be the means: farmers should join them and work for the necessary changes in the respective parties. The day of disillusionment with the existing system had not yet arrived.

Finally, the constitution provided for the encouragement of the principles and methods of cooperation. The idea of cooperation in the business of agriculture was steadily gaining ground.

Since earliest days the farmers' associations had feared, with cause, being taken over by government-sponsored or controlled

(34) Draft Constitution, see Appendix I.

groups. When the Territorial Grain Growers Association came into being, the agricultural societies of the time, sponsored by the government, had been admitted to membership.³⁵ But within a year, the agricultural societies were excluded because of their government connection. The new national body was not to be subjected to any such influence. The constitution expressly stated that membership was open only to farmers' associations "entirely independent of government control."³⁶

The constitution set forth the details as to the structure of the Council. Membership consisted of the executives of the affiliated associations with no single association being represented by more than five members. Three officers, President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer, were to be elected by the Council annually. The Council met at least once a year. "The expenses incurred in the conduct of the business of the Council shall be provided for by a pro rata levy on the membership of the affiliated associations, as shown by the last annual report of each."³⁷ Similarly the travelling expenses of delegates were to be pooled and the flat rate paid by each association in proportion to the number of delegates sent.

An attempt was made to avoid domination of the Council by any member association through the provision that the quorum for meetings be fixed at three associations. Another clause stated that the time and place of meeting were at the discretion of the President, with a rider that a meeting had to be called

(35) See Report of Annual Meeting, Territorial Grain Growers Association, Dec. 4-5, 1902.

(36) See Draft Constitution, Appendix I.

(37) Loc. cit.

when demanded by any three member groups.

A note or extra clause appended to the constitution recommended that all associations seeking membership should affix to their constitutions, as did the Council, a preamble setting forth their general objects and aims. This provision seemed a wise one as it would tend to publicize the objectives of the individual associations and of the farmers' movement as a whole. It would further help to prevent any misunderstandings as to aims and to discount the possibility of undesirable groups being allowed to join the Council.

Few errors or omissions in the constitution are evident a priori. The farm leaders could only draw on the experience of years in organizations which, even where called National, were largely localized. The Westerners were able to use their experience with the Interprovincial Council. A definite parallel is to be noted in the constitution of the two bodies. This was only natural since the man who drew up the constitution of the Interprovincial Council, E.A. Partridge, was present at the Grange meeting of 1909.³⁸

The birth of the Canadian Council was well received by the farmers' organizations. While the event caused little or no stir in the editorial columns of the great newspapers of the day,³⁹ the official organs of the farm groups were most enthusiastic. The editorial comment of the Weekly Sun, organ of the Grange, has been noted. The Grain Growers' Guide, speaking for the organized farmers of Western Canada, stated

(38) Grain Growers' Guide, June 26, 1926, p.34.

(39) See the Manitoba Free Press, Winnipeg Tribune, Toronto Globe for those months. The event was curiously ignored.

editorially: "The farmers of Canada are on the right road. When they are alive to their own interests and are pulling together, shoulder to shoulder, they will accomplish results undreamed of a decade back. The foundation is being well laid. A properly organized and aggressive farmers' council representing every province would be the most powerful engine that could be conceived in work for national progress. It will come in the near future."⁴⁰

The first meeting of the Canadian Council occurred on February 11th, 1910, in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, at the close of the annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association. Delegates were present from the four affiliated associations.⁴¹ The first executive, for 1910-11, consisted of: President, D.W. McCuaig of Manitoba, Vice-President, James Bower of Alberta, and Secretary-Treasurer, E.C. Drury of Ontario.

"It was decided by the council to devote all the energy to only a few matters..."⁴² First to come to the attention of the Council was the matter of trusts and combines which had been rapidly mushrooming forth in Canada behind the tariff wall. The sum of four hundred dollars was allotted for the purpose of securing evidence for the prosecution of the cement, wire fence and cotton trusts. To Mr. Drury went this task. The only other matter of importance dealt with one brought forward by the newly-organized United Farmers of Alberta and related to cattle guards. A committee consisting of James Bower, A.G. Hawkes, and R. McKenzie was appointed to secure evidence on this question to be presented to the Dominion Government.

Thus the council lost no time in getting down to business. The trusts were subjected to investigation because of the

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- (40) Grain Growers' Guide, editorial, January 5, 1910, p.5.
(41) The Dominion Grange, the Manitoba Grain Growers Association, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association and the United Farmers of Alberta.
(42) Grain Growers' Guide, editorial, February 16, 1910, p.7.

large quantities of their products purchased by the Canadian farmer. The question of cattle guards along the railways is always of interest to the farm population.

Some account must briefly be given of the leaders mainly responsible for the formation of a national farmers' organization. Mention can be made only of the most prominent. Without exception they were men of experience in the Grange or the Western associations who had united to form an agrarian organization on a wider basis.⁴³

E.A. Partridge, one of the most enigmatic figures in the history of Western Canada had been the founder and the first President of the Grain Growers Grain Company and a fraternal delegate to the annual meeting of the Dominion Grange in 1909 at which Eastern support was gained for the Council project. Partridge passed the early part of his life in Ontario, moving to Sintaluta, Saskatchewan, even before the coming of rail. After a time spent as a school teacher, he took up farming. He first became interested in the cause of agrarian organization through the Patrons of Industry and was an active supporter of the Territorial Grain Growers Association before turning his talents to the task of organizing, almost single-handed, the first cooperative grain company in the West.

Partridge, a dreamer, was undoubtedly the least practical of the Western leaders.⁴⁴ An orator of the rabble rousing type, he could goad men to action but lacked the executive ability to lead a movement once it had passed the early stages.

(43) In the preparation of this chapter, especial gratitude is due Mr. J.H. Evans, Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Manitoba and Mr. J.A. Millar of Indian Head, Saskatchewan.

(44) For example see his book, A War on Poverty, (Winnipeg, 1925).

A philosopher of strong convictions, his advanced ideas and schemes were far ahead and beyond general agrarian opinion of the day. Partridge frequently found himself unable to agree with and to work with fellow leaders, due probably to a nervous temperament, embittered through family tragedy⁴⁵ and the loss in 1907 of one limb, the latter accident leaving him in pain for the remainder of his life. A visionary like Partridge was needed to point the way but once that task was accomplished, there seemed little use for his services in the days to follow.

Men such as Roderick McKenzie could both aid in getting an organization underway and lead it when this was accomplished. McKenzie was a hard-headed Scot, raised in Ontario, where he worked as a school teacher and as a druggist. Coming West he worked on the construction of the C.P.R. and made a success of the contracting business before turning to farming near Brandon, Manitoba. A quiet, much-respected leader, he was less of an orator than a reasoner, and the workings of his logical mind are evidence in many of the Council's pamphlets and submissions, especially those relating to free trade. A man of religious zeal, he contributed this zeal to the farmers' movement in the field of organization rather than oratory. Men such as Partridge and McKenzie, poles apart in temperament and methods, both had their place in the grain growers' work.

D.W. McCuaig, first President of the Canadian Council, was another Scot from Eastern Canada who farmed on the Portage Plains in Manitoba. McCuaig was a shrewd man known as an excellent presiding officer at farmers' meetings, which were

(45) Both sons were killed in the World War and the eldest daughter drowned in the farm dugout.

frequently by no means serene. Like Partridge, he had gained experience in an earlier movement, being President of the Patrons Commercial Union in 1891. McCuaig dropped from prominence in the grain growers movement after his acceptance, in 1910, of the chairmanship of the Manitoba Elevator Commission. His part was played in the early days of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association and the Council of Agriculture.

The Easterner most prominent in the formation of the Council was E.C. Drury who became the first Secretary. Drury, an Ontario farmer, gained experience in the Dominion Grange, rising to the position of Master, which post he held at the eventful annual meeting of 1909. He had something of the idealist in him and later, when Premier of Ontario, encountered disaster through his impracticality and his inability to judge men. Unlike most agrarian leaders of the period, Drury possessed a University education and he and Roderick McKenzie were regarded as the tariff experts of the Council.

Although they were not closely connected with the actual formation of the Council of Agriculture, Motherwell and Scallion, two towering figures in the story of farmers' organizations in Western Canada cannot be neglected. One of the founders, and long President of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association, J.W. Scallion came from Ireland to Ontario, where he taught school and then engaged in business as a general merchant. He came West in 1882 to settle on a farm near Virden, Manitoba. Scallion was noted and respected as a man of high principles with practical ideas and sound judgment.

W.R. Motherwell, 'The Grand Old Man of Canadian Agriculture', served farmers over a long period of time through

his work in the Territorial Grain Growers Association and in its successor, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association. As a young man he had come West among the early settlers, and homesteaded at Abernethy, Saskatchewan. There he became the moving spirit in the formation of the Territorial Grain Growers Association and a central figure in the famous Sintaluta trial at which the organized farmers scored a resounding victory over the C.P.R. A deeply religious man, he, together with another agrarian leader, W.J. Tregillus of Alberta, regarded the profession of farming as second in importance only to that of the Christian ministry. Such men as Scallion and Motherwell added principle to the farmers' movement and kept the fight for justice from being based on economic motive alone.

The western leaders were influenced by their Anglo-Saxon background and by the experiences of early life in Ontario. A few had gained experience in agricultural societies and with the Patrons of Industry and the Grange. But it was the example set by the early associations, rather than the experience gained by actual participation in them, that proved of value to the Westerners. The early organizations in the West were led by men who had had little actual experience in farm organizations. But they were men of ability whose common Anglo-Saxon nature rebelled against further injustice and further financial loss.

The early leaders are striking for their selflessness and their strong convictions. Few if any stood to gain personally from their participation in the movement. Some, like Partridge, encountered bitter disappointment and disillusionment. An example of the selflessness of the pioneers in farm organization is to be found in the actions of Partridge and five farmers from Sintaluta

who pledged their personal notes to secure a loan in order that the weak, newly-born Grain Growers Grain Company might have a seat on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. Motherwell, Peter Dayman and John Millar spent countless hours in organizational work to arouse enthusiasm of farmers for the Territorial Grain Growers Association. The farmers' movement was destined later to encounter crucial difficulties while led by men of equal ability but less unselfishness than marks the early leaders.

While of strong personal convictions, such men were willing and anxious to submerge conflicting views and loyalties in order to gain the greater object - a national farmers' organization. Whatever their politics, all firmly believed in free trade, a common belief which would cement together the Council of Agriculture. Partridge was a socialist, McKenzie a 'Grit' and McCuaig a staunch 'Tory'. Political differences were forgotten. To such men, the formation of the Council appeared a sound and logical step in the advance of the farmers' movement.

High hopes were held for the future of the new organization. The Guide predicted that, in time, every province in the Dominion would be represented on the Council. "A few years will see these other provinces united beneath the banner of the Canadian Council of Agriculture..The 25,000 farmers who are now united in the federal organization will be doubled in another year..The Canadian Council of Agriculture promises for Canada more than any other single organization of which this great Dominion can boast." 46

(46) Grain Growers' Guide, editorial, February 16, 1910, p.6.

Chapter IV - The Siege of Ottawa

The first large-scale endeavor of the Canadian Council of Agriculture was an organized movement of farmers from all across Canada to Ottawa to present their demands to the Federal Government. The movement, occurring in December of 1910, is known as the Siege of Ottawa. The mass delegation constituted a revolt against the tariff policy of the Liberal Government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Since their inception, the different farmers' organizations had strenuously opposed the principle of Protection. Leading planks in the platform adopted in the 1890's by the Patrons of Industry had been: "Tariff for revenue only" and "Free Trade as in Great Britain."⁴⁷ In 1904 opposition from agricultural groups killed the first Fielding Tariff. At the hearing of the Tariff Commission of 1905-6, farmers' opposition was effective because it was organized. The Dominion Grange, the Farmers' Association of Ontario and the Manitoba Grain Growers Association appeared before the Commission individually when feasible and submitted a joint memorial as well. The joint submission asked "in the coming revision of the tariff, that the protective principle be wholly eliminated; that the principle of tariff for revenue only be adopted."⁴⁸ Actually the organized farmers achieved small success at this time. The fruit of their labors became apparent later in the negotiations for reciprocity with the United States.

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- (47) See the Patrons Platform in Farmer Organization in the North West by A.T. Hunter. (Papers of the Regina Historical Society)
- (48) The report of the Tariff Commission is not printed in the Sessional Papers. This excerpt is found in E. Porritt - Sixty Years of Protection in Canada. (Winnipeg, 1913) page 373.

From 1907 to 1910, while all appeared outwardly serene, resentment with the existing customs tariff continued to gain ground, especially in Western Canada. Farmers took every opportunity at their conventions and meetings to discuss the tariff and the privileged position of the Canadian manufacturer. Farm journals such as the Weekly Sun and the Grain Growers' Guide assisted in the work of education by repeatedly pointing out to farmers the injustice of protection.

On February 7, 1910 at a banquet in Winnipeg at which representatives of the organized farmers were present, a spokesman for the industrialists made a statement which had far-reaching effects. Mr. G.M. Murray, Secretary of the Canadian Manufacturers Association - a body looked upon by Western farmers as the voice of the privileged manufacturing class - made the astounding boast: "The reorganized Canadian Manufacturers Association is like a young giant, ignorant of its own power. By the exercise of these powers, it could, if it chose, bring several millions of people to the verge of starvation, or paralyze the industry of the whole Dominion." 49

The grain growers of Western Canada had long felt the financial effects of the customs tariff and other privileges possessed by the manufacturers. 'They who are the foundation of the nation' had of late been subjected to much education and propaganda about these privileges. Now a representative of the privileged class made this amazing statement - a veritable challenge. The unfortunate flight into rhetoric on the part of Mr. Murray was seized upon by the

(49) Reported editorially in the Grain Growers' Guide, February 9, 1910, page 5.

farmers' associations and their 'voices' and heralded throughout the Dominion. The existence and the tactics of the industrialists' pressure group, the Canadian Manufacturers Association, constituted a definite factor causing the farmers' march on the national capital.

Sir Wilfred Laurier's tour of Western Canada in the summer of 1910 added fuel to the fire of anti-protectionist sentiment. The Prime Minister came to familiarize himself with the prairies and their problems. At every opportunity the provincial associations deluged him with memorials and submissions. The memorial of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association, presented to the Premier at Brandon on July 18th, 1910 is representative of the demands⁵⁰ of the western grain growers.

There is little difference between the demands made on this occasion and the platform adopted at Ottawa some months later. The Brandon submission asked for government ownership and operation of terminal elevators, the Hudson Bay Railway and a Western abattoir. The need for federal legislation to permit incorporation of cooperatives was pointed out. On the customs tariff "the farmers strongly urge that such a change be made in our fiscal policy as will give them a square deal....The Western farmers strongly urge our government to accept the offer of the United States for the consideration of the question of reciprocal trade and do everything possible to widen the commercial relations be-

(50) See Grain Growers' Guide, July 27, 1910, page 7.

tween the two countries." Sir Wilfred was informed bluntly that the grain growers wanted tariff for revenue only with special privileges to none.

The government and the monied interests of the East were given to realize that there existed in the West a bloc of public opinion which had become relatively organized. The bloc consisted of men of both parties: yet an amazing unanimity prevailed. In British Columbia, Laurier found agrarian opinion generally to favor existing tariffs, but on the prairie the attitude of the grain growers was unmistakable.

The visit of the Prime Minister confirmed the farmers' belief that their just demands, when presented in organized fashion, bore weight. The membership of the provincial associations increased as it was realized that these bodies could gain the ear of Dominion leaders. An outcome of the western visit was the Siege of Ottawa. The organized farmers, after occasionally sending a deputation to Ottawa in previous years, were now ready for the call for a mass delegation to proceed eastward. To offset the tactics of the Canadian Manufacturers Association and like pressure groups, the organized farmers were now prepared to adopt such tactics on a large scale.

The call for the Siege came originally from the Grange in Ontario but the idea was taken up and to some extent taken over by the western associations. "The Toronto Sun, organ of the Ontario farmers, suggested the advisability of sending a large delegation of farmers from all Canada to Ottawa to lay

(51) See Grain Growers' Guide, July 27, 1910, p.7.

(52) So named by the Grain Growers' Guide, December 28, 1910, p.7 and elsewhere.

their case before Parliament." ⁵³ The Grain Growers' Guide agreed and at once set about arousing the grain growers to action.

The logical organization to sponsor the nationwide delegation was the Canadian Council of Agriculture. The Guide editorially prodded that body to action. "The time has arrived when the Canadian Council of Agriculture that was organized last winter, should awake from its lethargy!" ⁵⁴ Here was a project on which Canadian farmers could unite: a project which would not only correct injustices but strengthen their own organizations.

The scheme was received favorably by the Council. After considerable correspondence with the Prime Minister, the date of December 16th, 1910 was chosen as most suitable for the interview. This date was carefully selected so that Parliament would be in session with the budget not yet having been brought down: the farmers would be in a position to influence any tariff discussions in that session. A further consideration lay in that the Ottawa meeting should occur immediately following the annual meeting of the Dominion Grange so as to ensure a good following from the East. Attendance from the West was ensured through fixing upon a date late enough to enable delegates to secure winter excursion rates on the railroads. To further augment the delegation the western associations delayed sending representatives to Ottawa regarding the terminal elevator question until the larger

(53) Chipman, G.F. - The Siege of Ottawa (Winnipeg, 1910,) p.3.
(54) Grain Growers' Guide, September 21, 1910, p.5.

group had assembled.

Opposition to the tariff undoubtedly constituted the main causal factor in the Siege of Ottawa. Herein lay the major grievance of the organized farmers of the West. It was hoped that there would be general agreement among farmers everywhere in the Dominion on this question. Other matters would be discussed and demanded but the possibility of tariff reduction was the main attraction drawing farmers to Ottawa.

The agrarian attitude towards Protection was of almost a religious nature. This attitude was not founded merely on the basis of financial loss. The customs tariff stood for special privileges to certain sections of the community at the expense of other sections. As E.C. Drury, then Secretary of the Council, later pointed out: "The beneficiaries of Protection profiting by their privilege of taxing the community, become constantly richer, while the victims of the system become poorer."⁵⁶ Farmers believed that prosperity would be their lot if only justice were accorded them. The agrarians asked for no privileges and countenanced none for others. Drury, a representative from Ontario, picturesquely expressed it: "We want the manufacturers to stand on their own feet and not on ours."⁵⁷

The first large undertaking of the Canadian Council was well organized and well attended. The Siege, as it came to be known, was by far the largest delegation of farmers yet

(55) Roderick McKenzie, secretary of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association managed details in the West while the Grange leaders arranged for eastern representation.

(56) Drury, E.C. ; Fools of Folly (Toronto, 1932) p. 18.

(57) Chipman, G.F. - The Siege of Ottawa (Winnipeg, 1910) p. 4.

to go to the Dominion capital. Slightly over eight hundred delegates, representing seven provinces, assembled in Ottawa on December 15, 1910. The three western associations⁵⁸ had sent five hundred farmers while Ontario was represented by three hundred delegates. Of this latter group the largest number came from the Dominion Grange but other agricultural bodies - fruit growers, breeders, dairymen and stockmen - sent members. From the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers Association came two delegates: the New Brunswick Farmers Association sent two of their number. Seven individual farmers were present from the province of Quebec. Only British Columbia and Prince Edward Island were unrepresented. Anti-tariff sentiment had made little headway in either province as agriculturalists there were more likely to benefit from the National Policy.

The delegates from the Dominion Grange proceeded to Ottawa from their annual meeting in Toronto while the westerners travelled in style by special train. The Canadian Pacific Railway, long a target for the attacks of the grain growers added a touch of irony to the situation by making every effort to ensure first class service. As the Guide was constrained to point out: "Nothing was left undone to make the trip to Ottawa as comfortable and pleasant as possible."⁵⁹ The special train gave the Westerners the opportunity to organize their resolutions as well as to fraternize and learn one another's views and problems.

(58) The Manitoba Grain Growers Association, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers and the United Farmers of Alberta.

(59) Grain Growers' Guide, December 28, 1910, p. 7.

On arrival in Ottawa, the farmers lost no time in getting down to business. The convention opened at the Grand Opera House on December 15th. The various resolutions were brought forward for consideration and approval, then embodied in the 'Farmers Platform'.⁶⁰ To the amazement of most delegates general unanimity marked the proceedings. "Of all the vast number of delegates from the Atlantic to the Rockies there was not one man who was not in accord with the resolutions."⁶¹

It should be noted that the press reports of the Siege do not altogether agree with this statement. In its news report the Manitoba Free Press stated that a memorial from Quebec farmers favoring retention of the existing tariff had been brought to the convention.⁶² The memorial never reached the floor. Since ample opportunity was given for the airing of dissenting opinion it must be presumed that some sort of agreement had been made.

The only off-key note to be sounded during the proceedings in the Opera House arose in connection with the customs tariff. The Secretary of the Council, E.C. Drury, read a telegram from the Niagara Peninsula Fruit Growers Association favoring the existing tariff, saying that the tariff had done much for the country in the past and could do more in the future. This opposing opinion was brushed aside as being based on a misapprehension of the Council's attitude towards the tariff. The remarkable degree of unanimity is

(60) See Appendix II. The Farmers' Platform is to be found in Sessional Papers 1 - 2 George V, Vol. 24, No. 113. Also in Chipman, G.F. - The Siege of Ottawa (Winnipeg, 1910) pages 4 and 5.

(61) Chipman, G.F. - The Siege of Ottawa, p. 7.

(62) Manitoba Free Press, December 19, 1910, page 1.

one of the unique and important aspects of the Siege. It may have been helped by the fact that the farmers had only one day in which to formulate their platform.

On the morning of the next day, the memorial was presented to the Government. The sight of the mass delegation marching up Parliament Hill must have caused heart-searchings by many of the Members of Parliament, especially those from the West. The meeting with the Prime Minister and his cabinet, the Leader of the Opposition and about two hundred Members, occurred in the Commons Chamber. The delegates occupied the seats of the Members. Probably the seats were relinquished without argument. Also present were the representatives of the Canadian Manufacturers Association to observe the phenomenon. The Dominion Millers Association was represented but for a different purpose. Their members supported the farmers on the terminal elevator question. Even the Winnipeg grain dealers and exporters sent one of their number to do likewise. The voice of the Toronto Board of Trade was also raised in approval of this demand.

The President of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, D.W. McCuaig, introduced each speaker who in turn brought forward one of the resolutions approved the previous day. The last resolution was that dealing with the customs tariff. President McCuaig was undoubtedly speaking for the mass delegation when he informed the assembled parliamentarians that the last resolution constituted "the most important of all

(63) See Appendix II. The Farmers' Platform is to be found in Sessional Papers 1 - 2 George V, Vol. 24, No. 113. Also in Chipman, G.F. - The Siege of Ottawa (Winnipeg, 1910) pages 4 and 5.

(65) See Appendix II.

requests we have made of you today."

The resolutions presented dealt successively with terminal elevators, a chilled meat plant, the Hudson Bay Railway, amendments to the Railway Act, cooperative legislation, an amendment to the Bank Act and the Tariff. The delegates favored ownership and operation by the Dominion Government of the terminal elevators at the Head of the Lakes and of an abattoir in the West. The demand was expressed for the construction, ownership and operation by the government of the Hudson Bay Railway. Prime Minister Laurier, a Liberal of the Manchester School must undoubtedly have been shocked by the unanimous demand for such advanced and, to him, illiberal legislation. The organized farmers wanted amendments to the Railway Act, "certain parts of which are oppressive and detrimental to the farming interests."⁶⁵

An example was the right given to railways to discriminate in passenger and freight rates between different section of the country, a refrain to be much repeated later. The need for federal legislation to permit the incorporation of cooperative societies was singled out. The agrarians believed that the newly enacted Bank Act should be so worded as to provide for amendment at any time.

On the customs tariff, the resolution strongly favored reciprocal free trade with the United States in natural products and agricultural implements. The method of obtaining it suggested in the resolution was through independent action of the governments rather than by the rigid

(64) Sessional Papers 1 - 2 George V, 1911, Vol. 24, No. 113, page 380.

(65) See Appendix II.

requirements of a formal treaty. The Farmers' Platform favored the British Preference, asking that the preferential tariff be steadily lowered so as to provide for complete free trade with the Motherland within ten years. The resolution ended with an offer to accept direct taxation to provide the revenue lost through the suggested tariff reductions.

Quite properly the platform was designed primarily to benefit the Canadian farmer and through him the national economy and Canadians generally. The organized farmers preferred to emphasize that their dislike for the customs tariff was a matter of principle based on a desire to correct injustice. Actually, although little or no publicity was accorded this aspect, the western grain grower stood to gain very substantially from free trade with the United States. Reciprocity in agricultural implements would lower the prices of these goods in Canada. More important, free trade would restore the market in America for Canadian wheat, lost in 1909 when a duty of 25¢ a bushel was imposed. Hence the desire of the organized farmers for free trade was not a matter of principle alone but had a definite economic motive as well.

The demands presented to the Laurier government were not demands hastily conceived at the last minute. The farmers of Ontario and the grain growers of the West had discussed these matters for years in their conventions and local meetings. Farmers everywhere had been given the opportunity to learn about the injustices of their lot through such journals as the Weekly Sun and the Grain Growers' Guide. Delegations had been sent occasionally to Ottawa to present

the demands of the organized farmers. Westerners had not lost the opportunity to speak bluntly to the Prime Minister during his Western tour. But before December, 1910 neither the government, the Eastern interests nor the organized farmers themselves, had realized the extent of agrarian unanimity on questions like the tariff. As the Toronto Globe stated editorially: "The movement of the western farmers and their alliance with their friends of Ontario and the East to secure tariff reductions cannot be brushed aside lightly. To ignore it even now would be folly."⁶⁶

At the end of the presentation of the Farmers' Platform, Laurier arose to reply. As was only wise, he promised nothing more definite than due consideration of the demands. Legislative action could hardly be taken on the tariff while the negotiations with the U.S.A. were still proceeding. Nothing would be done in the negotiations to impair the British preference. The question of nationalization of terminals was avoided by the Premier, who instead directed the attention of his listeners to the possibility of the development of an all-Canadian grain route. The government was ready to proceed with the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway. Government ownership might be possible, but operation by the government was a different matter.

The immediate reaction of the delegates to Laurier's reply was disappointment. "There is almost a universal feeling of disappointment tonight with reference

(66) Toronto Globe, December 17, 1910 page 6.

to the statement made by the leader of the government in answer to the papers presented to him." ⁶⁷ This feeling soon disappeared as further reading and examination of the speech led to high hopes for the future.

The Siege of Ottawa may be regarded as a decided success. The infant Canadian Council of Agriculture had sponsored the march on Ottawa and received full credit for it. The Siege could scarcely have occurred at a better moment for the fortunes of the newly-born national farmers' organization. Farmers from seven provinces had been brought together and had worked together. It was not too much to expect combined action in the future. Such action would be taken through the Council. As the Guide pointed out, the Siege should result "in an immense addition to the ranks of the organized farmers." ⁶⁸

Both the Council and the farmers' movement in general received invaluable publicity as a result of the Siege. The great daily newspapers all had their representatives on hand in the Press Gallery of Parliament. For the event the Council appointed its own Press Committee. ⁶⁹ While the press had been excluded from the mass meeting of December 15th in the Grand Opera House, reporters received copies of all the resolutions presented. ⁷⁰ "It was decided by the convention to hand out all information to the press and to hold nothing back whatever, as it was felt that pub-

(67) Manitoba Free Press, December 17, 1910, page 10.

(68) Grain Growers' Guide, December 28, 1910, page 6.

(69) The Press Committee consisted of E.J. Fream of Alberta and G.F. Chipman of the Grain Growers' Guide.

(70) Manitoba Free Press, December 19, 1910, page 1.

licity was the greatest friend of the farmers' Cause."

While this statement is typical of those issued at every convention, and is apparently not absolutely true, it does indicate the firm belief of the organized farmers that their cause was righteous and needed only to be known to be believed.

The farmers' movement was becoming a power in Canadian affairs. The reception accorded the mass delegation is one illustration of the changed situation. The farmers were accorded a hearing on Parliament Hill with the Prime Minister, his government, and a majority of the House of Commons present. They were entertained by the Governor General and by the civic officials of Ottawa. They were pressed to visit some of the important industrial plants of the Dominion. Most of them travelled by special train. The movement had come a long way.

The Seige gave the organized farmers their first real opportunity to act as a pressure group. Previously, delegations from the various associations had gone on occasion to Ottawa, to present their demands to the Federal Government. Similar action on the provincial level had been taken by the affiliated members of the Council. But the seige constituted a new phenomenon-an attempt on the part of the organized farmers to get what they wanted through a show of strength, through pressure on the federal government. This was a new development and as such received general recognition.

Roderick McKenzie, in his call to western farmers to come to Ottawa, speaks of "the pressure that the farmers may bring

(71) Grain Growers' Guide, October 5, 1910, page 15.

to bear upon parliament. " As a result of their new line of attack, the agrarian representatives could expect to have a much larger hand in future legislation of concern to them. The organized farmers of the Dominion had established a rival to the Canadian Manufacturers Association and the Trades and Labor Congress, the pressure groups of industry and labor. The Siege is the first example of the new pressure group in action.

A basic task undertaken by farmers' associations in Canada has been the work of education. The preamble to the constitution of the Canadian Council emphasized "the study of social and economic problems" and "the proper information of our people."⁷³ A good part of the Council's work was deemed to be educating Canadian farmers as to their rights, to prevailing injustices and to possible means of rectification. The mass delegation of farmers to Ottawa in 1910 aided, through the resultant publicity, this work of education. The event itself gave those present an opportunity to fraternize and to learn one another's views. Canadian farmers found that men of the agricultural profession from varied sections of the country could agree on certain basic issues. "Those delegates from the West who thought that their views on the tariff might be somewhat in advance of the views held by the Eastern farmers were most agreeably surprised to find that there was the same feeling towards the tariff in the East as in the West."⁷⁴

(72) Grain Growers' Guide, October 5, 1910, page 15

(73) See Appendix I

(74) G. F. Chipman - The Siege of Ottawa (Winnipeg, 1910) p. 7

Every major newspaper in Canada carried news of the Siege-news of what the organized farmers wanted. The farm journals, such as the Grain Growers Guide and the Weekly Sun, were filled for months before and months after the actual meeting with material on the Siege. Farmers right across Canada were given ample opportunity to see what their fellows in other parts of the country wanted. The injustices of the farmers' lot were exposed in no uncertain terms. The Siege gave the Council an excellent opportunity to perform, through publicity, its work of education. The opportunity was not lost.

A good example of this educational work is to be found with regard to the tariff. For the first time in Canadian history, farmers made a comprehensive attack on the customs tariff. In the course of this onslaught, the Canadian farmer was given ample opportunity for thought. The Council of agriculture believed "that the greatest misfortune which can befall any country is to have its people huddled together in great centres of population and that the bearing of the present customs tariff has the tendency to encourage that condition."⁷⁵ This social philosophy was basic in the agrarian attitude towards Protection. In these ways and along these lines the Council helped to shape and to mold the opinions of the agricultural population.

The Siege brought certain facts rudely to the attention of Eastern Canada. Industrialists were shown that a new force in Canadian affairs had arisen. A counter pressure group had been organized to offset the efforts of the Canadian

(75) See Appendix II.

Manufacturers Association. That organization immediately set about trying to offset the effects of the Siege. An unsuccessful attempt was made to organize a counter demonstration of five thousand merchants and commercial travellers to protest against the Cooperative Act then being considered in Parliament. The organ of the manufacturers, Industrial Canada, bombarded its readers with near-hysterical protestations and denunciations of the farmers' movement. The Grain Growers Guide was especially favored in this regard.

The march on Ottawa may be regarded as a portent of things to come in Canadian politics. The subserviency to Eastern Canada of the prairies was being shaken and, ironically enough, by men most of whom had spent their early lives there, and received their education and some experience in farmers' organizations east of the Head of the Lakes. ⁷⁶ Statistics indicated that, in time, with the growth of population, the West would be able to back demands even more forcefully. The Siege showed that Westerners were becoming aware of their own strength, of the strength of the organized farm movement. Eastern Canada, in maintaining its ascendancy, could look forward to troubled times ahead. As the Toronto Globe sagaciously pointed out on the occasion of the Siege: "The growth of the West is so rapid that it will almost certainly hold the balance of power in the next parliament. At all events, in a dozen years, which is a very short span in the history of a nation, the West will be in a position to dictate the fiscal policy of the Dominion."⁷⁷

(76) See Chapter 3.

(77) Toronto Globe, December 16th, 1910 page 6.

A definite element of philosophy is to be found in the Siege and the Platform of 1910: economic grievances were not the only cohesive force. The agrarians believed that no group in the economy should receive special concessions as compared to other groups. If any did, then injustice would result. This attitude was expressed in the motto of the Grain Growers' Guide: 'Equal Rights to All and Special Privileges to None.' The philosophic element should not be over-emphasized. As one delegate informed his listeners in the Opera House, "...if it comes down to the actual facts, we are probably doing it largely from a selfish standpoint because we want relief from the burdens that are pressing us..."⁷⁸ But the grievances sending the farmers to Ottawa were not wholly of an economic nature.

The Siege illustrated another aspect of agrarian philosophy. One Eastern newspaper commented on this editorially: "The Western farmers belong to a new generation, one that has a strong, if unproved belief in the power of Governments to mend all abuses by assuming the functions of those who have been guilty of oppression."⁷⁹ Abuses were being brought to the attention of the nation's legislators for rectification. The government was called upon to intervene in the cause of justice and, where necessary, to operate sections of the economy in which injustices were evident.

The Eastern farmer had been much more inclined to discount the value of government action. Speaking before the

(78) Chipman, G.F., op cit., page 15. E.C. Drury spoke thusly in moving the adoption of the Tariff Resolution.

(79) Toronto Globe, December 17, 1910 page 6.

Tariff Commission of 1905-6, E.C. Drury, later Secretary of the Canadian Council, had expressed the view of Ontario agrarians:

"We farmers...are not used to asking you for something-if there comes a storm we duck our heads and take it like men. We don't run to the country for aid."⁸⁰

Westerners would have shouted a loud 'Aye' to Mr. Drury's statement without realizing that there existed a contradiction. In the East, the agrarian leaders were usually of British stock, accustomed to stand on their own feet. So were the agrarian leaders in the West who usually had come from Ontario and had spent the early part of their lives there. Yet in the West the injustices of the farmers' lot were much more evident, much more keenly felt. There, agriculture was the staple industry: there existed no marked diversification in the economy to bear the brunt of distress when agriculture suffered. Monopolies in the transportation and handling of grain were more evident and caused decidedly more distress. Even the tariff was felt to be more of a burden to the grain growers who were far from the industrial centres of the East and who were usually commencing their agricultural careers without great material wealth.

The wonder is that the Eastern delegates even agreed to the Farmers' Platform. The probable explanation lies in the fact that the delegates of the Grange and other associations east of the Great Lakes could hardly have been very much interested in the greater part of the Platform. The resolutions favoring amendments to the Bank Act and the Railway Act were of

(80) Wood, L. A., A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada, (Toronto, 1924) page 242.

little concern to Easterners. If government action followed on the demands relating to the Hudson Bay Railway and the chilled meat industry it would likely have been to the detriment of the East generally. On the tariff and on a Cooperative Act all farmers would benefit. The Farmers' Platform must certainly have been passed in toto simply because of the lack of interest of Eastern farmers in a good part of it. The Western view on the functions of the government seemed farther along the road to socialism than Ontario farmers would have cared to go. Yet the western brand of socialism evident in the memorial of 1910 was still far removed from that of many farmers of the West today who not only demand the ever increasing exercise of governmental functions in the economic system but who demand protection for themselves against the buffetings of the system of free trade and competition.

Also evidenced in the Farmers' Platform was the belief of Canadian farmers in their vocation. To them, agriculture was no mean profession-it was a noble profession and the basic industry on which all forms of industrial activity depended. W. R. Motherwell, the founder of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association and long a leader in agrarian affairs, regarded agriculture as a profession second in importance only to that of the Christian ministry.⁸¹ As a corollary to this belief, industrialization was looked upon with suspicion. Canadian industrialists sought and obtained special privileges such as the tariff, anathema to the organized farmers. Further, industrialization caused the decline of agriculture through the movement of

(81) From a scrapbook on Motherwell kindly lent by John Millar of Indian Head. The quotation is from a series of articles on the life of Motherwell by F.J. Workman.

people away from the farms. Greater industrialization must cease in order to alleviate "the greatest problem which presents itself to Canadian people today...the problem of retaining our people on the soil."⁸² While the memorial assured the industrialists that the farmers bore no ill-feelings towards them, it will be noted that the delegates at the Siege brusquely refused the overtures of the Canadian Manufacturers Association to entertain them. Such philosophic strains were to appear again and again in the future years of the farmers' movement in Canada. The Platform of 1910, which for the first time collected together the demands of the organized farmers and presented them in orderly fashion, illustrates a social philosophy of agriculture.

The Platform shows the practical nature of the farmers' demands as well as their political naivety. The resolutions were practical and if carried out would right what the delegates believed to be grave injustices. Realizing that the tariff reduction meant loss of revenue for the Federal Government, the organized farmers offered "to face direct taxation in such form as may be advisable to make up the revenue required under new tariff conditions."⁸³ On the other hand, the naivety of the group became evident in at least one point in the proceedings. The tariff resolution favored reciprocity through the independent action of the governments rather than by a formal treaty. Premier Laurier brushed this point aside. If the farmers had been more versed in the procedure of govern-

(82) See Appendix II.

(83) Loc. cit.

ments, they would have been aware that tariff reduction would almost certainly occur only through a treaty between the two nations. On this point, the Platform is somewhat naive. The twin elements of practicality on the one hand and naivety or idealism on the other appear again at important moments in the history of the agrarian movement.

The Siege was marked by the continued dominance of the West. The move for the organization of the Canadian Council of Agriculture had come from the West and had been successfully consummated largely through the efforts of the Western leaders. The call for the march on Ottawa came from the organ of the Dominion Grange, but the western associations at once took up and largely took over the project. The West had an easy majority of delegates at the Siege itself. The western farmers came from three closely cooperating associations, while the East was represented by various groups unaccustomed to united action. In the deliberations of the Council itself, the West was represented by three affiliates, the East by one. The resolutions contained in the Platform illustrate the dominance of the West. The majority of resolutions were of much greater interest to the grain growers of the West. The Siege continued the dominance of the Council by the West, begun even before the national organization came into being.

The Siege of Ottawa had no immediate results of an important nature. None of the fundamental demands were realized within a reasonable period of time and some were never effected. On the key issue, the tariff, the Canadian government was encouraged to do what would have been done anyway,

namely, continue the negotiations for reciprocity with the United States. But hopes for reciprocity were dashed by the defeat of the Laurier Government in the general election of 1911. Indeed from the point of view of achieving tariff reform, the organized farmers would have been better advised to have forgone the trip to Ottawa and organized their forces for a crusade in the political bailiwicks. But such a course was not open to the Council.

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The Siege of Ottawa was the first great undertaking of the Canadian Council of Agriculture. The organized farmers had clashed again with the National Policy, this time through organization on a national scale. Again the organized farmers went down to defeat because of happenings on the political level. These defeats because of politics were not to be forgotten in years to come. But the Siege itself served to put the Council on its feet. While concrete immediate results were negligible, the long run favorable effects were important. Most important of all, farmers had at last organized on a national scale and begun to act as an effective pressure group. The farmers' national organization was on its way. As the Guide put it, "On with organization and education. The fight has only commenced and the farmers need all their forces."

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- (84) See the opening pages of the next chapter, The Period of Apathy 1911-15, for an account of the Council's part in the general elections.
- (85) The previous combined attack on the customs tariff occurred in 1908. The Grange, the Ontario Farmers Association and the Manitoba Grain Growers Association submitted a joint memorial to the Tariff Commission.
- (86) Grain Growers' Guide, December 21, 1910, page 5.

Chapter V - The Period of Apathy, 1911 - 1915

"The people of Canada have spoken. They do not want reciprocity with the United States and they do not want the Laurier Government. They have settled both these important questions in a most definite manner."⁸⁷ So stated the Grain Growers Guide after the Dominion elections of 1911.

Great was the disappointment in the ranks of the organized farmers, especially in Western Canada. The Guide, in giving the agrarian opinion of the West, put the defeat down to the reciprocity issue being linked with the fate of the Laurier government whose time had come. As well, the Eastern interests - the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the railway interests and the other monied groups, had combined to thwart once again the rightful demands of the grain growers. A separate referendum on the issue should have been taken. "By a very large majority, the actual working farmers of the Prairie Provinces have endorsed the principle of reciprocal trade with the U.S."⁸⁸ But such was not to be their lot. The defeat of reciprocity proved to be a decided setback to the farmers' movement in general and to the Canadian Council of Agriculture in particular.

In the affairs of the Council, the defeat of reciprocity marked the beginning of a period of apathy. The national organization had led part of the fight against the customs tariff. It had been placed in an awkward position

(87) The Grain Growers' Guide, September 27, 1911, p. 5.

(88) Loc. cit. By total vote, while Saskatchewan and Alberta went Liberal, Manitoba voted against the Laurier Government, (Cons. 40,356 to Lib. 34,781). There, two Liberals and eight Conservatives were elected.

during the elections of 1911. Nothing in its constitution prevented the Council from campaigning actively for reciprocity. The organized farmers of Canada had taken a definite stand against Protection in the Farmers' Platform of the previous year. The constitution encouraged supporters to participate in politics "as a means to make the political parties without distinction responsive to a representative of the demands of the people who form the bulk of the population."⁸⁹ Much could be said for the Council getting into the campaign on the side of the party promising reciprocity.

Yet there existed ample precedent for the Council refraining from political activity even in support of the main plank in its platform. The fate of the Patrons of Industry still lingered in the minds of agrarian leaders.⁹⁰ The entry of the national body into the campaign would be the signal for dissension within the ranks and criticism from without. Men of both national parties were to be found in the Council of Agriculture and its affiliates. Even support of an educational nature presented difficulties since political bias would have appeared almost inevitably in any pamphlets, manifestos, lecture courses and addresses. Since its affiliated associations abstained from active participation in these general elections, the national organization wisely followed suit. The Council made its contribution to the achievement of free trade through the Siege of Ottawa. No active part was taken in the political campaign which followed.

(89) See Appendix I.

(90) See Chapter II.

The defeat of reciprocity was an unexpected reverse for the Council. Reciprocal free trade with the United States had been the fundamental plank in the Farmers' Platform of 1910. The fight against the tariff constituted the focal point in the early activities of the Council. Here was the issue in which the farmers of Eastern and Western Canada could stand together. In the memorial presented at the Siege the tariff resolution was the only resolution, excluding the one relating to a Cooperative Act, really of interest to farmers from all the provinces represented. Opposition to the tariff provided the cement to hold together the farmers' national organization.

But the defeat of the Laurier Government largely removed the tariff issue from the centre of interest in the Canadian scene. The party of MacDonald, the party which had formulated the National Policy, now held the reins of government. Worse still, the Conservatives had achieved this position without any promise of tariff reduction.⁹¹ The West could justifiably expect nothing along these lines from the new government. Interest in tariff reduction would now taper off.

Canadian farmers' movements must continually be striving to gain some important objective. If the organization is not battling towards some goal interest slackens off. The movement then dies a slow death or enters a period of apathy. The latter proved to be the destiny of the Canadian Council. General interest in the tariff declined: yet the Council continued to reiterate solemnly its demand for reciprocal free trade in cert-

(91) In the election campaign, Borden, while seeming to agree with the grain growers' demands for government operation of terminal elevators, studiously avoided definite pronouncements on the tariff issue.

ain products with the United States and complete free trade with Great Britain.

The best example of this is the Second Siege of Ottawa. The second differed greatly from the first. The second "march" had no mass delegation entailing great preparation, organization, and publicity. There was no special train, no large group of parliamentarians present. In 1910 there had been present eight hundred delegates and twenty speakers: In 1913, fourteen delegates comprised the whole group. A factor favoring the organized farmers at the First Siege had been the imminence of a general election. Three years later no such favorable timing existed. In fact the Second Siege was not a march on Ottawa at all; it consisted merely of the Cabinet hearing just another delegation.

A group of fourteen members of the Canadian Council of Agriculture went to the capital city and met on December 16, 1913, with Premier Borden and his cabinet. The group, headed by the President, R. C. Henders, comprised representatives from the four affiliated associations and honorary members. ⁹² Mr. Henders informed the Cabinet as to the reasons for the presence of the delegation. "The farming industry was not in a flourishing condition and it was felt that conditions were rapidly becoming serious. These conditions were not attributed to the government but it was felt that legislation would do a lot to alleviate

(92) At a Council meeting November 12, 1913, the President of the Grain Growers Grain Company and the Editors of the Weekly Sun, the Peterborough Farm & Dairy and the Guide became honorary members.

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them."

The memorial was couched in almost exactly the same terms as that of 1910. Strong opposition to the tariff again figured most prominently. The old resolutions favoring government ownership and operation of terminal elevators and the Hudson Bay Railway and the need for a Co-operative Act were again brought forward. But the Council was merely repeating itself. The government had settled at least in its own opinion, the terminal elevator question by the Canada Grain Act of 1912.⁹⁴ The Conservative ministry was not interested in tariff reduction or in having anything to do with this contentious question. Only with regard to legislation to incorporate cooperatives and in details on the handling of grain,⁹⁵ could the organized farmers reasonably expect government action. The Council was concentrating its attention either on hopeless demands or on demands of little general interest at that particular time.

The concrete results of the Second Siege were negligible. The government had heard the demands before and was unlikely, in an off-election year, to especially heed them. No great publicity, educational or organizational work resulted. The event was little noted in the newspapers of the time. Even the farm journals accorded it surprisingly little space. The Grain Growers' Guide took the opportunity to point out: "But the real work must be done in the country among the farmers themselves...These farmers must be stirred up."⁹⁶

(93) The Grain Growers' Guide, December 24, 1913, p. 7.

(94) Statutes of Canada, 2 George V (1912), c. 27.

(95) The least important demands. See the Guide, Dec. 24, 1913, p. 7.

(96) The Grain Growers' Guide, December 31, 1913, p. 6.

In negative results, the Second Siege heightened the growing feeling of apathy among farmers. The general elections of 1911 had had the effect of weakening the main foundation of the Council of Agriculture. Instead of choosing new issues, or at least temporarily adopting a different line of attack, the Council proceeded along well-worn ruts. Such a course could only result in discouragement to supporters and loss of interest.

In the period from 1911 to the reorganization of 1916, the Council was handicapped badly by a lack of funds. The organization's finances consisted of one hundred dollar annual membership fee from each of the four affiliated associations.⁹⁷ At the very first meeting the sum of four hundred dollars, an entire year's income, was voted for the securing of evidence for the prosecution of the cotton, cement, and wire fence trusts. At a later meeting in 1911, it was decided to attempt to raise funds through voluntary subscriptions. Such a procedure is usually either dangerous or useless. It may be dangerous in that a large subscriber may wish to exert undue influence, or useless in that nobody subscribes. The latter proved the case with the Council.

Even the annual membership fees were not always paid. The records of the Council show no payments from any of the associations in the years 1911 and 1913.⁹⁸ The reason is probably twofold, firstly, no pressing need for the money,

(97) The fees for 1910 were paid. See Report of Proceedings, Manitoba Grain Growers' Association Convention, January 24-26, 1911.

(98) No financial record available for 1911. The Manitoba Grain Growers' Association did not pay that year. See Report of Proceedings, Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, 1912.

secondly, a desire to avoid embarrassing the Dominion Grange, then in difficulties and struggling to keep alive. In 1914, only the three western associations paid their membership fees, a situation repeated in the following two years.

Money for the national organization could have come from the farmers' commercial companies. ⁹⁹ The western companies were by then in good financial condition. Soon after its inception the Grain Growers Grain Company had begun making grants to the Grain Growers Associations in the three provinces to further the work of education. The Saskatchewan company followed suit through annual grants to the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association. "These grants were made without any strings attached to them."¹⁰⁰ On the business side of the farmers' movement were to be found many of the prominent leaders. Men such as T. A. Crerar, J. R. Kennedy, Roderick McKenzie in Manitoba, John Maharg, George Langley and C. A. Dunning in Saskatchewan, E. J. Fream and W. J. Tregillus in Alberta were all connected with the commercial side of the grain trade. Most of these men attended Council meetings either as honorary members or as delegates from the associations. Neither arrangement raised any more money for the Council.

But opposition existed to the inclusion of the farmers' Companies in the Council. On occasion the farmers in business saw matters in a different light than did farmers in convent-

(99) The Grain Growers Grain Company, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, the Alberta Farmers Co-operative Elevator Company and, after 1914, the United Farmers Cooperative in Ontario.

(100) The Grain Growers Record 1906-1943, (Winnipeg, 1944), p.64.

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 ion. It would naturally benefit the Council in its deliberations to have such divergent views presented. This was done after a fashion through a system of honorary memberships. In 1911 the representatives of the Grain Growers Grain Company and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, were present as guests at a Council meeting. ¹⁰² The companies were not again represented until 1913 when the President of the Grain Growers Grain Company and the editors of the three farm journals were made honorary members of Council.

However, honorary memberships did not swell the treasury. No charge could be made for such memberships since the Council would then leave itself open to charges of commercial domination. Those opposed to the granting of membership in the Council to the Farmers' companies believed that such action would result in domination by the companies. The Council must be restricted to 'dirt' farmers. Furthermore, the constitution limited membership to groups "entirely independent of government control." ¹⁰³ It was uncertain whether the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company could meet this condition.

The Council did not possess sufficient funds to do all it could have done and should have done. In 1914 and after, the national organization began to sponsor rural study courses and

(101) For example, the Grain Growers Grain Company justified the taking of profits from overages (surplus grain left in the elevator after cleaning) while the associations did not.

(102) Minutes of Council, December 29, 1911.

(103) See Appendix I. The Saskatchewan government possessed a definite measure of financial control. See Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1 George V (1910-11), c. 39, Appendix D.

pamphlets on various subjects. Such work either had to be sponsored by the Council and paid for through the associations or sponsored and paid for by the Council. More of this educational work through the medium of the printed word might have been done, especially relating to the war effort, if money had been available. As a pressure group the Council might have sent more and stronger delegations to Ottawa or perhaps maintained a permanent lobby there. A central office could have been established and a permanent Secretary appointed. Both measures would increase the prestige and influence of the Council. But the money was simply not available under the existing arrangement.

Other activities were handicapped as well by the lack of funds. A profitable field of endeavor almost entirely ignored was the investigation and publicizing of the consolidation movement then proceeding in Canadian industry. Trusts, mergers, and combines developed alarmingly behind the tariff wall after the turn of the century and with especial rapidity in the years 1909 - 1912 inclusive. During this period 58 consolidations were effected with an aggregate authorized capitalization of \$467,000,000.¹⁰⁵ This relatively new type of industrial organization would obviously have widespread results on the Canadian people. An investigation would interest Canadians right across the country and prove of especial interest to grain growers in

(104) For example, J.S. Woodsworth, Studies in Rural Citizenship, (Winnipeg:1914).

(105) Stapells, H.G., The Recent Consolidation Movement in Canadian Industry, (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Toronto, 1922) p. 13.

the West where the Guide was carrying on a publicity campaign on the subject.

The Council made one attempt to arouse interest in the investigation of trusts and combines. At the meeting of February 11, 1910, the sum of \$400.00, a year's income, was allotted to the Secretary, Mr. E.C. Drury, for the securing of evidence for the prosecution of the cement, wire fence and cotton trusts. No report was ever made to the Council. In 1913, on request of the executive, Mr. Drury returned \$168.00. It is not evident whether this money was held by him in his former position as secretary-treasurer or whether it constituted part of the 1910 allotment. Such research and legal work was difficult without adequate funds but the Council could certainly have done more to publicize the trusts and combines mushrooming forth in Canada. Such action would have benefitted Canadians generally and the new farmers' organization in particular. Lack of revenue and the general feeling of discouragement prevented activities being undertaken at the very time when increased efforts might have offset the prevailing apathy.

The structure of the Council itself proved to be not altogether satisfactory. The new organization had to feel its way forward in matters of procedure and structure. The constitution was amended in 1913 to provide representation on the executive from each province. The change was necessary as Ontario was represented at only three of the thirteen meetings of the full Council from February, 1911,

(106) Minutes of Council, February 14, 1914.
(107) Minutes of Council, February 15, 1915.

to the reorganization of July, 1916, missing all annual meetings during the period.

Procedural changes as well were made. A Western Section was established in 1911 to speed discussion and action on matters of purely Western concern. ¹⁰⁸ The group had its own Chairman and Secretary but sent its resolutions to the Council for action. But the subordinate helped to continue the domination of the Council by the West and hence did nothing to help the national organization in the East. In 1913 the Council wisely decided to submit, each year, its plan^k of action to the associations for consideration. ¹⁰⁹ Similarly, in 1915 a motion was passed to the effect that the secretaries of affiliates should exchange resolutions of inter-provincial import, passed by their respective conventions, in order to expedite action by the Council.

The Council early adopted an unwritten rule of unanimity. If any member association took decided exception to a resolution or plan, the matter was laid aside, temporarily at least, by the Council. There is no record of the rule being formally adopted: it was tacitly agreed upon and ¹¹⁰ retained. Such a rule was necessary to the newly-born national organization if dissension was to be avoided. Later the unwritten rule of unanimity would help to cause vacillation and indecision on the part of the Council but there is no evi-

(108) Minutes of Council, December 29, 1911.

(109) Minutes of Western Section, October 24, 1913. The resolution applied only to the western affiliates. It was hoped that Ontario, after the reorganization of the farmers' organization there, would agree.

(110) The writer is indebted to Senator T.A. Crerar for this information.

dence to indicate that for this early period the effectiveness of the Council's actions was lessened by the rule. In a period of apathy nothing at all might well have been done, but for this method of procedure.

The relationship between the Council and its affiliates had not yet become crystallized. The council was undecided, apparently, whether to adopt a paternalistic attitude towards them or to leave them alone. The condition of the organized farmers of Ontario steadily deteriorated until 1914 and could certainly have used any assistance. But the Council could give no financial assistance and any other aid might have aroused cries of outside interference and Western domination. The national organization did make arrangements to have its Western delegates at the Second Siege of Ottawa help the cause of the Ontario farmers through lectures, addresses and advice. Later, Roderick McKenzie delivered an inspiring address at the inaugural meeting of the United Farmers of Ontario at Toronto, in March, 1914.¹¹¹

In time the Council came to adopt a paternalistic attitude towards the associations. Early traces of this attitude are to be found in this period. But there existed no organizational machinery either to assist the older associations or to establish new ones in unorganized provinces. The Council was hampered through this relationship between the Council and the associations not being clearly defined.

"In the decade before 1914, a general democratic ferment on the Canadian prairies intensified agrarian dis-

(111) McKenzie was actually representing the Manitoba Grain Growers Association.

content. During these years Western Canadian farmers joined the crusade for greater democracy which was sweeping through North America.¹¹² Yet the council, despite its most enthusiastic supporters being from the West, played little part in the new movement until after the reorganization of the national body in 1916. The concentration of wealth and the growth of monopolies were especial objects of attack in what one authority terms 'the Revolt against the New Feudalism'.¹¹³ The Grain Growers' Guide led the verbal onslaught with articles and editorials in almost every issue espousing the cause of direct legislation and the prosecution of trusts and combines. The fight against Protection had subtly changed its line of attack. The new objective was greater democracy on the theory that its achievement would lead to tariff reform.

But the Council ignored the subtle change. Its most fervent energies were spent hammering away directly at the tariff. The new movement for reform scarcely touched the deliberations of the Council. After the futile effort of earlier years, no further action was taken against trusts and combines. The drive for direct legislation failed to reach the Council. Since it was primarily a provincial affair, the matter remained in the hands of the provincial associations. The national body might nevertheless have provided a measure of leadership in the federal field.

It is a lesson of Canadian history that a farmers' organization must always be striving for some objective. The

(112) Sharpe, P.F., The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada, (Minnesota:1948), p. 54.

(113) Porritt, E., The Revolt in Canada Against the New Feudalism, (London:1911).

crusade for greater democracy might have provided a new issue, a better objective for the Council at a time when interest in the old objective was flagging.

Until 1916 the Council's part in the Canadian war effort was negligible. Mention of the war is rarely found in the records of the deliberations of that body during the first three years of conflict. Western farmers had been generally isolationist in sentiment. The Guide spoke for its readers in such flights of rhetoric as the condemnation of the Boy Scouts as a militaristic organization and the bitter articles directed against the Canadian naval program.¹¹⁴ The latter defense proposals had aroused great opposition in the conventions of the grain growers. Isolationist sentiment in the West was deep-rooted.

The outbreak of war to a great extent altered this situation although the change was sometimes slow in coming. As late as 1917, R.C. Henders, a past President of the Canadian Council, while urging support of the war effort, showed no illusions or chauvinism about the holocaust. In a speech to the convention of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association he stated: "Yet because of our false economic system we find ourselves in the throes of the most gigantic war the world has ever known."¹¹⁵ Until its reorganization the Council played little part in the war effort. Apathy still enshrouded the organization. If the cause of educating Canadian farmers about the war had been taken up by the Council with enthusiasm and vigor, the apathy might well have been shaken off.

(114) Grain Growers' Guide, September 10, 1913, July 23, 1913.

(115) Manitoba Grain Growers Association Yearbook, 1917, p. 24.

If the Council of Agriculture was out of step with agrarian opinion on the war, it was at least following the wishes of the organized farmers in accepting the challenge of the industrialists to joint conferences "on matters of vital interest to the public welfare."¹¹⁶ The meetings might assist the war effort. Further, the agrarian pressure group was considered to be of sufficient strength to hold its own against rivals. As the Guide stated editorially: "The Grain Growers cannot but secure advantage from a conference with manufacturers. It would also serve to clear the air and would undoubtedly remove many false impressions that are in existence"¹¹⁷. In 1915 the Council held a meeting with representative businessmen of Winnipeg and shortly afterward the foundations were laid for periodic Joint Conferences of Commerce and Agriculture.

Actually little came out of the meetings with the industrialists and businessmen. It is dubious as to what extent the commercialists were educated in the needs of agriculture. However, the organized farmers lost nothing by the joint conference, and spirits were lifted by the evidence of how well their representatives had handled themselves and the cause of agriculture during the meetings.

In the matter of joint conferences, the Council had the approval and support of the affiliated associations. But in 1914 it became apparent that, on the question of admitting the commercial companies to membership, discontent in the provincial was rising. At a Council meeting in that year, the representat-

(116) Minutes of Joint Committee of Commerce & Agriculture, March 7-9, 1916.

(117) The Grain Growers' Guide, November 6, 1912, p.6.

ives of the United Farmers of Alberta brought forward a resolution for the establishment of a Federated Board comprising the associations and the commercial companies. The United Farmers of Alberta resolution is a harbinger of the reorganization of 1916. It, in the words of the Secretary, "resulted in an animated discussion", ¹¹⁸ an unusual occurrence in the Council where peace and harmony prevailed almost continuously in these early years. The other members of the Council temporarily shelved the issue by inducing the Albertans to agree to a resolution suggesting that the Council could serve any needed purpose. If this proved impossible, then the scheme received approval. The Council, in one matter at least, had gotten out of step with one of its affiliates.

The deliberations of the Canadian Council during the period 1911-1915 covered a wide range but tangible results were few. Meeting after meeting of the Council and of its Western Section concerned themselves with the usual matters. The tariff, terminal elevators, the Hudson Bay Railway, the Cooperative Act and amendments to the Railway Act and the Bank Act were all repeatedly discussed. Occasionally, such matters as sample markets, freight rates, and an alternative route via the United States for Western grain and details as to the grain trade itself arose.

On the first named matters the Council merely reiterated, without success, the stand taken in the Farmers' Platform of 1910. In addition the Council wanted the Bank Act amended to provide easier agricultural credit and the Railway Act changed

(118) Minutes of Council, July 17, 1914.

(119) Statutes of Canada, 2 George V(1912), c. 27.

to make the railway responsible more frequently for stock killed on the right of way. The establishment of a sample market, provided for by the Canada Grain Act of 1912, was opposed until all terminal elevators had been nationalized. Demanded as well was the equalization of freight rates to Minneapolis and Duluth as compared with the Head of the Lakes. This action would provide an alternative route for Western grain, important in years of good harvest. The Council secured none of its important demands. In most cases the government simply did not take any action.

Sometimes a compromise with the demands was effected. Such was the case with the Canada Grain Act of 1912.¹¹⁹ The Council had brought all possible pressure to bear upon the Dominion Government in an effort to have the terminal elevators nationalized. This demand formed an important plank in the Farmers' Platform. Subsequent delegations to Ottawa had reiterated the wish of the organized farmers. While the Grain Act was before Parliament, the Council had a strong committee on¹²⁰ hand to lobby.

As passed, the Act did not provide for the nationalization of the terminals. Instead, as an experiment, the Government decided to enter the field itself through the ownership or leasing and the operation of terminal elevators. This arrangement meant that the producers had the choice of using the government facilities or the terminals owned by the private companies. The grain trade itself was brought under strict

(119) Statutes of Canada, 2 George V(1912), c. 27.

(120) R. McKenzie, R.C. Henders, F.W. Green, E.N. Hopkins, E.J. Fream.

supervision through the creation of a Board of Grain Commissioners for Canada. A further grievance of the grain growers was alleviated through the provision in the Act preventing the owners or the operators of terminals from buying and selling grain in their own interests.¹²¹ On the other hand, the provision for the establishment of a sample market ran directly contrary to the resolutions of the Council. But the pressure tactics of the Council had had limited effect. The sections of the Act relating to terminal elevators were a compromise while stricter supervision of the grain trade could only benefit the grain growers.

The Council in some measure overcame the organized farmers' lack of representation in Parliament. On the prairies the provincial associations achieved considerable success¹²² in their representations to the respective governments.

The Council's limited success with regard to legislation in the national fields has been noted. But the delegations and submissions helped to compensate for the lamentable absence of adequate representation of the agrarian interests, especially from Western Canada. The Guide recognized this useful function of the Council: "This is the only body which can speak for the farmers of Canada and year by year it is speaking for a larger number of them."¹²³

During the period from the Siege of Ottawa to the reorganization of 1916 the Council met regularly at least once a year for the annual meeting. Other meetings were held,

(121) Section 123.

(122) For example, government support to the cooperative elevator companies.

(123) The Grain Growers' Guide, November 17, 1915, page 5

usually two or more each year including the meetings of the Western Section. Prairie domination, evident at Ottawa in December, 1910, increased as the provincial associations became stronger and the Dominion Grange weaker. In 1914 the greater number of Grangers went into the newly-organized United Farmers of Ontario. The new farmers' organization could not at once equal the western bodies in strength or influence. Since Ontario's presence at the Council table was uncertain, it would have been strange indeed if the West had not continued its early tendency to leadership in the affairs of the Council. The minutes of the meetings indicate the extent to which the national organization was preoccupied with problems of Western concern. The establishment of a Western Section simply meant that the grain growers could meet separately, formulate their ideas and insure their passage at regular Council meetings. With the representatives from Ontario present only infrequently, such procedure proved to be unnecessary. Regular Council meetings were often exactly the same as meetings of the Western Section.

In this period, the farmers' movement in Canada was growing, rapidly in the West, and after 1914, rapidly in the East as well. In 1910 all four associations affiliated with the national body comprised 25,000 farmers, an increase which more than offset the decline of the Grange.¹²⁴ In 1914 came the birth of the United Farmers of Ontario, a coalition of farmers' groups in that province. The farmers' commercial companies were expanding as well. Cooperative elevator companies had been established in Saskatchewan and Alberta through the combined

(124) Estimate in the Guide, January 3, 1912, p. 6.

efforts of the respective governments and the grain growers' associations. Both met with success. The Grain Growers Grain Company had done increasingly well over the years, finally entering upon the operation of country and terminal elevators as well as the grain exporting business. In Ontario, the United Farmers Cooperative Company Limited came into being at the same time as
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the United Farmers of Ontario.

Since the western associations were members of the Council, their expansion helped the position of the national organization. As the Guide proudly informed its readers in 1915, "This is one of the most important organizations in the Dominion of Canada, representing as it does a large class of people, a larger financial investment and containing greater future possibilities than any other organization in the land...The Canadian Council of Agriculture has only touched the fringe of its possibilities; but already it has done great work for the farmers of Canada."
126

But this supposed growth of the Council is deceptive. It is growth in depth rather than in breadth. No further provinces sought to become affiliated, and the Council had no machinery to assist such provinces in becoming organized. At the birth of the United Farmers of Ontario the best that the Council could do was to give assistance through talks, addresses, and advice. The provincial associations did a great deal more through showing J.J. Morrison, during his fact finding tour of the prairies in 1913, what had been

(125) The Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company was established in 1911 and the Alberta Farmers' Cooperative Company in 1913.
(126) Grain Growers' Guide, November 17, 1915, page 5.

done in the West. The Manitoba Grain Growers sent their secretary, Roderick McKenzie, to be main speaker at the inaugural meeting of the new Ontario body. The Council was not expanding nationally. The expansion was on vertical rather than horizontal lines.

The years from 1911 to 1915 then, constitute a period of apathy in the life of the Council. Towards the end of the period the realization was spreading among supporters of the national farmers' organization that fundamental changes were necessary. The resolution of 1914 brought forward by the United Farmers of Alberta was a portent of the future. If the financial difficulties could not be overcome then the Council would either wither away or become an apathetic, useless instrument. More work along the lines of education and organization had to be done. The Council must get in step with the times and tackle the issues of the day. Its first great setback, the defeat of reciprocity in 1911, steered the Council onto a course of apathy. The time was coming for a new course to be charted with basic changes in the framework of the Council itself. From the Siege of Ottawa to the re-organization of 1916, the Council was in the doldrums. Events were to occur in the mid-year of the war which drastically changed this situation.

Chapter VI - The Council Reorganizes, 1916 - 1918

We have here an organization, the possibilities of which as an influence on public opinion, and a protection to the life of the common people of Canada, are absolutely unlimited, provided we take the fullest advantage of the forces at our command...While good work has been done, we do not feel that we are taking advantage of the opportunity which there is before us. 127.

The years from 1916 to 1918 saw a drastic change in the Canadian Council of Agriculture. The change was much needed. The national organization did not possess adequate sources of revenue for its activities. ¹²⁸ Opinion had been slowly rising within the body and elsewhere that the Council was not properly representative of the producers. The United Farmers of Alberta resolution of 1914 indicated the view of the organized farmers of Alberta that the farmers in business should be given representation.

The farmers' companies owed their existence to provincial associations and close ties united the groups. ¹²⁹ Often the leading officers of the associations would be executives of the companies. When the cooperative elevator companies were established in Saskatchewan and Alberta, the officers of the respective associations had been named as directors of the new corporations. Hence, it was natural for the provincial associations to look with favor upon the idea of the companies being represented. As the commercial aspect of the farmers' movement became stronger and more prosperous, the pressure for commercial

(127) Report of the Committee appointed to consider future development work of the Council. Minutes of Council, March 11, 1918.

(128) See: The Period of Apathy, 1911-1915.

(129) The Grain Growers Grain Company had been started by prominent members of the Territorial Grain Growers Association while in Saskatchewan and Alberta, the leaders of the respective associations had been intimately connected with the establishment of the cooperative elevator companies.

representation increased. The more prominent the companies became, the greater the need for the presence of their representatives at meetings of the national organization. "The farmers' commercial companies were invited to participate in the work in order that the council in its deliberations might have the benefit of the knowledge and experience gained by the officials of the companies in the grain trade and the other business enterprises in which they were engaged."¹³⁰

The companies were undoubtedly eager to join the Council. Up to this time, the Council had been the pressure group of the western associations. Only limited success had been achieved.¹³¹ But the Council had great possibilities. It was the only group with the right to speak for the Canadian farmers from all sections of the country. The absence of strong parliamentary representation of the agricultural interests strengthened the Council's importance as the voice of agriculture. The national farmers' organization held a position of prestige and influence in the Canadian scene. On occasion it had influenced legislation in respect to the grain trade.¹³² It is small wonder that the farmers' companies were interested in gaining membership in such a body.

The companies contained many of the dominant figures in Canadian agriculture at the time. With such men at the helm the Council might be converted from an apathetic pressure group adequately performing none of its tasks with respect to legislation, education or organization, to a powerful representative

(130) Address by J.W. Ward, Secretary of the Council, reported in the Western Producer, Feb. 12, 1925.

(131) See: The Period of Apathy, 1911-15.

(132) See: e.g. The Canada Grain Act, 1912.

of the interests of the farmers in business. The Council could still be the pressure group of the associations but, as well, could do likewise for the creations of the associations, the co-operative grain companies. Agrarian leaders like T.A. Crerar, John Kennedy, J.R. Murray, G.T. Chipman, Chas. Dunning, Geo. Langley, F.W. Riddell and C. Rice Jones had achieved great successes in the commercial side of the grain trade. Success would surely attend their efforts to transform the Council to a force equal to its rivals, the Canadian Manufacturers Association and the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada.

In the past the farmers' companies had been accustomed to assist the provincial associations in the matter of finances. Since 1908,¹³³ the Grain Growers Grain Company had made annual grants to the associations of the three provinces. From 1911 the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company made annual grants to the educational organization in that province. Very probably the Alberta company followed suit with respect to the United Farmers of Alberta.¹³⁴ In Ontario there existed no comparable company until the formation in 1914 of the United Farmers Cooperative Company Limited of Ontario. But none of the companies had made grants to the Canadian Council of Agriculture.¹³⁵

(133) The date 1908 is taken from the Grain Growers Record, 1906 to 1943 (Winnipeg:1944) p. 64. The date 1910 as the first year of the grants is given in a statement of the Policy Followed by the U.G.G. during a period of 24 years towards other farmers' Organizations. United Farmers of Manitoba annual convention January 1930.

(134) No evidence available on this point.

(135) Patton, H.S.: Grain Growers Cooperation in Western Canada (Harvard, 1928) is in error when he says, p.388, that the United Grain Growers Company made grants to the Council between 1910 & 1914. The financial statements of the Council show no such contributions. Patton misread, in a Guide article, 1924 for 1914. No grants were made until 1916.

It is unlikely that such grants would have been welcomed by the Council. There existed a fear of domination by the commercial interests, a fear overcome in time by financial necessity. At least one of the companies was not entirely free from govern-
136
ment control. and the original constitution expressly forbade membership to such bodies.

The farmers' companies were in a position of being able to make such grants to the associations and to the Council without difficulty. The Grain Growers Grain Company had grown steadily and earned federal incorporation in 1911.
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The company had taken over the 'white elephant' of the grain trade, the Manitoba Elevator Commission, and turned it into a profitable enterprise. Success had attended the terminal elevator and the grain exporting ventures. Generally, the company, the first venture of the western grain growers into the cooperative handling of grain, was in prosperous condition. The cooperative elevator company in Saskatchewan was in a strong financial condition with the Alberta company less so. As well the year 1916 saw discussions to form an even stronger organization. In Ontario, the United Farmers Cooperative Company Limited had been established in 1914 and prospered from the start.

The wealth in the farmers' movement was to be found in the farmers' companies. The revenues of the provincial associations were derived from membership fees and from grants

(136) The Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company. See footnote 103.

(137) The Grain Growers Grain Company should be regarded as a cooperative organization, despite opinions to the contrary, because of such features in the company as the provision for one man, one vote and the thwarted desire to pay patronage dividends.

of the companies. If the Council was seeking new and larger sources of revenue, the logical place to look was the farmers' companies. The commercial organizations were more than willing to make such contributions. The annual grants were made to the provincial associations without obligation - the companies were not connected formally with the associations. But in the case of the Council, the companies evidently preferred to receive membership in exchange for the grants. The national organization had greater possibilities and the companies wanted a measure of control over it. Unlike the associations, the Council was not strong and prospering: the presence of the companies' representatives was more likely to be welcomed in the task of reorganization.

The actual reorganization of the Council occurred over the period of the last three years of the World War. By the end of 1918, the national organization had been rejuvenated. The changes were made without fanfare. Even the Grain Growers' Guide was unusually silent. Only rarely during the three year period did the 'voice' of the grain growers comment editorially on the reorganization of the Council.

Yet the process of change proceeded steadily. Opposition to commercial membership must have been by that time, either non-existent or not vocal. Probably the parties concerned did not at once realize the significance of the changes.

The harbinger of change was the resolution brought before the Council in July of 1914 by the representatives of the United Farmers of Alberta, the most aggressive of the western bodies. The resolution called for the formation of a Federated Board composed of representatives of the associations

and the three cooperative companies in the West. At that time
the other affiliates ¹³⁸ had not yet come around to take this
point of view. Nor was the Alberta representative, C. Rice-
Jones, prepared to press the matter. Hence, a cautiously worded
resolution was passed by the Council. "That this Board expresses
their sympathy with the suggestion made by the United Farmers
of Alberta in this regard and if, on further consideration, it
will be ascertained that the Canadian Council of Agriculture
will not serve the purpose intended, that we approve the form-
ation of such a Board."

In this manner the question of admitting the companies
to membership was shelved for the time being. Nothing came of
the proposal for a Federated Board. The formation of such a
board would have detracted from the prestige and influence of
the Council itself if the two groups were kept separate. Yet
the Council members were not yet ready to accept the commercial
representatives.

At the annual meeting of 1916, an invitation to affil-
iate was extended to the four cooperatives and to the Grain
Growers' Guide. No committee of the Council had been created
to study the question. Rather, opinion was moulded by simple
necessity. The Council needed money: the companies could prov-
ide money. Considerations such as a desire for better repres-
entation of the farmers' movement were secondary in importance.
The Alberta farmers had been ready to acquiesce to the change
as early as 1914. Within two years the organized farmers of the
other prairie provinces had arrived at a similar point of view.
Ontario had not attended any meetings in 1914 and had been rep-
resented only once in the following year by a group of key per-
sonnel in the formation of the United Farmers of Ontario. It
was not until April of 1916 that the United Farmers of Ontario

(138) Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Ontario was not represented
at this meeting of the Council, held in Winnipeg, July 17/14.

formally aligned itself with the Council. Since the new association in Ontario was closely linked with the new cooperative enterprise in the province it was not likely that that association would oppose the change.

At the next meeting, applications for membership from the commercial bodies were received and accepted. The Council now comprised four associations, four companies and a farm journal.¹³⁹ The membership consisted of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association, the United Farmers of Alberta, the United Farmers of Ontario, the Grain Growers Grain Company, the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company, the Alberta Farmers' Cooperative Elevator Company, the United Farmers Cooperative Company Limited of Ontario and the Grain Growers' Guide.

At the same time, the very necessary step of appointing a Reorganization Committee was taken. Three prominent leaders, two of them from the commercial side of the farmers' movement, formed the Committee - T.A. Crerar of the Grain Growers Grain Company, G.F. Chipman of the Guide and Roderick McKenzie of the Manitoba Grain Growers. Already the companies showed signs of leadership in the affairs of the Council. The Committee was requested to revise the constitution and suggest methods of increasing the finances and placing them on a stable and satisfactory basis.

The constitution of 1916 differs considerably from that of 1910. The framework of the Council was altered to

(139) The United Farmers of Ontario simply took over the membership held by the organization. It largely absorbed the Dominion Grange and by a vote of its board of directors formally aligned itself with the Council on April 20, 1916.

make it more suitable for the purposes of an agricultural pressure group. The preamble of the constitution declared that the Council was now "to constitute in itself a medium through which the various organizations in membership may act collectively where their common interests are concerned" and "to provide unity of action".¹⁴⁰ There was no such emphasis on action in the early constitution. The Council was being transformed from a discussion group to a body of action.

One object, not mentioned at all in 1910, was declared to be the investigation of, and the dissemination of information on, methods of taxation for providing National revenue. The agrarians believed that the post-war years would see an attempt on the part of the monied interests to avoid the taxation necessary to pay for the war. As well, this clause is a reference to the old enemy of the organized farmer, the tariff, since the tariff and the national revenue were closely linked. Opposition to the National Policy of Protection was still the main cement holding together the national farmers' organization.

The clause in the preamble to the constitution of 1910 emphasizing cooperation was replaced by the clause relating to taxation and the National Revenue. The organized farmers had achieved successes in the field of cooperation except with regard to their demand for legislation to incorporate such business enterprises.¹⁴¹ Attention was now to be con-

(140) See Appendix III. For brevity only the constitution of July 1918 is given in the appendix. The only differences occur with regard to membership, Article II and finances, Article VIII.

(141) It was felt that such legislation would encourage the growth of cooperatives. See Chipman, G.F., the Seige of Ottawa, pages 47 - 48.

centrated on taxation and the tariff.

No mention of political activity was made in the preamble to the 1916 constitution. This is strange as the movement towards political action was slowly gaining momentum during these years. The reason may have been a desire to avoid premature action or a desire to avoid reference to politics while the nation was engaged in war.

The only other important constitutional change occurred with regard to finances and here the most important reform of all was executed. "Each shareholder organization in membership shall pay an annual fee of ten (10) cents per shareholder with a minimum of One Hundred (\$100.00) Dollars and each other organization in membership shall pay an annual fee of not less than One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00)".¹⁴²

Since the number of shareholders in the companies remained relatively stable or increased while the membership in the associations might fluctuate widely during the course of events, the arrangement placed the finances of the Council on a reasonably solid basis. The revenues were increased¹⁴³ considerably as well. The commercial organizations could be depended upon for special or emergency grants if need be, a pecuniary impossibility for the membership associations. The constitutional revision of 1916 placed the finances of the Council on what appeared at the time to be a satisfactory basis. The reform was vitally necessary to the national organization if it was to perform its work of education and

(142) Clause VIII in the 1916 Constitution. Minutes of Council July 25, 1916. See Appendix III.

(143) The Grain Growers Grain Co. and the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Co., each had over 18,000 shareholders by 1916. See Patton, H.S., op cit. pages 160-161.

organization and its work as the pressure group of the organized farmers. Agrarians were coming to realize that adequate financial resources are a 'must' to any group in the latter category.

A great asset to an organization such as the Council, especially in its pressure tactics, would be a permanent secretary and a central office. The reorganization of 1916 resulted in the acquisition of both. Previously the Council had neither. The office of the Interprovincial Council had been nominally Calgary and that of the Canadian Council, Toronto. For lack of revenue, neither organization had possessed a permanent secretary or a head office. Now that the financial structure of the Council had been overhauled, the members decided to appoint a permanent Secretary-Treasurer at a substantial salary.¹⁴⁴ An able farmer of long experience in the farmers' movement was selected for the post, Roderick McKenzie, then Secretary of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association.¹⁴⁵ Arrangements were made for the establishment of a head office at Winnipeg. A permanent secretary with the facilities of an office would be invaluable as a coordinating centre and a clearing house.

The process of reorganization continued quietly in 1917 and 1918. The Council was now more active than before and the increased activity showed the need for further changes in the framework of the organization. The year 1917 saw the appointment of another committee to go into matters needing

(144) Not until after N.P. Lambert became secretary in 1918 was the office held during pleasure rather than by annual election. Mr. McKenzie was elected to serve at a salary of \$200.00 a month. See: Minutes of the Executive, July 28, 1916 and Minutes of the Council July 25/11.

(145) See: Chapter III.

146 reform. The report of the committee resulted in a further revision of the constitution.

An additional factor in favor of the change was the report of another committee ¹⁴⁷ appointed to consider the future development work of the Council. Its report presented in March, 1918, is of special interest as it indicates clearly what the organized farmers thought to be the functions of the Canadian Council. The report had been prepared by three representatives of the commercial side of the farmers' movement and illustrates the new emphasis on action which resulted from ¹⁴⁸ the extension of membership to the companies.

As from its inception, the Council was considered to be an educational organization. The work of education was to be carried on as before among the farmers as well as among "the foreign element...for the purpose of building up a national spirit...promoting unity." The Council was becoming more conscious of its position as a national organization.

In addition, the work of the Council was conceived to be of a "legislative character...acting as the mouthpiece of the farmers' organizations." Here is emphasized what had been strongly hinted at before, namely the view that the Council was the pressure group of the organized farmers. Such phrases in as "presenting these questions to the Government...watching the course of new or of any legislation..." indicate this new emphasis. The Council had always been an agrarian pressure group

(146) The committee consisted of G.F. Chipman, J.B. Musselman and Roderick McKenzie. See: Minutes of Council, March 13, 1917.
(147) T.A. Crerar, Geo. Langley, C. Rice-Jones, all from the farmers' companies.
(148) See: Appendix IV.

but now this function was more frankly expressed and more heavily emphasized.

A striking new concept of the Council's work is contained in the section of the report which reads "By working in close cooperation with Provincial organizations...to prevent the possibility of a public difference of opinion which would, of course, be detrimental to the farmers' interests. The Council and its farmers' movement were becoming more and more influential in Canadian life and were about to enter an important phase of their activities, during the post-war period. There must be no dissension within the ranks, at least outwardly. It is very dubious whether, if the companies had not gained membership, the Council would have expressed any such opinion. The whole report shows the influence and leadership of the commercial representatives. Previously farm organizations had been able to and still could see eye to eye on certain basic issues. But as the commercial aspect of the movement became more and more important, so also grew the likelihood of internal dissension. This view of the Council as a maintainer of peace among farmers' organizations constituted something new: the view was due to the influence and presence of the companies.

The report of the Committee stated that properly to carry out its work, the Council must acquire professional help. The work of education and of influencing legislation could no longer be adequately performed alone by highly respected farmers of long experience such as Roderick McKenzie. The agrarian pressure group must now have trained personnel. The change was undoubtedly at the behest of the commercial companies who had been accustomed in business to secure the best services avail-

able. Since these organizations were now part of the Council and the financial mainstay of it, the Council must likewise secure the best of personnel. The need for such personnel had become increasingly apparent over the years. The Grain Growers' Guide had seen the necessity as early as 1916. In referring to the delegations attempting to influence legislation the farm journal pointed out that "the business interests seem to be represented invariably by experienced lawyers. The time possibly is not far distant when the farmers will be equally well represented at the capital."¹⁴⁹

An impending lack of adequate revenues again plagued the Council. Besides increasing revenues, the early reorganiza-¹⁵⁰tion had resulted in greatly increased activities, and more money was needed. As well, the organized farmers believed that the end of hostilities would necessitate great activity on their part to offset the efforts of the business interests to avoid the increased taxation necessary to pay for the war. This work, led by the national organization, would require more funds than those presently at the disposal of the Council. "The extent of the work which is not only desirable but absolutely essential in the interests of the farmers is only limited by the funds¹⁵¹ which can be provided for this purpose."

Hence in July, 1918 the constitution of the Canadian¹⁵² Council underwent a further revision. Representation was

(149) Grain Growers' Guide, May 30, 1916, Page 30.

(150) See next chapter.

(151) Report of the Committee appointed to consider future development work of our Council, Minutes of Council, March 11, 1918.

(152) See Appendix III.

limited to four members from each affiliate rather than five. There was no change in the actual membership of the organization. An application for membership from the United Farmers of British Columbia had been received the previous year but nothing came of it. Apparently the question was quietly dropped since the agriculturalists of the westerly province favored the tariff. Without agreement on this fundamental issue, membership could not be extended to the United Farmers of British Columbia as internal dissension would only result.

The important change in the revision of 1918 occurred with regard to finances. The Council's revenues were finally placed on a sufficient and stable basis. The added revenue came from increased contributions on the part of the shareholder organizations. The constitution now provided for the annual membership fee to be twenty-five cents per shareholder for companies with more than five thousand shareholders and ten cents per shareholder for companies with less. The minimum fee for commercial companies was set at \$200.00. Similarly associations with more than five thousand members paid \$200.00 and those with less \$100.00, the minimum fee.

The Council had come, within a short space of time, to be largely dependent financially on the commercial companies. In 1919, the first full year after the change, the four companies contributed \$14,559.00 to the four associa-

(153) The amendment had actually been passed by Council in March, 1918. Some members favored reduction to the representatives per affiliate. See Minutes of Council, March 11, 1918.

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tions' \$800.00. As well, any special grants would come from the farmers in business. Such a financial arrangement could not fail in time to influence the position and the activities of the national organization.

The new financial position permitted the engagement of a well-paid permanent Secretary. The choice fell upon Mr. Norman F. Lambert, an associate editor of the Grain Growers' Guide and formerly a staff writer of the Toronto Globe. The services of the former Secretary, Roderick McKenzie, were retained through provision being made for him as a paid Vice-President. Such a staff gave the organization an air of permanency and importance. The Council was beginning to build up the expert staff necessary for its educational work and its pressure tactics.

The reorganization forced the Council to face certain new problems peculiar to a national farmers' body. The question of the relationship between the Council and its affiliates was becoming troublesome. The Council attempted through the unwritten rule of unanimity, to avoid any difficulties that might arise. If a member organization vetoed a resolution, it was not passed by the Council. But if the organization merely expressed opposition and did not veto the resolution, the Council might

(154) See: Annual Account, Canadian Council of Agriculture for the year ending December 31st, 1919. The revenues were derived as follows:

<u>United Grain Growers,</u>	\$ 8,664.25
<u>Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Co.,</u>	5,207.13
<u>United Farmers Cooperative Co. Ltd.,</u>	488.55
<u>Grain Growers' Guide, Ltd.</u>	200.00
	<u>\$14,559.93</u>
<u>Each of the four associations @ \$200.</u>	
<u>per association-</u>	\$ 800.00

pass the resolution which then became binding on all affiliates. For example, the question of a government price guarantee for the 1918 wheat crop was discussed at a meeting of the Council in August, 1918. Neither affiliate from Ontario was represented but the United Farmers of Ontario informed the Council by telegram of its opposition to the price fixing of rural products only. The opposition was founded on the view that such action was an indignity to agriculture and would create industrial strife interfering with production. The Council, since no veto had been made, went ahead and passed a resolution favoring a fixed price for the 1918 crop. The resolution then represented the opinion of all organized farmers comprising the Canadian Council. It was rather an unwritten means of overcoming difficulties in the relationship between the Council and the member organizations. As such it was successful until the advent of the companies to the Council board caused the national organization to lose part of its former unanimity.

The question arose, during the years of the reorganization period, as to what action should be taken when an affiliate was being injured through a decision of the Council. The Alberta Farmers' Cooperative Elevator Company in 1917 is a case in point. The Council had gone on record as opposing the immediate establishment of a sample market. ¹⁵⁵ The Alberta organization differed but could not publicize the fact since decisions of the Council represented the united opinion of organized farmers or at least were supposed to do so. The

(155) Provision for a Sample Market had been made in the Canada Grain Act, 1912 but no action was taken until 1917 when the machinery was created: the market still did not come into operation.

elevator company found that its competitors were using against it the decision of the Council, since most Albertans favored the sample market plan. The Alberta representative brought before the Council the question of the relation of the different affiliates to the decisions of the Council. The matter was referred to the Committee on Reorganization but nothing came of it.¹⁵⁶

The unanimity which had been a striking feature of the deliberations of the Council now began to be less apparent. The division of opinion was not between the companies on the one hand and the associations on the other. Rather it sometimes existed between the different provinces. The reorganization of the late years of the war did not settle what was to become an increasingly vexatious question--the relationship between the decisions of the Council and the views of the individual organizations.

The change in the Council did not proceed to the point where the organization possessed its own newspaper or organ. Early in 1918 a project was considered whereby an annual publication would be issued by a private individual, but under the auspices of the Council, embodying news and material of interest to the organized farmers. The plan failed to meet with approval. A proposal for an advisory board on editorial policy for the Grain Growers' Guide, brought forward later the same year by the Alberta members, also failed of adoption. The board would consist of the representatives of the farmers' organizations. The agrarian leaders saw the danger of such a board controlling rather than advising on editorial policy. As well, the Guide was the

(156) See: Minutes of Council, August 30, 1917, f.f.

official organ of the western associations, not of the Canadian Council. Under the existing arrangement the prairie journal provided a satisfactory medium for the Council in its work.

The reorganization of 1916-1918 constitutes an event of major importance in the life of the Council. The framework of the organization was altered to make it more suitable for the work to be done. The finances had finally been placed on a sufficient and stable basis. The appointment of a permanent secretary with an office at his disposal would greatly assist the work made possible by the new revenues. The Council now represented the commercial side of the farmers' movement as well as the educational associations. The affiliates were prosperous, a factor obviously enhancing the prestige and influence of the central organization. ¹⁵⁷ New personalities from the farmers' companies had been brought to the Council table and could be expected to provide fresh enthusiasm and spirit as well as practical advice.

The reorganization made the Council more representative of the farmers' movement. The voice of the farmers' companies would henceforth be heard at meetings of the national body. No less than eight separate organizations were now affiliates of the reorganized Council. ¹⁵⁸ About 75,000 farmers from

(157) The formation of the United Grain Growers, Ltd., in 1917 had taken care of the least prosperous of the commercial organizations, the Alberta Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company. The new firm also comprised the Grain Growers Grain Co., but not the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company which remained separate.

(158) The Grain Growers' Guide derived its revenue from paid circulation and from the United Grain Growers Ltd., so it was hardly an independent organization although treated as such in the Council.

four provinces were now represented in the national organization.¹⁵⁹ As well, signs were becoming increasingly apparent of farm organization in Quebec and New Brunswick while there existed a possibility of the inclusion of the United Farmers of British Columbia.

The reform placed the Council in a better position to carry out its work. More money meant more propaganda and more publicity. Professional assistance could now be had when necessary. A central office and a permanent secretary with sufficient funds would facilitate the work of organization and education. Assistance could be given to the farmers of provinces not represented in their efforts to organize. The work of educating the farmers across the Dominion would receive a great stimulus.

The Council was now organized, theoretically at least, as an effective group. Any modern body in the nature of a pressure group should have the group it represents well organized, possess adequate financial strength, have means of propaganda and publicity and have in its service professional personnel.¹⁶⁰ The reorganization of the late war years placed the Council in a position to satisfy, to a large extent, those requisites.

The farmers of Ontario and the West were well organized through the provincial associations. Finances were on an adequate and stable basis. The farm journals, espec-

(159) Estimate given in the Grain Growers' Guide, August 2, 1916, page 30.

(160) Schattsneider, E.E., Pressure Groups versus Political Parties, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, September, 1948.

ially the Grain Growers' Guide were considered to be adequate sounding boards for propaganda and information. If they had not been so regarded, the Council would have acceded to the earlier proposal for an annual publication of interest to the organized farmers. The Guide and the Farmers' Sun were official organs of the associations and were sympathetic to the Council, representing as it did, the combined associations. A start had been made in 1918 towards the acquisition of trained personnel. As well, the new financial strength would permit the hiring of lawyers and other technical experts to assist the Council in its work on legislation.

A burst of activity on the part of the Council occurred during and after the period of reorganization. The formulation of the Farmers' Platform took place in 1916 with a revision in two years. Pressure tactics on the Federal Government were renewed with greater vigor in such matters as freight rates and government guarantees for the price of wheat. The tariff, the old enemy, was tackled once again. Finally, the Council entered the political arena. Much of the new activity may be regarded as a result of the reorganization.

Prior to the revamping of the national organization, the provincial associations of Western Canada had dominated its deliberations and activities. The organized farmers of Ontario were occupied first with the death struggles of the Dominion Grange and later with the birth pangs of the United Farmers of Ontario. Meanwhile, the prairie organizations continued to

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- (161) Formerly the Weekly Sun. Name changed in 1919. See: Hannam, H.H., Pulling Together, (U.F.O. 1939) p. 34.
- (162) For detailed account of the activities, see the next chapter.

grow in strength and prosperity. This strength, combined with the strong personalities of the western leaders made inevitable from the first, the western leadership of the Council.

The reorganization continued the process of domination of the Council by the West. But the leadership was to come from the commercial companies rather than the associations. The companies made no immediate attempt to secure the leading offices in the organization. Their leadership arose in discussion and in action. ¹⁶³ The new constitutional framework meant dependence to a very large extent on the funds provided by the companies. This dependence, coupled with the driving personalities in the commercial organizations meant that leadership in the Council would continue to come from the West but from the farmers in business rather than the farmers in convention.

As well as bringing in the commercial companies with their wealth, the changes added new executives to the Council. Men such as J.A. Maharg, Geo. Langley, C. Rice-Jones, E.J. Fream, T.A. Crerar, J.J. Morrison and Geo. Chipman all represented the commercial side of the farmers' movement. Some of these men had gained prominence through the associations and maintained close ties with these groups. Their presence at the Council table, for the first time as representatives of the commercial affiliates, would add to the effectiveness of the national organization. The usual attributes of businessmen, such as practical advice and efficient methods of getting things

(163) This point is evident from reading the Minutes of Council for the years 1917 and 1918. Later the representatives of the company would hold the elected officers but in this period of the associations retained the positions.

done, would make the Council less a body of thought and discussion and more a body of action.

Great things were now expected of their national organization by the organized farmers. A common belief existed that the post war period would bring great problems to Canada and to the farm element. The monied interests of the opposition forces, relatively quiescent during the war, would once again take up the fight to maintain their special privileges. But the organized farmers believed that this Council had been reorganized in just such a way and in sufficient time to hold not only any gains achieved but to press forward for political and economic reform. As the Guide stated early in the reorganization period, in almost its only comment on the process of change:

"It (the Council) can safely be described as the largest farmers' organization in the world and with the permanent basis upon which it has now been placed and with sufficient financial support, it shall accomplish very valuable work on behalf of the organized farmers." 164

(164) Grain Growers' Guide, August 2, 1916, p.30.

Chapter VII - Renewed Activity, 1916 - 1920.

The years from the beginning of the reorganization in 1916 until the end of the decade in 1920 represent real achievement for the Canadian Council of Agriculture. The work of education was greatly expanded. Organization proceeded rapidly both with regard to farm women and to the unorganized provinces. A large measure of success attended the pressure tactics of the national body. The activity of these years was of benefit both to the nation generally and to the organized farmers in particular. As a result, the prestige and influence of the Council, previously waning, reached new heights.

"The great need is educational work." ¹⁶⁵ So, in 1917, spoke the Grain Growers' Guide about the farmers' movement. The revitalized Council was prepared to play its part. The membership associations had always carried the main burden in education. Through pamphlets, conventions, locals, addresses and such media, the associations were performing the task of educating the farmer about matters of concern to his welfare.

The Council's part consisted of supplementing this educational work in matters of national moment. Its efforts proceeded at first along much the same lines as those of the membership associations. In 1916 the national organization led the way by formulating a Farmers' Platform on which the educational efforts of all were henceforth based. Two years earlier, a booklet entitled 'Studies in Rural Citizenship' by Reverend J.S. Woodsworth had been published under the auspices of the Council. ¹⁶⁶ The stated object of the work was to spread know-

(165) The Grain Growers' Guide, January 17, 1917, p. 5.

(166) Woodsworth, J.S., Studies in Rural Citizenship,
(Winnipeg: 1914).

ledge of various social subjects and to inculcate the idea of united action by the farmers. Little more was done through the medium of the printed word until the reorganization of the Council was underway. Increased revenues now permitted increased educational activity. The line of attack turned to pamphlets on specific matters. The tariff and the Farmers' Platform were objects of especial regard, while the monied interests received their share of attention. ¹⁶⁷ Great numbers of such leaflets were published under the auspices of the Council and were usually distributed free through the associations. ¹⁶⁸ The national organization now possessed sufficient funds to pay for propaganda on so widespread a scale. In addition, the farmers' companies repeatedly expressed their willingness to provide special grants for this purpose. In accepting such grants, the Council, while furthering its educational work, increased its dependence on the companies. ¹⁶⁹

Through such leaflets, the Council carried on a publicity campaign in competition with the efforts of rival pressure groups like the Canadian Manufacturers Association. In pamphlets, addresses, their organ 'Industrial Canada' and the

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- (167) Such pamphlets bore titles like Tariff's Toll on Children, How the Farmer Pays the Bill, Railway Burden Means Taxation, and Help Old England with Freer Trade.
- (168) The Financial Statement for 1919 indicates cost of pamphlets as \$2,639 and revenues from their sale \$6.00. In July the Secretary reported that since the last meeting 80,000 leaflets had been printed. See Minutes of Council, July 9, 1919.
- (169) See Minutes of Council, April 1, 1919, recording offers from the United Grain Growers Limited and the Saskatchewan company. In 1920 the former made a special grant of \$5,000. to the Council. See Minutes of Council, October 21, 1920.

newly-formed Canadian Industrial Reconstruction Association, the industrialists were waging an active campaign to maintain their privileges and to belittle the efforts of the organized farmers.¹⁷⁰ Hence the educational work of the Council served the dual purpose as well of offsetting the effects of the propaganda of rival groups.

The farm journals played an unofficial part in the educational work of the Council. In the East, the Farmers' Sun, organ of the United Farmers of Ontario, could be depended upon for such work. In Western Canada, the Grain Growers' Guide, organ of the three associations, waged a constant campaign against trusts and the tariff, on the need for organization to implement the Farmers' Platform and other such matters of concern to the grain growers. Yet there existed no formal connection between the national organization and any newspaper or organ. None was considered necessary. Probably the educational work could have been furthered had the Council controlled a newspaper. Such a policy was against the wishes of the organized farmers whose representatives had even turned down a proposal for an advisory board to assist the editor of the Guide. Further,

(170) For example, see Industrial Canada, especially for the summer months of 1918 - editorials like that of the August issue, pages 40-41, and the speeches and articles of Sir John Willison, President of the Canadian Industrial Reconstruction Association. See his speech to the Toronto Branch of the C.M.A., as reported in Industrial Canada, June, 1918, page 47, and his report on the C.I.R.A., Industrial Canada, September 1918, page 52. The Reconstruction Association formed in March, 1918, was a short-lived group advocating high tariffs. See the Canadian Annual Review 1918, page 550.

the expense involved in control of a newspaper constituted a deterrent. The Guide had been consistently subsidized by the Grain Growers Grain Company, and later by the United Grain Growers Limited. Control of a paper meant financial responsibility and even the increased revenues of the Council could not bear the strain. Since the major farm journals were owned by affiliates of the Council and since none of the journals possessed national coverage, the acquisition of an organ would cause friction and charges of favoritism. Hence the Council deemed it wise to let well enough alone and to rely on the farm journals to aid voluntarily in the work of education.

Delegations to Ottawa and the formation of the Farmers' Platform provided publicity in the daily newspapers, all of which helped to illustrate what the organized farmers of Canada were doing and why. The Council continued to send frequent small delegations to the national capital to inform the Government as to the farmers' view on matters like freight rates, the Grain Act, and the marketing of grain. Such delegations were duly reported in the newspapers and sometimes achieve editorial mention, favorable or otherwise depending on the journal concerned. Either way proved of benefit since the farmers would ignore criticism in newspapers supposedly favorable to the monied interests. On the occasion of the National Liberal Convention in 1919, while the Council did not accept an invitation to send representatives, ¹⁷¹ it did send a copy of the revised Farmers' Platform

(171) "Inasmuch however, as the organized farmers of Canada affiliated through this Council of Agriculture have never identified their institutions with the activities of any political party, we respectfully decline the invitation..."
Minutes of Council, July 9, 1919.

together with a memorandum expressing the views on existing national problems of the organized farmers. The Manitoba Free Press, on the second day of the great convention, devoted almost half of its editorial page to the farmers' submissions, pointing out: "The sentiment of the whole document is radical and progressive in keeping with the spirit of the times in Canada; and it is certain to have a very considerable bearing upon future political developments in Canada..."¹⁷² Such publicity aided in the work of education.

The Council gradually became conscious of the necessity of promoting its educational work on a more national scale. The report of the Committee on Future Development Work emphasized the Council's duty to conduct an educational campaign to build up a national spirit, absorb the foreign element and promote Canadian unity.¹⁷³ To this end provision was made in 1919 for the publishing of literature in languages other than English. As well, a publicity man was engaged to handle propaganda through the French-Canadian newspapers.¹⁷⁴ The Farmers' Platform was conceived to be of national interest and was designed to educate on a wide scale and to attract support from varied quarters. Mr. Maharg, a western Member of Parliament and an officer of the Council, to have it known even more widely, read the complete Platform into Hansard, the official journal of Parliament.¹⁷⁵ Through such methods of publicity, the Council increased the range and effect of its educational work.

(172) The Manitoba Free Press, August 6, 1919, p. 10.

(173) Appendix IV.

(174) A Mr. Caron. Minutes of Executive, July 11, 1919.

(175) Debates of the House of Commons, March 17, 1919, p.533.

The greatest achievement of the period, and the first to occur after the reorganization of the Council had begun, is to be found in the Farmers' Platform, as drafted in 1916 and revised in 1918. The prime purpose of the platform was educational, but in a new and different sense. Until this time, the Council had devoted most of its educational efforts to educating the farmer to the injustices of his lot. Only on rare occasions, such as the Sieges, had much importance been placed on action. The platform was put forward in order that the farmer might learn to exert pressure on his parliamentary representative along definite lines. Candidates and Members of Parliament could be asked specifically to pledge themselves to support and to work for the implementation of the platform. Rather than education for education's sake, it was now a case of education for action.

The original platform of 1916 was simply the codification of the many demands for reform made in previous years by farmers' organizations. The memorials of the Siege of Ottawa, and the second Siege, were reiterated together with demands culled from the resolutions of past conventions and local meetings of the provincial associations. Within a year, the platform had been adopted with enthusiasm by the associations and referred to their thousands of locals where general agreement was again registered. The platform thereupon officially represented the views of the organized farmers of Canada, as united together in the Council of Agriculture.

In November of 1918 the Farmers' Platform was re-

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vised. Certain of the reforms advocated in it had come into force and could be dropped. Female suffrage, provincial rights in liquor legislation, direct taxation on personal and business incomes and legislation against the patronage evil were reforms demanded in 1916 and achieved in some measure within a short period of time. As well the conclusion of war brought serious problems to Canada, problems which had to be faced in their platform by the organized farmers. Hence the original Farmers' Platform was revised in 1918 and given the name of the New National Policy in contrast to the National Policy.¹⁷⁷ To the agrarians, the policy of Sir John A. MacDonald meant tariffs and little else.

In the revision, attention again centred on the question of the tariff. Opposition to the Policy of Protection had provided the cement which bound together the Council in its early days. This opposition still constituted the central theme for the organized farmers. Measures of direct taxation were now advocated to offset the argument of the industrialists that the customs tariff provided the best means of raising revenue.

The reasons for the bitter opposition of the farmers to Protection were reiterated and reinforced in no uncertain terms. It was pointed out that the huge war debt and the needs of veterans and post-war immigrants necessitated the fostering of agricultural development, development which was being prevented by the tariff. Reduction in the tariff on British imports would enhance relations with the Motherland. "The Protective

(176) Appendix V. The revision of 1918 contained the unfulfilled demands of the 1916 platform.

(177) H.B. Cowan and G.F. Chipman drew up the platform of 1916 while the 1918 revision was largely the work of N.P. Lambert.

Tariff has fostered combines, trusts and 'gentlemen's agreements' in almost every line of Canadian industrial enterprise," thus ruining new industries, eliminating competition and raising prices. The protected interests were condemned for causing political corruption and a lowering of public morality. The plea that the tariff constituted the best means of raising of national revenue was briskly dealt with by the statement that the tariff was actually the most wasteful and costly method conceivable since it made the rich richer and the poor poorer. Attention was directed to the fact that the tariff so increased the farmers costs "that it is becoming impossible for farmers generally, under normal conditions, to carry on farming operations profitably." A more sweeping condemnation of the policy of Protection is scarcely conceivable.

The actual tariff reforms demanded, followed much the same line as the Council had taken for years-an all round reduction, free trade with Great Britain, reciprocal trade in natural products with the United States. An additional demand illustrates the practical nature which marked the whole platform. All protected industries should be obliged to publish annual profit and loss statements and all claims for tariff protection should be heard publicly by a committee of Parliament. As in former years, the organized farmers asked for no privileges and condoned none for other groups. The demand was for justice, not privileges.

The platform went on to propose methods of direct taxation to compensate for revenue lost through tariff reduction. It is probable that the organized farmers were one of the first groups in Canada to propose direct taxes on personal and business

incomes. To care for the war veterans, such measures were proposed as gradual demobilization, reinstatement in former positions, and vocational training. A land settlement scheme was advocated to get idle land into production: the method of marketing by cooperative agencies received commendation. Nationalization of the transportation and communication systems and in the field of natural power and coal mining was demanded. Still other reforms were set forth in the platform "to bring about a greater measure of democracy in government." These reforms included complete abolition of the patronage system, senate reform, direct legislation, the removal of the wartime restrictions such as censorship and government by order-in-council, and prohibition.

The revised Farmers' Platform, the New National Policy, brought to the point of culmination the crusade for democracy which had been well underway before 1914 only to be checked by the war. The original statement of 1916 had been drawn up and issued without fanfare and was of a much milder nature than its successor. This lack of fanfare and spirit may be ascribed to the war still being in progress. The statement of 1918 was issued with much greater publicity and enthusiasm. The Council realized that such a summation of the economic and social reforms demanded by the organized farmers had great possibilities. Now each and every farmer had the opportunity to learn what he wanted and could take action to get it.

Both the platform of 1916 and that of 1918 were drawn up without thought of direct political action. ¹⁷⁸ Many farmers

(178) Before and during the World War, the Mailbag column in the Grain Growers' Guide contained occasional letters advocating political action.

undoubtedly desired the creation of an independent political party to achieve the farmers' demands. But the Council moved with caution in the matter of political action. The only political idea behind the New National Policy appears to have been to get Members of Parliament to pledge their support to the Farmers' Platform. Reform would be achieved in this manner rather than through the creation of a separate political movement. The established political parties would still be the vehicles of reform. The Guide expressed this attitude in an editorial of March, 1917: "The platform as drafted represents the views of the organized farmers and they propose to carry on an educational campaign in support of it. They also propose to encourage farmers everywhere throughout the West to give their support only to such candidates as will pledge themselves to support this platform when elected to parliament. The farmers in each constituency will take any political action they choose to secure the selection and election of such candidates, but it is distinctly understood that neither the Canadian Council nor any of the provincial associations will engineer any political platform."¹⁷⁹

The Farmers' Platform of 1918 was political in nature only to this limited extent.

Nevertheless the formation of a national platform marks another step in the drift of the organized farmers towards political action. Such action may have been in the minds of its supporters but officially the Council still abstained from political activity. The hope still existed that either a political party, likely the Liberal party, would support the platform and secure its adoption or that Members of Parliament would individually support it and work for its achievement.

The New National Policy possessed a decided element of national consciousness. It was designed to appeal to a wider

(179) The Grain Growers' Guide, March 21, 1917, p. 6.

range of the public than was to be found in the farmers' movement. For the first time in any of the memorials and briefs of the national organization, reference is made to labor. An attempt was obviously being made to gain the support of labor. "We recognize the very serious problem confronting labor in urban industry resulting from the cessation of war and we urge that every means, economically possible and practicable, should be used by federal, provincial and municipal authorities in relieving unemployment in the cities and towns.

As an appeal to urban workers, the platform may be regarded as a failure. To the ranks of labor, the platform only vaguely recommended the adoption of the principle of cooperation in relations between capital and labor as a panacea. Labor, in its bitter mood of the post-war era and still not as well organized as the industrialists and the agrarians, could hardly be expected to be satisfied with this platitude.

As well, the platform contained an aspect of internationalism.¹⁸⁰ A stand was taken in support of the League of Nations and the concept of the Dominions as free and equal partners in the British Commonwealth. It was hoped that such a progressive view would appeal to the more intelligent of the Canadian voters. The viewpoint of the organized farmers on international affairs had progressed a long way from the isolationism of pre-war days and shows the effects of the educational efforts of such organizations as the Council and the provincial associations. One

(180) Senator N.P. Lambert attributes this to the influence and advice of Professor O.D. Skelton who was in close touch with Mr. Lambert, Secretary of the Council, during this period.

authority attributes the enlightened stand to the influence of the editor of the Manitoba Free Press on one of the agrarian leaders. ¹⁸¹

The platform marks a change in tactics, an unconscious change, for the Council as a pressure group. The organized farmers had never regarded their national organization as a body of this nature although such work had been one of its important functions. The typical pressure group does not usually make a public declaration of principles but prefers to use other and quieter methods to gain its ends. A public pronouncement tends to weaken its position. Yet this is exactly the course now pursued by the Council of Agriculture. Previous statements, such as the memorial of the Siege of Ottawa, had outlined the position taken on immediate issues but the Farmers' Platform was obviously something more than this. Policies were set forth on matters not merely of immediate concern but of long-range interest. In its role as a pressure group, the Council may have erred by this open expression of objectives. Yet in the eyes of the organized farmers, who perhaps did not wholly understand the tactics of a pressure group, such a move was only to be commended.

The New National Policy is in reality a declaration of principles for the farmers' movement. Former statements had been of interest mainly to the Western grain growers. Now a platform of appeal to Eastern farmers as well

(181) Professor W.L. Morton attributes it to the influence of J.W. Dafoe, Editor of the Free Press, on T.A. Crerar. Dafoe in turn may have been indebted to the Honorable Sir Clifford Sifton.

had been constructed. It was hoped that the platform would provide a common basis for all interested in economic and social reform. At the time it provided a core or central theme on which the farmers could concentrate their efforts. Actually, without fully realizing it, the Council, in putting forward the platform, had provided an excellent foundation for independent political action. If the organized farmers were laying down policies which they desired to have implemented, it was not too long a step to political activity to achieve these policies. At the time, the platform was designed to develop an intelligent electorate which would aid in securing such reforms. Members of Parliament and candidates could be requested to take a stand on the agrarian declaration of principles. But independent political action was not the conscious object of the platform. Yet the very act of its formulation greatly enhanced the likelihood of such action.

There existed nothing in the constitution of the Canadian Council of Agriculture directly stating organization to be one of its objects. The first constitution, that of 1910, had used the words "...to organize the farm population of the Dominion for the study of social and economic problems..." Later revisions in 1916 and 1918 dropped this phraseology. Instead, the preamble to the constitution included such objects as "...to provide unity of action..." and "...to constitute in itself a medium through which the various organizations in membership may act collectively..."¹⁸² Hence, the object of organization was only secondary in importance to the Council. In

(182) Appendices I and III.

the organized provinces, this field of endeavor rested entirely in the hands of the member associations. The farmers' companies, through their annual conventions and meetings of locals, provided a measure of organization as well.

In organization then, the Council's task was twofold, coordination of the affiliates on a national scale and organization in provinces not yet represented on the national body. The reorganization completed by the constitution of November, 1918, largely took care of the problem on a national scale, but the sphere of national organization for farm women remained untouched. Similarly, work could be done in unorganized provinces. During the early post-war period, efforts were concentrated in these fields with a very large measure of success.

Saskatchewan in 1913 led the way in the organization of farm women. In that year a revision of the constitution of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association allowed the establishment of a Women's Section. The farm women were accorded full membership standing, could convene apart and elect their own executive officers. Close ties were maintained with the parent body as all dues collected were paid into the S.G.G.A. treasury and in turn an annual grant made. The women usually attended the annual convention of the men when their own was completed.

In 1915 the United Farm Women of Alberta came into being on lines similar to that of the Women's Section in Saskatchewan. From 1912 on, farm women sat as members at conventions of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association but it was not until 1918 that they sat apart in their own section. In the

same year, the United Farm Women of Ontario was established, with the assistance of Mrs. Violet McNaughton, an executive of the Saskatchewan Women's Section. The women, in their efforts to organize, were following the example set earlier by the men, namely established groups helping the farmers elsewhere to organize.

Organization on a broader scale began to be discussed in detail by the farm women about 1918 and was furthered by a resolution of the Council of Agriculture urging that the Women's Section should form an inter-provincial council which could cooperate with the Council. Such action was taken with the blessing of the Council but largely through the efforts of the ladies themselves.

In April of 1919, the Inter-provincial Council applied to the Canadian Council for admission on about the same basis as an affiliate in such matters as representation and travelling expenses for delegates. However, instead of entering as an ordinary affiliate, the farm women formed their own section, meeting separately when they so chose. The national organization took the precaution of placing a clause in the revised constitution to the effect that recommendations

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- (183) For example in 1914 Roderick McKenzie assisted in the creation of the U.F.O. In early days, fraternal visits were common.
- (184) Minutes of Council, November 26, 1918.
- (185) The Interprovincial Council of Farm Women was established early in 1919 at a meeting in Brandon, Manitoba. Elected President was Mrs. Violet McNaughton, who later became the first President of the Women's Section of the Council. Others taking leading parts in both groups included Mrs. W. Parlby of Alberta, Mrs. J.S. Wood, Miss M. Finch and Miss M. McCallum of Manitoba. See Minutes of the Women's Section, 1919 to 1927.

of the Women's Section had to be passed by the Council. In this way any public divergency of view would be avoided. Such a precaution was in keeping with the belief that the national body should prevent any public difference of opinion among farm organizations. The necessary revision of the constitution was made at a Council meeting July 9, 1919 and the Women's Section of the Canadian Council of Agriculture came into being.

The Council of Agriculture now represented the farmers and the farmwomen of Ontario and the three prairie provinces. The impetus for national organization had come from the ladies themselves, as the Council had no formal machinery, beyond a permanent secretary and central office, to aid such work. The credit for the inclusion of the women's associations must go to the farmwomen themselves. Their inclusion added further strength to the national organization and enhanced its growing prestige and influence.

The Council of Agriculture was expanding in breadth as well as depth. There existed little machinery to help in the work of organization. The permanent officials, Norman Lambert as Secretary and Roderick McKenzie as paid Vice-President, were only too willing to assist farmers'

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- (186) Patton, H.S., Grain Growers Cooperation in Western Canada (Cambridge;1928), errs with regard to the date of the formation of the Women's Section. In Appendix C, page 420 of his book gives the date as 1925.
- (187) Mr. McKenzie is listed in the financial records of the Council as an employee only until the end of the year 1919, at which time he returned to his work as Secretary of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association. See Financial Statements for 1919 and 1920.

groups in becoming established. Similarly, members of the Council would make themselves available from time to time for this purpose. But there was no organizer nor any committee of the Council charged with the responsibility of helping farmers organize. In the four provinces represented, organization was completely in the hands of the respective membership associations. In the other provinces, assistance could be given and was given by the Council or the associations on an informal basis. Little emphasis was placed in the deliberations of the national body on the establishment of new organizations. The organized farmers believed that their brothers in unorganized provinces should be given the opportunity to organize themselves, with outside assistance when requested. As one of the Council's pamphlets pointed out, "Its (the Council's) aim is to represent thoroughly established farmers' organizations in every province of the Dominion. 188 The Council and the associations would help but the farmers must organize themselves.

The year 1918 saw the formation of the United Farmers of New Brunswick with similar organizations being established two years later in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The only outside assistance came from individuals such as J.J. Morrison who represented an affiliate, the U.F.O., rather than the Council itself. Mr. Morrison had delivered an address and acted in an advisory capacity at the inaugural meetings of the U.F.N.B. and the U.F.N.S.. Another affiliate, the Grain Growers' Guide had assisted the former organization

(188) The New National Policy, (Winnipeg:1920), p.9.

by financing its official journal and providing the services
of an editor.¹⁸⁹ Both new organizations were admitted in
1920 to full membership in the Canadian Council. The same
year, the New Brunswick United Farmers Cooperative Company,
an enterprise similar in nature to the Ontario cooperative,
was included as well.

The United Farmers of Prince Edward Island was
formed in 1920 but concentrated its attention on local issues
such as transportation rather than on issues of concern to
organized farmers generally. Distance constituted a further
deterrent to the farmers of the 'potato province' seeking
membership in the national organization. The United Farmers
group in this province never did become associated with the
Canadian Council. The United Farmers of British Columbia had
requested membership soon after its formation in 1917 but the
agriculturalists of the Coast province were high tariff in
sentiment and the matter of their membership was temporarily
laid aside. As in the case of Prince Edward Island, distance
again acted as a stumbling block to unity. The stand of the
British Columbians on the question of the tariff could hardly
be tolerated in an organization held together by a common op-
position to the policy of Protection. The Council and the
United Farmers of British Columbia never became more closely
associated than the state described as 'friendly relations'.
In 1919 Les Fermers-Unis de Quebec had been formed but could
not agree with all the planks of the Farmers' Platform and
were not admitted to membership until 1923.

(189) The United Farmers Guide. First editor was G. Grassie Archibald.

However, even the existence of such groups, without their being included in the national organization, constituted a source of strength to the Council so long as divergency of views did not weaken the cause. The organized farmers in these provinces managed to keep their difference from becoming too well publicized. The Council itself had very little to do with the establishment of any of the new organizations. No financial assistance had been given. In effect the national body limited its assistance to the extending of paternal blessings on the efforts of the farmers in these provinces to organize. The Council expanded nationally through the efforts of the members of certain of the new organizations rather than through its own efforts.

In expanding nationally, the Council did not lose sight of its objectives: no groups who were not in complete accord with the planks of the platform were admitted. Applications for membership were received from Saskatchewan Cooperative Creameries Limited and Cooperative Fruit Growers of Ontario in 1919 and in the following year from the National Dairy Council. In dealing with these applications, the Council adopted its usual procedure when confronted with unpleasant or contentious matters, namely, tabling the matter and thus quietly laying it aside. The general objection of Council members to these applications arose from the belief that the inclusion of diversified interests would necessitate compromise at a moment when compromise would weaken the influence of the Council. There is the possibility as well that the representatives from Saskatchewan and Ontario on the national organization disliked the prospect of further repre-

sentation from that province as it would lessen the prestige of those already affiliated. So, certain members of the Council, namely, the President, R.W.E. Burnaby of Ontario and Hon. T.A. Crerar from the United Grain Growers Limited strongly opposed the application of the National Dairy Council "on the ground that it contained a strong representation of protected interests."¹⁹⁰ In order to expand nationally the Council of Agriculture was not prepared to associate itself with groups which could not fundamentally acquiesce on the main foundation of the national body, opposition to the tariff.

Yet the refusal of these applications, coupled with the continued domination of the national farmers' organization by the Western grain growers, justifies a belief that the Council was based not on professional or occupational interest but upon a commodity. The Council had always been a staple organization, based on grain growing. The rebuff of the dairymen and the Ontario fruit growers meant that it would remain essentially such a body. The inclusion of other agricultural interests, as exemplified in the present day Canadian Federation of Agriculture, would have necessitated compromise. But the Council of Agriculture would have been greatly strengthened for the trying days ahead and might well have survived the death blow administered when the grain growers of Western Canada could no longer agree among themselves. The Council chose to remain an organization based on a staple. The decision was an important one.

(190) Minutes of Council, July 13, 1920.

The process of reorganization, temporarily completed by 1918, was carried still further after the war. The Secretary was henceforth, by constitutional amendment, to hold office during pleasure rather than by annual election. The Council had been fortunate enough to secure, in N.P. Lambert, a capable and intelligent newspaperman, at a time when publicity was badly needed. To retain his services, efforts were made to make the position of Secretary more attractive through strengthening it and increasing the stipend.¹⁹¹ The high opinion held of Mr. Lambert by the Council is illustrated by their choosing him to represent the organization on the Canadian Trade Mission overseas. On his pointing out that a regular member should go, this was done but Lambert went as well.

At the annual meeting of 1919, J.B. Musselman of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association brought forward a plan to reorganize the Council on the basis of provincial councils composed of various provincial, educational and co-operative organizations. Membership in the national organization would be based on these provincial councils. Since nothing further is to be found in the records of the Council about this scheme, it must be presumed that Mr. Musselman was induced to allow it to be set aside.

An important detail with regard to the framework of the Council, not dealt with during the reorganization, was settled in 1919. It was decided that there were no individual

(191) Mr. Lambert was engaged at a salary of \$4,000. By 1921 he received \$7,000., an indication of the value placed upon his services by the Council.

members of Council but that membership was based on the affiliates. Each representative spoke for his organization and not for himself. This concept of membership was to have repercussions in later days. The organization was getting steadily away from the old basis where there had been little or no distinction between members and between the associations represented. But the Council had not yet reached the point where the commercial companies and the associations were sharply distinguishable. ¹⁹² The national body was becoming less a gathering of agrarian leaders and more a meeting of the representatives of powerful farm organizations.

Thus, the years immediately following the war show great advances in the organizational work of the Council of Agriculture. Farmwomen were now represented both through the Women's Section and at regular Council meetings. Two more provinces had been added to the roster of those already represented, with another farmers' cooperative enterprise joining as well. Indications were that the organized farmers of British Columbia, Quebec and Prince Edward Island might in time affiliate. Groups representing the protected interests had been kept from the Council table. The provincial associations and the farmers' companies were ¹⁹³ increasing in membership and wealth. Truly, the Council was expanding in breadth and in depth.

The main work of the Council in the period 1916 -

(192) This opinion is verified by Senator Lambert.

(193) According to Senator Lambert, the United Farmers of Ontario showed the largest increase in membership between 1918 and 1921 with the Saskatchewan association coming next.

1920 consisted of influencing legislation. Pressure tactics rather than direct political action were still used. The national farmers' organization exerted a remarkable influence on the legislation in this period of interest to the organized farmers, especially in view of the weakness of agrarian representation in Parliament.

The most spectacular achievement of the Council of Agriculture during these years arose in the marketing of grain. During the winter 1916-17, the British Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies communicated with Sir George Foster, Canadian Minister of Trade and Commerce, regarding the possibility of the outright purchase of the 1917 wheat surplus. The Minister in turn contacted the Canadian Council as the body most representative of the farmers of Canada. The British proposition consisted of an offer to purchase the surplus of the 1917 crop at \$1.30 a bushel, Number 1 Northern in store at Fort William, with proportionately lower prices for lower grades.

The Council rejected the offer as being too low to cover the costs of production and to ensure maximum production. Instead the recommendation was made that the government should guarantee a minimum price of \$1.50 and a maximum of \$1.90, or if a flat price be desired, \$1.70 per bushel, Number 1 Northern at Fort William. In support of its contention the national organization pointed out that the flat price was less than the average price for the preceding six months.

In taking this stand the Council of Agriculture took a courageous step. Opposition groups did not hesitate

to fling charges of war profiteering and lack of patriotism on the part of Canadian farmers. The organized farmers were quite ready to make necessary sacrifices but felt that in this case the sacrifice should be borne by the country as a whole. Farmers alone should not be asked to accept low prices for their product. ¹⁹⁴ The Grain Growers' Guide

expressed general agrarian opinion in its approbation of the stand taken by the national organization. "The responsibility which the government placed upon the Council was tremendous. The responsibility was not only to protect the grain growers of the West, but also to protect the British and allied nations in the life and death struggle in which they are now engaged...But that sacrifice should be made by all the people of Canada and not alone by the farmers who have done most of the sacrificing in the years gone by." ¹⁹⁵

Acting on the advice of the Council, the Canadian Government rejected the offer. A short time later, when the Board of Grain Supervisors was created to handle the marketing of the 1917 wheat crop, the Council sent a delegation to the new Board requesting that the price for the crop be fixed. When the price was eventually set at \$2.21 basis Number 1 Northern at Fort William, the Council received full credit from the farmers for its rejection of the British offer and its pressure on the Board of Grain Supervisors. It is estimated that the new price represented a gain to the Canadian farmers of \$217,000,000. ¹⁹⁶

This was the type of concrete result which the farmer could understand. The prestige and influence of the

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- (194) Note the parallel to the situation today with regard to the British Wheat Agreement.
(195) The Grain Growers' Guide, March 21, 1917, page 6.
(196) Ward, J.W., The Canadian Council of Agriculture, (Winnipeg: 1925), page 9.

Council and of its affiliates increased tremendously. Since farm income is a vital factor in the Canadian economy, the rest of Canada benefitted as well. Yet there were no wide-spread charges that the farmers lacked patriotism or were profiteers. The Council had presented the farmers' case quietly and effectively, relying on economics, not sentiment. The results mark one of the high water marks in the career of the national farmers' organization. A very definite contribution had been made to the welfare of the Western grain grower, long the mainstay of the Council.

Similarly, in 1918, the guaranteed price for wheat was a direct result of the representatives of the Council. Despite the stand of Ontario which expressed its opposition to price fixing by telegraph, since its representatives were not present at the meeting, the members agreed "That the Canadian Council of Agriculture make strong representations to the Government of Canada for a guaranteed price for the 1918 Canadian wheat crop." ¹⁹⁷ A minimum price of \$2.24½ a bushel, basis Number 1 Northern at Fort William was agreed upon, that being the minimum price then guaranteed to the American farmer by the United States Government. The voice of the organized farmer had spoken. The Board fixed the price at that level and credit again went to the Council of Agriculture, whose prestige rose still further.

At that same meeting and again a year later the national farmers' organization demanded the establishment of a Canadian Wheat Board. The United Grain Growers Limited

took the lead in this matter but apparently all the western affiliates agreed with the plan. ¹⁹⁸ The resolution stated

"that the Canadian Council of Agriculture is strongly opposed to the opening of the Canadian markets for unrestricted trading in wheat, and would reiterate its recommendations of August 19, last year that the Government of Canada create, without delay, a body similar to the U.S. Grain Corporation with like power and functions and with the financial accomodation adequate to its operations."³⁴ The representatives felt that only such a Board could deal with similar boards in importing countries and that speculative trading could not adequately perform its task in a world of trading restrictions. The example of the United States was pointed out. Canada's greatest competitor in the sale of wheat possessed a board like that being advocated.

Unfortunately the Canadian government at first ignored the Council's demand and in July 1919 restored the open market. Prices soared and the government quickly closed the market and created a Board just as the organized farmers had demanded. The new Board was patterned almost exactly on a plan drawn up by the United Grain Growers Limited and the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company, approved by the Council and submitted to the government. But the government's action in temporarily restoring the open market almost wrecked the whole project. Many of the farmers who had demanded a fixed price reversed their stand when prices soared on the Grain Exchange. Still others, who had opposed the idea of a Board, feeling that after the restrictions of the war they should be allowed to sell at

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- (198) Mr. H.L. Griffin, economist of the U.G.G. Limited, states in an unpublished manuscript, "A Farmers' Company Comes of Age", that his company took the lead.
- (199) Minutes of Council, July 9, 1919.

highest prices, protested even more vehemently.

The gathering storm died when the Wheat Board announced a price of \$2.63 for the 1919 crop. But meanwhile the Council, undoubtedly the body behind the plan for a fixed price, had been subjected to much criticism. One member of the Council, Mr. Maharg, had even gone so far as to state in the House of Commons that the Canadian Council had not been responsible for the appointment of the Wheat Board. ²⁰⁰ However, no doubt existed as to the actual stand taken by the Council. Later when the majority of farmers had come to agree with the idea of a fixed price, the Council would claim credit for its actions in securing the fixed price for the 1919 crop. Temporarily, much abuse and criticism fell to its lot mainly on the score that a commercial company had dominated the decision of the Council as a whole.

In its pressure tactics in the marketing of wheat, the Council had achieved success. The high prices paid for the wheat crops of 1917 and 1918 were direct results of the Council's representations to the government. The Council justly received most of the credit and, for a short time most of the blame, for the creation of the Canadian Wheat Board. For the first time in a matter of major importance, the Canadian Government had requested the advice of the Council of Agriculture, recognizing its right to speak for the Canadian farmer. In recognition of the importance of the farm movement in general and the Council in particular,

(200) Debates of the House of Commons, Vol. V, p. 4132.

three seats on the new Wheat Board, including that of Vice-
Chairman, was given to prominent members of the Council. ²⁰¹

But such concrete results had not been gained without cost. The harmony, which had hitherto prevailed at Council meetings, had been seriously threatened. The opposition of Ontario with regard to price fixing had been overridden in 1918. A prospect of real internal dissension arose in connection with the disposal of the wheat crop of 1919. In that year the provincial associations of Alberta and Manitoba announced their opposition to price fixing while the members of the S.G.G.A. went on record demanding that the government adopt just this course of action. Many of the organized farmers felt that they should now be allowed, after the restrictions of the period of the war, to take advantage of the high prices which would result from the restoration of the open market. Others, including such agrarian leaders as C. Rice-Jones and H.W. Wood of Alberta saw that the farmer could hardly demand protection for his product and at the same time ask for tariff revision. ²⁰²

Hence, in 1919 it appeared inevitable that the Council of Agriculture, comprised of these groups, would be rent with dissension. That the national organization went on record as favoring a guaranteed price is due largely to the efforts of the commercial companies, especially the U.G. G. Ltd. The Wheat Board plan, accepted by the Council and

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- (201) F.W. Riddell of the Saskatchewan company became Vice-Chairman, and H.W. Wood of Alberta association and Colonel J.S. Fraser of the Ontario organization were made members.
- (202) This difficulty still exists in Western Canada.

eventually by the Canadian Government, was formulated by the western companies. ²⁰³ The Grain Committee of the Council, which brought in the recommendation for a fixed price, consisted of the permanent secretary, one member from the associations, and three from the companies. The Saskatchewan association and the commercial organizations gained the day and the Council managed to retain an outward appearance of unity. But the seeds of discord had been sown. A line of demarcation between the interests of the associations and those of the companies began to appear. There is little doubt that the guaranteed price would have been condemned as a protective measure had the Council remained the child of the membership associations: the fortunate success of the Wheat Board in obtaining a high price for the 1919 wheat surplus temporarily healed any wounds. But the action of the United Grain Growers Limited ²⁰⁴ and the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company is strenuously supporting the plan for a Wheat Board, assisted by the Saskatchewan association, broke the harmony which had hitherto been a striking feature in the deliberations of the Council of Agriculture.

The attack on the tariff was continued in this period. While no downward revision was achieved, at least any upward revision, as advocated by the Canadian Manufacturers Association and its new ally the Canadian Reconstruction Association, was prevented. The Tariff Commission of 1920,

(203) The Grain Growers Record 1906-1943 (Winnipeg:1944), p. 25.

(204) It is interesting to note that while C. Rice-Jones, General Manager of the United Grain Growers Limited, opposed price fixing at the annual meeting of the U.F.A., by the time later in the year that the Council met, he had come to support the stand of his company.

while achieving little, constituted a moral victory for the organized farmers who believed that such enquiries could do nothing but aid their cause. The Council took the lead in the presentations to the Commission, coordinating the efforts of the various farm groups "in order that no unfair advantage should be taken by a Critical Board, over the Farmers Organizations." ²⁰⁵

While the budget of 1919 was of a mildly protectionist nature and resulted in the resignation of the leading representative in the cabinet of the organized farmers, Hon. T. A. Crerar, the determined opposition of the agrarians caused the government carefully to avoid any important tariff changes in the budgets of the succeeding two years. But for this determined opposition there is little doubt but that an upward revision would have occurred, especially in view of the prevailing high tariff sentiment in the United States.

The only setback suffered in the fight against the policy of protection could hardly be described as the fault of the Council of Agriculture. American grain growers had become high tariff in sentiment due largely to fear of their markets being flooded with Canadian wheat. In 1921 after much agrarian agitation the Fordney Tariff was passed imposing heavy duties on wheat imports to the United States - a blow to the Canadian farmer. The Canadian Council had made efforts to cooperate with its counterpart in the U.S.A., the American Farm Bureau Federation, to avoid just such an occurrence. Representatives of the Canadian organization were present at the annual

meeting of the Federation in 1920 and a similar courtesy was extended the same year to the Americans. For a short time, there existed a strong possibility of an international group being formed. Actually, the Council could do little to prevent the loss of the American wheat market except try to have Canada avoid retaliatory measures.

The Council met defeat in its activities on the question of freight rates. In 1917, the Crows Nest Pass Agreement which provided rate concessions to Western Canada on grain and other commodities, was abrogated by the government. The Council protested but could not do so too strongly as the demands of the war necessitated certain concessions to the railways. The abrogation did not immediately cause great hardship to the grain growers as wheat prices were at a high level. Later, when the question of the Agreement's restoration arose in the early twenties, the Council would make a determined and successful stand.

The national organization took action on various other matters. When, in 1918, the government began the wholesale cancellation of exemptions of farm workers, the Council informed the government that such a course could only lead to decreased farm production at a time when maximum production was vitally necessary. The demands of war caused the government to continue its course but the national organization had done its duty in expressing the views of its supporters.

The Council of Agriculture began to take a more friendly view of rival pressure groups. Such a view was only to be expected as the farmers' body neared maturity and realized more and more its true position. Conferences were

arranged on occasion with such groups as the C.M.A., the British Columbia Fruit Growers Association and the Canadian Bankers Association to discuss matters of common interest. In Western Canada the Council joined with the representatives of various business organizations to form the Joint Conference of Commerce and Agriculture, a permanent body meeting regularly during the last three years of the war. ²⁰⁶ "The object of the organization, expressed in broad terms, is to bring the Western farming and business interests together from time to time to discuss problems affecting their mutual welfare in order that in matters where an agreement of opinion is reached, joint action may be taken to further a solution." ²⁰⁷

Little resulted from such gatherings but the Council lost no prestige by them as the farm organization met with its powerful rivals on the basis of equality.

On occasion the Council showed no hesitancy in expressing strong views, sometimes in a none-too-popular fashion. The advice to the government to reject the British offer for the 1917 crop and the stand against the cancellation of exemptions for farmers' sons, were unpopular in less agricultural sections of Canada. Advocacy of direct taxation was hardly likely to ensure friendly relations with the industrialists. Similarly the proposal in July 1919 that Victory Bonds should be taxed since they were falling into the hands of monied interests, did not gain support in business circles. The Council in 1920 roundly condemned the Board of Commerce

(206) Reports of the Joint Committee of Commerce and Agriculture, March 7-9, 1916, December 1-2, 1916 and March 13-14, 1918.

(207) Foreword to the Report of the March, 1916 meeting.

for its failure to carry out its appointed task of relieving the high costs of living. Such actions, while perhaps not gaining widespread popularity or support, were certainly in accord with the views of the organized farmers. It was this group that the Council represented.

The years 1916-20 were good years for the Council. Great advances and achievements were made in its three fields of endeavor - education, organization and the influencing of legislation. The national organization was perhaps at the zenith of its career from the standpoint of size and influence. Over 150,000 farmers²⁰⁸ were included in the central organization, which was now generally recognized by the government, by rival groups and by the farmers themselves, as the only national body representing the organized farmers of Canada. The members of the organization saw ample justice for the statement made in a pamphlet issued in 1920; "The future of the Canadian Council of Agriculture is as broad and certain as that of the country itself."²⁰⁹

(208) Estimate from The New National Policy(Winnipeg:1920),
p. 9.

(209) Loc. cit.

Chapter VIII - The Great Mistake 1920 - 1923

"When the Council of Agriculture first formulated its famous platform, it was not anticipated that direct action would be necessary to have these reforms made effective but rather was it hoped that they would be in some measure accomplished by the pressure of public opinion brought to bear on those responsible for the government of Canada. This, however, was a vain hope."²¹⁰

For the Canadian Council to become embroiled in politics was a serious and, in the end, a disastrous mistake. The original purpose of the organization was largely overlooked. Disharmony and lack of co-operation came to keynote meetings. Conflicting personalities and views clashed at the Council table. The Council laid itself open to serious criticisms, not all of which were untrue or unjustified. Results simply were not worth the cost. Whether or not the farmers' movement should have engaged in direct political action is not the subject of this thesis; it is contended, however, that the Council of Agriculture should not have adopted such a course.²¹¹

Following the defeat of reciprocity in 1911, the farmers' movement moved slowly, perhaps unconsciously, in the direction of political action. The outbreak of war temporarily checked this tendency which was to continue with renewed vigor after the Armistice. At first, support of political action was weak and scattered. An occasional farmer would write to the Grain Growers' Guide advocating the creation of a third party. E.A. Partridge, a much respected leader, was

(210) Grain Growers' Guide, December 24, 1919, page 7.

(211) To the preparation of this chapter, my especial thanks are due Professor W.L. Morton, Senators T.A. Crerar and N.P. Lambert, Mr. D.G. McKenzie and Mr. H.L. Griffin.

an outspoken advocate of independent political action. But such men were regarded as radicals. Until 1919 practically all agrarian leaders stood firm against such a course believing that political action spelled disaster for farmers' organizations. ²¹² However, as time passed, the memory of the fate of the Patrons of Industry and other agrarian groups which had engaged in politics began to dim. As well, newer members of the movement knew little about the early efforts to organize. The farmers' movement continued to be characterized by a non-partisan unity in which political differences tended to be ignored or submerged.

The post-war era saw the culmination of a trend in Canadian political affairs which had been long coming; a void appeared in the traditional political structure. For years prior to 1920 neither of the two established parties had performed adequately its proper function, the function of at least outwardly uniting the Dominion by allying itself with the West. Neither the Liberal Party nor the Conservative Party was able to effect either such an alliance nor to submerge any protest movement by acceding to its demands. Many agrarians had come to believe that both parties were practically synonymous and that neither would give justice to the farmer. As the Grain Growers' Guide had editorialized in 1916: "The time has come when the Western representatives should represent Western people and Western views and cut off connection with the privilege-ridden, party-blind, office

(212) John Kennedy, of the United Grain Growers Limited, was a notable exception. See the Guide, March 4, 1914, page 9, for his advocacy of a third party.

hunting Grit and Tory parties that make their headquarters at Ottawa." ²¹³

The formation in 1917 of the Union Government helped to break down the rigid party lines in Canada. Voters now had the opportunity to support other than the traditional parties. The Liberal party, looked upon by farmers as the most likely vehicle of reform, was shattered by the conscription issue in 1917 and by the death two years later of Sir Wilfred Laurier, its leader for twenty-six years. The cancellation, in the final years of the war, of military exemptions for farmers' sons caused great resentment, especially among agrarians in Ontario.

There were additional factors causing the organized farmers to move in the direction of political action. In Saskatchewan and Alberta there appeared, from the United States in 1918, the Non-Partisan League, whose supporters regarded themselves as the political wing of the farmers' movement. The League applied great and, in the end, successful pressure on the United Farmers of Alberta to engage in political activity. The successes of the Non-Partisan League in American politics encouraged Canadian agrarian advocates of political action and shook the confidence of such leading opponents of this course as Roderick McKenzie. ²¹⁴

The entry of the Hon. T. A. Crerar, President of the United Grain Growers Limited and long a prominent leader in the Council of Agriculture, into the Union cabinet in

(213) Grain Growers' Guide, August 30, 1916, p. 5 (ed.).

(214) See Grain Growers' Guide, September 6, 1916, p. 18.

1917 gave recognition to the farmers' movement as a political entity. Crerar accepted his portfolio as the representative of the farmers of Canada rather than as a member of any party. Henry Wise Wood, another agrarian leader, came very close to being offered a seat in Canada's Privy Council.²¹⁵ The farmers' movement had been accorded recognition as an entity in the political scene. When Crerar resigned from the cabinet in 1919 on the tariff issue, the organized farmers had an obligation to continue as a political unit. Failure to do so might mean forfeiting the newly won prestige and importance.

Many of the important grievances which had first led the farmers to organize remained largely unreformed. For years the farm journals had been driving home this point. No substantial downward revision in the customs tariff had been effected and the 1919 budget of the Union Government held out small promise on this score. The suspension two years before of the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement meant considerably higher freight rates in Western Canada. Generally, the situation after the war led farmers to believe they had little hope of securing reforms by pursuing their usual methods. From 1910 on, the Grain Growers' Guide had lost few opportunities to point out this fact to its readers. "The only hope of the farmers of Canada is to realize that they have no more to expect from one political party than

(215) According to one story Crerar and Wood agreed that neither would accept a portfolio unless offers were made to both men. Crerar's acceptance has been given as one reason for the Wood-Crerar feud.

another."²¹⁶ Other journals like the Farmer's Sun, the Alberta Non-Partisan and similar farm papers, took a like stand. Even the Manitoba Free Press had given non-partisan support to the Union Government and no longer exhorted farmers to vote Liberal. With the farm journals constantly urging such a course and with a powerful daily newspaper like the Free Press not opposed, it is small wonder that the concept of independent political action should become more attractive in the minds of increasing numbers of the organized farmers.

The move toward political activity was not deliberate on the part of the majority of farmers. It was the culmination of certain forces let loose and of certain events. When the farmers began to advocate policies, as in the Farmers' Platform, rather than mere reforms, independent political action was not far off. As has been noted, the formation of the Union Government constituted the key to the whole matter. The immediate cause is to be found in the antagonism aroused by the government's action regarding military exemptions. The farmers of Ontario led the way in 1919 by overthrowing the provincial government. Manitoba and Alberta would, in time, follow this example with determined efforts being made in Saskatchewan as well.

The year 1919 saw the majority of representatives in the Council of Agriculture steadfastly resisting attempts to embroil it in politics. The rank and file of the provincial associations had shown at annual conventions, their eagerness for political action. But their representatives

(216) Grain Growers' Guide, August 10, 1910, page 6.

on the Council were not yet ready to commit the national organization to such a course. The situation was saved temporarily by the Council early that year recommending political action to the associations. "Now, therefore, be it resolved that this Council recommends to the provincial Associations that they take immediate and energetic action along such lines as in their judgement will be most effective in securing the election to parliament of members."²¹⁷

Such a resolution was in accord with the Council's belief that reform could be effected through the election of candidates pledged to the Farmers' Platform.

The remainder of the year saw opinion growing both within the national body and in the ranks of the organized farmers to the effect that the Council of Agriculture should coordinate these provincial efforts in preparation for the next Dominion elections. The Council moved with great caution. The movement of events steadily increased the pressure for action. The resignation of Crerar in June of 1919 from the Union cabinet on the tariff issue and the victory of the United Farmers of Ontario in the provincial elections of October converted many farmers to the new line of endeavor.

It was becoming steadily more apparent that the political movement, if left uncoordinated, might well not only fail but might ruin the farmers' movement generally. In Ontario and Alberta, appeals were being made on the basis of class consciousness. No great activity was progressing in Manitoba, while in Saskatchewan a provincial political

(217) See Minutes of Council, April 3, 1919.

committee had been created and \$50,000.00 collected. The relationship between the political movement on the provincial level and the low tariff group of Members of Parliament in the House of Commons needed definition. That some form of coordination was necessary became increasingly evident.

Accordingly, after much debate, the Council, in November, 1919, adopted a resolution instructing the executive to arrange for a National Political Convention to be held early the following year and to include members of the Council and political representatives from all provinces. The representatives of the association were chiefly instrumental in having the resolution adopted, with leading members of the commercial companies favoring such a course. Greer and Murray, from the United Grain Growers Limited, and Langley from the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company, were now convinced both of the efficacy of political action and of the fact that the great majority of Western farmers, their customers, would support the move. Chipman, editor of the Guide, had long favored political action by the organized farmers.

In arranging for the conference, the Council had accepted a decided measure of leadership in the political revolt. The national organization would have been well advised to arrange for the conference and then abdicate the leadership, perhaps arranging for a central political organization to fill the void. But such was not to be the case.

The Political Conference assembled in Winnipeg, January 6th, 1920. Present were thirty-three representat-

ives of Council affiliates and sixty-eight political delegates representing either constituencies or provincial political committees. ²¹⁸ Only Ontario and the three prairie provinces were represented. Elsewhere the organized farmers, in their recently established associations, showed much less interest in political affairs or, as in the case of the Maritimes, politics on the provincial level only. But, of the provinces represented, all the leading figures in the farmers' movement and the leading advocates of political action by the farmers were present.

The results of the conference were a victory of sorts for the more cautious spirits in the Council. Wood of Alberta and Morrison of Ontario were opposed to the Council acting as a coordinating agency for political activity. The former believed disaster would be the lot of farmers' organizations in politics while the latter wanted his province to work out its own problems, now that political power had been achieved. Crerar was the main advocate of participation of the Council in politics. The conference, "after considerable discussion", ²¹⁹ decided to leave political activity on a provincial basis. The Council's only formal connection was to be of a nature which could be explained in terms of

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- (218) Representation went as follows:
Ontario- 6 delegates from affiliates, 4 political delegates.
Manitoba- 12 " " " , 9 delegates from the provincial political committee, 24 from constituencies.
Saskatchewan- 8 delegates from affiliates, 17 from constituencies.
Alberta - 7 delegates from affiliates, 6 from the provincial political committee, 8 from constituencies.
See Minutes of Political Conference, January 6, 1920.
- (219) Loc. cit.

its original purpose. The national body's part was limited to work of an educational nature in general election campaigns with financial assistance being given by the associations.

Outwardly, the Council of Agriculture was still not in politics, yet the arrangements would inevitably lead to that body becoming embroiled. No independent third party had been formed and the conference had gone on record as being against the creation of a national political organization at the present time. But the child of the Council, the Farmers' Platform, had been named the New National Policy and accepted as the basis for political action in the provinces. ²²⁰ No real leadership on the federal level had been given to the political revolt and no arrangements made for such leadership. Any work in an election campaign would be generally regarded as meaning that the national farmers' organization was engaging in politics. Generally, the situation left by the Conference was unsatisfactory to both sides: further movement one way or the other on the part of the Council was inevitable.

The representatives on the Council who believed in political action continued their efforts to have that body coordinate the activity then progressing in Ontario and the

(220) Senator N. P. Lambert, who drew up the revision, states that political action was not the main purpose behind the platform. He wrote it after seeing copies of a speechmade at Galt, Hamilton, Toronto and elsewhere in Ontario by Sir John Willison, President of the Canadian Industrial Reconstruction League. In these speeches Sir John advocated a return to the National Policy and increased tariffs. The first two planks, on the British Commonwealth and the League, were inserted on the advice of Professor O.D. Skelton, according to the Senator.

prairie provinces. At first the Council split into two sections. Wood from Alberta and Morrison from Ontario opposed such a policy and were supported by the newly admitted members from the United Farmers of New Brunswick. In favor of the Council getting into politics were the associations of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Support also came, probably in the main because of Crerar, from the United Grain Growers Limited, the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company and the Grain Growers' Guide. Internal dissension became rife, but to preserve the appearance of outward unity, no further action was taken until later in the year.

As the Dominion elections grew nearer, the need for coordination became increasingly apparent. If the Council of Agriculture continued to resist pressure to act as the medium, then a central political organization might be created which would overshadow the existing national body and cause its decline. In October of 1920, the views of the Manitoba and Saskatchewan exponents of political action gained the day. The Maritimes were not represented. The Ontario and Alberta delegates were faced with the necessity for some sort of coordinating agency. A resolution was passed favoring the Council "establishing within itself a coordinating agency for the purpose of carrying on more intelligently the political activities which had been undertaken by the different provincial interests now finding expression in the Council."²²¹ The die had been cast but only after great discussion and much caution.

(221) See Minutes of Council, October 21, 1920.

At the final meeting for the year, in December, an interprovincial coordinating agency was established as part of the Council. The agency would look after much of the detail in an election campaign and would provide liaison between the constituencies, the provincial committees and the low tariff group in the House of Commons. The new body was directed to "so marshall the progressive forces of every constituency as to encourage the utmost cooperation rather than conflict between those who desire to uproot the present entrenched system of special privilege in Canada." ²²² The cry for justice and equal rights for all still constituted the basis of the farmers' movement. Most of the actual work would be done through the office of the Secretary of the Council of Agriculture whose staff would be increased. Representation on the coordinating agency was to be from the provincial political committees. Funds for this work would be provided by the Council.

By this action, the Canadian Council very definitely took political action. Leadership was given to the political revolt. Formal endorsement of the low tariff group of M.P.'s and of Mr. Crerar as leader marked the launching of the National Progressive Party. The national organization had decided to gain its ends mainly through political activity rather than by pressure tactics. The new course had been embarked upon without the enthusiastic agreement of all affiliates. The difficulties of such a situation are at once apparent.

(222) See Minutes of Council, December 8, 1920.

The Political Coordinating Committee, as the agency was called, set about feverishly preparing for the impending general elections. The travelling expenses of the Progressive leader were taken care of and much campaign work done. Despite internal dissension in the political movement and outside handicaps such as a Royal Commission to investigate the grain trade, a remarkable victory was gained in the federal elections of 1921. Already a split was appearing in the ranks of the Progressives between those who believed in group government and keeping the movement restricted to farmers and those who believed in 'broadening out' to include all of progressive mind. The Hyndman Commission proceeded, during the height of the campaign, to commence investigations into alleged malpractices at the terminal elevators. The investigation, before it was finally stopped, caused embarrassment to the United Grain Growers Limited and handicapped the leader of the Progressives, Mr. Crerar, who was also President of the Company, in his election campaign.

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Nevertheless, the new party emerged from the elections with the second largest group in the House of Commons. A total of sixty-five members pledged to the New National Policy had been returned with the Progressives sweeping the West. The Political Coordinating Committee had worked hard and well in the campaign. The Council of Agriculture had provided leadership, prestige and, to some extent, funds for

(223) The Commission never completed its investigation as the United Grain Growers Ltd. took out a court injunction against its continuance and the investigation was finally dropped.

the political revolt. For the moment, it appeared that the advocates of political action had been right. The dawn of a new era in Canada seemed imminent and, if so, the Council of Agriculture would be in the forefront.

The success was but temporary and the cost to the national organization heavy. Literally speaking, the cost in money had been too great for the Council. For 1920, in a budget of \$18,000.00, payments exceeded receipts by over \$1200.00.²²⁴ The commercial companies contributed sixteen times as much as all the associations with voluntary subscriptions being negligible. Council members were faced at the same time with the disagreeable realization that the budget, as proposed for 1921, called for expenditures of \$20,000.00. The increased ordinary expenditures of the organization required two-thirds of this sum, while the rest was slated for political activities. The Canadian Council had come a long way from its early years when \$400.00 constituted the annual budget.

Violent controversy developed at a meeting in February of 1921 over the means to be used to raise the needed funds. A serious depression had begun late the previous year and the commercial companies could not see their way clear to increasing their already large grants. The associations, suffering from loss of membership and revenue in the depression, would have to cover the deficit either by diverting part of their own grants, received from the companies,

(224) See financial statement for the year ending December 31, 1920.

to the national organization or by increasing their own contributions to some such basis as ten cents per member.

Neither suggestion was accepted as the representatives of the associations did not care to commit themselves to a course likely to be unpopular with the rank and file. In the end, the only other possibility was taken, namely slashing expenditures. Political activity involving funds was to be left to the provincial associations; any work done by the Council would be taken care of by personal subscriptions. This decision was reached at the very moment when much work had to be done in view of the impending elections. The Council had overstrained its finances and could not fully undertake what it had assumed. The breaking point in the financial structure had been reached. The controversy which resulted was a factor causing the disharmony in the Council which marks the period. As the expenses of the organization increased, so did its dependence on the commercial companies. This situation would in time arouse criticism.

In its engrossment with politics and with the marketing question, the Council tended to overlook the vital matter of national expansion. The refusal to admit other agricultural groups, dealt with in the last chapter, meant that the national organization remained a 'staple' organization restricted mainly to those interested in the western grain trade. True, the United Farmers organizations in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had been admitted to membership. Their representatives attended only infrequently because of the great amount of travelling involved and because the Maritime farmers exhibited little interest in political action

on a national level. Not until 1923 were the United Farmers of Quebec admitted and only after much discussion. French-Canadian farmers could not agree with the provisions of the Farmers' Platform relating to Prohibition and to Public Ownership. Political action necessitated a certain exclusiveness on the part of the Council since the inclusion of groups of too widely separated interests would necessitate compromise. All members of the new party were not willing to make compromises, feeling that the farmers would do well to take a strong stand. In time, this exclusiveness would be used to the detriment of the Council with questions being raised as to its right to speak for the farmers of Canada.

The entry into politics signaled a neglect of the former role of pressure group. Friendly relations and even co-operation with rival groups are no longer sought. Before, the Council had co-operated with such groups as the Dominion Millers Association, in 1916, and western business interests in the Joint Conferences, 1916-1918. To some extent, friendly relations were maintained with the Trades and Labor Council, the C.M.A. and the Bankers' Association. This aspect of the functions of a pressure group was now ignored. Co-operation was brusquely refused with the Western Canada Colonization Association in getting idle land into production and with the National Waterways Association regarding the St. Lawrence Seaway. In 1921 co-operation with

(225) No provincial political committees were formed in either province and the associations left political action to the locals.

the Canadian Labor Party, a radical political organization, was disapproved.

Even international co-operation was largely overlooked during the period of political activity. After the fraternal visits of 1920, the American Farm Bureau Federation showed interest in the establishment of an international organization. Such a body would have proved beneficial to Canada since it might have been possible, through it, to lessen the prevailing high tariff sentiment among American farmers. Probably because an international organization would further strain the finances, already badly strained due to political activity, the Council turned down the over-²²⁶tures of the Federation. In the long run, the Council of Agriculture would have been well advised to maintain friendly relations and co-operation with other groups and rivals, a course which would most likely have been pursued but for the engrossment in politics.

When the Council became connected with the political activities of the farmers, it became, as a result, the scene of the quarrel as to the form the movement was destined to take. One faction, led by Crerar, Chipman and Drury and supported by the Progressives of Manitoba and Saskatchewan wanted to broaden out the Progressive Movement to include labor and the urban people, in fact to include all people interested in reform. On the other side stood those who wanted to restrict the movement to farmers, to base it on economic interest. Chief advocate of this course was Henry

(226) See Minutes of Council, August 24, 1920.

Wise Wood of the United Farmers of Alberta, who believed in group government. Each element in the economy would be represented in parliament as a group, held together by economic interest. J. J. Morrison and the United Farmers of Alberta agreed with Wood, at least to the extent of being opposed to the 'broadening out' policy. This fundamental divergence of view finally acted as a cause of the downfall of the Progressive Movement.

If the Council of Agriculture had refrained from political activity it would not have become the scene of bitter controversy on this question. As it was, from 1920 on, the deliberations of the national organization were embittered by the clash. The disharmony caused by this struggle and by the discord over the pool question, would finally lead to the downfall of the Council of Agriculture.

After the 1921 general election, the Council failed signally to give leadership to the Progressive Movement. The Progressive Party in the House of Commons was pursuing an aimless course. Fundamental to the whole farmers' movement was the failure to realize the workings of the Canadian political system. A proper realization of the system would have made possible the avoidance of such mistakes as the failure to become the Official Opposition and the failure to realize the importance of the rule of caucus. The Council probably could have done very little to rectify this fundamental misconception of the political system. But if the national organization had fully accepted its role of leadership, some way might have been found out of the difficulties besetting the Progressive Party. Or, the Council might have stepped

aside and permitted a national political organization to be created which could have made the attempt.

As it was, the Council in 1923 abandoned the cause of political activity. After the general elections two years before, attention had turned to politics on the provincial level. In this field the Council played very little part, quite naturally. On the national level the Progressive Party was already rent with dissension and floundering badly. The main reason for the new policy on the part of the Council lay in the changed attitude of the commercial companies.

The United Farmers' Cooperative Company Limited of Ontario, being closely connected with the U.F.O., had supported the stand against the national organization entering politics. Like the Ontario and Alberta associations, the Ontario co-operative had consented with misgivings. The United Grain Growers Limited and Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company had favored the new course chiefly because of the influence of the Honorable T.A. Crerar. But the companies, for business reasons, had had a change of heart. The conclusion had been reached that the Progressive Movement was not destined to have the lasting support of the majority of farmers. If this was true, the companies would be most unwise to support it to the detriment of the established parties. The commercialists had no wish to follow the politicians in the farmers' movement into possible oblivion.

As well, excuse could not be made for aiding one political party and not another. The adherents of the party not supported would be alienated. It was becoming more and more apparent that many of the adherents were likely to be

customers of the companies. Langley, from Saskatchewan, expressed the view at the Council meeting in March, 1923 at which the decision to abandon politics was taken. "The

Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company was engaged in buying, selling and handling grain on behalf of its patrons, shareholders and non-shareholders, some of whom were Tories, some Liberals and some Progressives and it was undesirable that the Company should support an institution which was engaged in carrying on election campaigns for the benefit of any political party." 227

Early in 1923 the companies had decided that the Council must henceforth abstain from politics. The Progressive Party did not seem likely to continue to hold the allegiance of the majority of farmers, customers of the companies. If so it would be poor business for the companies to support the Council which in turn supported the party. The gauntlet was down. The commercial companies were informing the Council that it must either get out of politics or the companies would get out of the Council. The Secretary of the Council in a letter one year later substantiated that the situation was precisely this. "It is held that these companies have no right to use their funds, which belong to the shareholders who are of all political faiths to support any political party, and in as much as the Council derives a large part of its funds from the commercial companies, the point was eventually reached where it became necessary for the Council either to reorganize without the commercial companies or cease to take part in election politics. This, I think, is the real reason for the resolution adopted by the Council in March 1923." 228

The companies then had been forced to take a determined stand in the matter. If the Council had not engaged in politics this stand would never have been taken. In 1922

(227) See Minutes of Council, March 26, 1923.

(228) Letter from J.W. Ward, Secretary of the Council to Wm. Hirth, Editor of the Missouri Farmer, Columbia, Mo., dated June 21, 1924.

and 1923 a considerable amount of criticism had been directed the Council chiefly on the question of the marketing of grain. The Winnipeg Evening Tribune and the Farmers' Advocate had made searching criticisms of the national farmers' organization. ²²⁹ Its right to speak for the farmers of Canada was questioned and its method of holding its meetings in camera criticized. The Advocate, never friendly to the Council, accused it of being dominated by the United Grain Growers Limited and of, in turn, dominating the associations. The criticisms will be dealt with later. Suffice at present to say that the evidence illustrates the justice of the charge of commercial domination. It is unlikely in this case that the United Grain Growers Limited were in the lead since the company was headed by Mr. Crerar. But the companies had been forced by events to the conclusion that the Council must leave political arena. That it did so is undoubtedly ^{ed} due in large part to the great influence wielded by the companies.

Yet the withdrawal from politics was not due to the commercial companies alone. The Ontario association had largely lost interest in political action on the national level. The Drury government was fighting for its life, shaken with administrative scandal. The attention of the U.F.O. naturally centered on this together with the continued quarrel between Drury and Morrison. Hence at the time the matter of political activity came to a head in the Council, the organized farmers of Ontario were preoccupied

(229) See Farmers' Advocate February 25, 1922 page 121(ed)
Winnipeg Evening Tribune Jan. 4, 1923, page 4 (ed).

with their own problems and not overly concerned with national affairs.

Henry Wise Wood and his Alberta group had never been too enthusiastic about the Council entering politics. Since the Progressive Movement refused to be converted to the group representation idea, the Albertans preferred to go their own way in their own province. From 1921 on Wood and his supporters had gradually come to assume a position of domination in the deliberations of the Council. In 1922 Wood had been elected to the presidency of the national organization and re-elected the following year. Consequently there stood at the helm a man never too enthusiastic with the Progressive Movement, a man who had said in February of 1922, "I was at great pains to reason out the cause of the instability of the farmers' organizations..One fact stood out clear; none of them had survived taking of political action."²³⁰

The members of the Alberta association, not wishing any outside interference from those advocating the broadening out policy, were not averse to the abolition of the Council's Political Coordinating Committee. The U.F.A., organ of the association informed its readers that "the Council's decision to abandon political activity was the correction of a mistake."²³¹

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The unrepresented provinces had not supported

(230) Maclean's Magazine, Feb. 1, 1922, Page 42.

(231) U. F. A., May 15, 1923 as quoted in P. F. Sharp. The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada. (University of Minnesota Press, 1948) p.159.

(232) Both the U.F.N.S. and U.F.N.B. had joined the Council in 1920 but soon ceased to attend. Quebec was not admitted to membership until 1923.

with enthusiasm the political activities of the farmers' movement. In Quebec and in the Maritimes political interest on the part of the farmers was limited, even on the provincial level. At the Council meeting in March, 1923, the representatives of the United Farmers organizations in Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the former attending as guests, stated that their groups wished to join the Council of Agriculture but believed that the national organization should not be a political association. ²³³

The Manitoba and Saskatchewan associations, then, originally the most fervent advocates of political action by the Council, were faced with the bald fact of necessity. An important factor influencing them, and the other affiliates as well, to favor a change of policy may have been the increasing amount of criticism being heaped upon the Council. Due to political activity and to the controversy over marketing methods, the national organization had been severely criticized on more than one occasion, not so much on the score of its decisions but because of its methods. The Farmers Advocate, in an editorial of February 1922 had condemned the Council as being not sufficiently representative, as being dominated by the United Grain Growers Limited, for holding its meetings in camera and for dominating the associations. In the final month of the same year, the Winnipeg Evening Tribune criticized the organization for its exclusiveness and for failing to hold its meetings in public. ²³⁴

In the former journal, readers were informed that: "In point

(233) See Minutes of Council, March 28, 1923.

(234) Winnipeg Evening Tribune, December 9, 1922 page 4 (ed).

of fact, the Canadian Council of Agriculture is the most undemocratic organization that has ever existed in the Dominion." ²³⁵ The criticism was replied to in the Guide ²³⁶ and appears to have had small effect at the time. But the decision to take the Council out of politics must have been, in part, an attempt to head off such criticism.

The decision may have been designed as well to quell internal dissension. A meeting of the Council in February of 1922 had been the scene of controversy over the work and the structure of the Council, controversy due in part at least to the political activity question. Evidently ²³⁷ the United Farmers of Manitoba were not satisfied with the political leadership being given by the Council. One of their delegates proposed an entire reorganization of the farmers' movement with the centralized association to be the United Farmers of Canada. This proposal, which meant suicide for the Council, was quietly laid aside.

At the same meeting, part of the dissatisfaction then prevalent in the Saskatchewan Association leaked over into the national organization. At a recent convention, a successful revolt against the existing executive had occurred based on a belief that the same set of officials were controlling the association, the cooperative elevator company and the Saskatchewan delegation to the Canadian Council of Agriculture, through interlocking directorates. When one of the

(235) Farmers' Advocate, Feb. 25, 1922, page 121 (ed).

(236) Grain Growers' Guide, March 8, 1922, page 5.

(237) The Manitoba Grain Growers Association became the United Farmers of Manitoba in January, 1920.

rebels, George Edwards, criticized the Council for not admitting new commercial companies, Langley of the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company brusquely informed him "that his commercial company would be glad to sever connection with the Council if it was thought that the Council could continue its existence without the support received from the Comapnies."²³⁸ Already a line of demarcation was developing between the companies and the associations. At this early date the companies had been forced to rise openly to the threat of withdrawal of financial support.

Considerable effort to reform was made by the Council in order to quell internal dissension and external criticism. An Eastern Section was proposed early in 1922 to include the United Farmers of Ontario and other eastern farm organizations which might care to join.²³⁹ The new group would have its own offices and its own finances but matters involving federal policy would be decided by both sections meeting together. The idea evidently did not meet with the approval of Eastern farmers and instead special financial arrangements were made to enable the United Farmers of Quebec and the Maritime United Farmers, (the successor to the U.F.N.B. and U.F.N.S.) to join. To overcome the criticism that it was dominating the associations, the Council began more and more frequently to refer matters to the associations before a decision was made by the national

(238) See Minutes of Council, Febuary 27, 1922. It will be noted that the companies in membership did not offer to agree to other companies being admitted.

(239) See Minutes of Council, Feb.27, 1922.

body. Provision was also made to allow affiliates to meet together to deal with matters of regional interest. ²⁴⁰ An unsuccessful attempt was made in March 1923 by representatives of the United Grain Growers Limited and the United Farmers of Manitoba to have the Council governed by majority consent rather than by the unanimity rule. The decision to abstain from political activity constituted a further effort to lessen the disharmony within the Council and the criticism without.

The national organization did not altogether abandon its ordinary work during the period of political activity from 1920-23. The Council continued to discuss matters of interest to farmers such as freight rates, agricultural credit and banking, express and lake shipping rates: and of more importance, grain marketing. The latter question is discussed in the next chapter. On most of these matters, emphasis turned to action through politics rather than through pressure tactics - but on occasion the two methods were used in conjunction.

An outstanding contribution of the Council in this period, gained through a combination of both lines of attack, was made in the struggle over the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement. The Agreement, beneficial to the grain grower in favorable freight rates on grain, flour and certain other commodities, had been suspended in 1917 owing to the high operating costs of the Canadian Pacific Railway. When the suspension was about to end in 1922, a struggle developed between the rail-

(240) See Minutes of Council, March 29, 1923.

ways desiring to abrogate the agreement entirely and the Western provinces; demanding its restoration. The Council sent a strong delegation to Ottawa to bring pressure to bear. When the pressure tactics failed, the Progressives in the House of Commons made a determined stand and secured the extension of the Agreement, for one year, on grain and flour. Later the Council continued the battle, with eventual success. Meanwhile, the organized farmers, through the Council and the Progressive Party, had scored a resounding victory.

The results of the Progressive Movement must not be neglected in any overall assessment of the effects of political activity on the part of the Council of Agriculture. The movement was an expression of agrarian resentment against the subordinate status of the West. As such, it succeeded, in part at least. Henceforth the needs and problems of the prairies received greater consideration in Eastern Canada. Much of the favorable legislation enacted during 'The Great Depression' and after to assist the farmer was due to the realization that Western Canada could forcefully assert its right.

The demands of the Progressives had their effects in legislation of the period. The extension of the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement was a definite contribution to the economic welfare of the West. The old enemies, trusts and combines, suffered a lasting reverse through the strengthening in 1923 of the Combines Investigation Act, a move strongly supported by the Progressives. On other legislation, less success was achieved. The efforts to have bank charters granted for one year only and to have the maximum rate of interest fixed at 7% per annum, met with failure. In pressing for the comple-

tion of the Hudson Bay Railway and for support to the Canadian National Railways, the efforts of the Progressives served only to keep these issues before the country. On the provincial level, the tone of political endeavor was undoubtedly raised and many of the malpractices of politics removed, leaving behind a puritanical attitude and conviction which still exists. As well, the way was paved for later political revolt, of which the Progressive Movement was the harbinger. The movement has its definite place at a phase in the development of the Dominion.

Political activity was nevertheless a mistake on the part of the Council of Agriculture. The prestige of the national organization was badly shaken. The results of the Council entering politics by no means equalled the eventual cost.

Chapter IX - The Council and the Pools

Perhaps the most important work the Canadian Council of Agriculture did was carried out in connection with the founding of the wheat pools of Western Canada. Yet, ironically, the existence of the pools led in time to the decline of the national farmers organization.

In the years following the World War, attention of grain growers turned to political activity and to problems of marketing. Naturally the Council of Agriculture was deeply involved in both. As has been indicated, the national body achieved small good and much criticism through its participation in politics. Even more lethal blows were dealt the Council through its actions on the question of marketing methods.

Early in 1920 controversy raged over the continuation of the Wheat Board which had compulsorily marketed the wheat crops of 1917 to 1919 inclusive. The grain trade itself, preferring the open market, desired its abrogation. Western farmers wanted the Board continued, at least for the crop of 1920, ostensibly because the principal markets for Canadian wheat were still controlled by import boards. Actually, there existed a long standing distrust of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, 'the House with Closed Shutters' and a deep rooted desire for stabilized wheat prices. The grain grower was dissatisfied with a system under which a wagon load might fetch twenty dollars less in the afternoon than in the morning.

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(241) Boyd, H.- New Breaking (Toronto, 1938), page 117-118.

The Council of Agriculture led the way in demanding the continuation of the Canadian Wheat Board. A resolution to this effect was passed at a Council meeting in July, 1920. ²⁴²

But the Canadian Government preferred to follow the example of the United States government which had refused to continue the Grain Corporation. In July, the Honorable George Foster, Minister of Trade and Commerce announced that the government did not intend to take advantage of the recently passed enabling act. ²⁴³

"The present Wheat Board will not function in so far as the crop of 1920 is concerned... the marketing of this crop will revert to the normal methods of pre-war times." ²⁴⁴

The Council had suffered a reverse. At a meeting in October the demand was renewed but in addition a farsighted step was taken. The farmers' movement was based on the principle of cooperation. To this time, the principle had never been widely applied in the West. The United Grain Growers Limited had been suspended in its early years from membership in the Winnipeg Grain Exchange because of a determination to pay patronage dividends. Yet when cooperative elevator companies were established in Alberta and Saskatchewan there was no provision made for the payment of such dividends. The post-war period in the United States saw the rapid expansion and growth of the American farm associations sponsoring voluntary cooperative marketing. As compared to the compulsory Wheat Board system, a producer could voluntarily join a cooperative. If he did so, he signed a contract

(242) Minutes of Council, July 2, 1920.

(243) Statutes of Canada, 10-11 Geo. V, c. 40, 1920.

(244) Canadian Annual Review, 1920, page 105.

to deliver his produce to the association which undertook to market the produce at the most advantageous time and return to each member the profits in proportion to the amount of produce contributed. Cooperative marketing schemes were widely adopted by raisin and citrus fruit growers of California, where Aaron Sapiro, the firebrand orator who spread the pool gospel in Western Canada, first gained experience in pool marketing.

At the October meeting, the Council, while reiterating its demand for a Wheat Board, appointed a committee to enquire into the feasibility of the pool idea. At its previous meetings in July, the national farmers' organization had gone on record as stating "that under normal world conditions a system of voluntary cooperative marketing under the control of the participating producers and involving a pooling of returns would be the most desirable method of marketing wheat and other produce."²⁴⁵ Since the possibility of compulsory marketing was becoming steadily more remote, the Council was preparing to give leadership to the farmers' movement in voluntary cooperative marketing. The committee consisted of H. W. Wood, President of the United Farmers of Alberta, J.R. Murray, of the United Grain Growers Limited, and F.W. Riddell, of the Saskatchewan company and formerly with the Canadian Wheat Board. The investigation made by this committee has been described as "important as the first move ever made in the direction of cooperative pooling."²⁴⁶

(245) Minutes of Council, July 13, 1920.

(246) Boyd, H.- op cit., page 99.

The committee reported at the December meeting of the Council its conclusion that a cooperative wheat pool was practicable. A draft plan, which came to be known as the Murray plan, was presented. Members, joining voluntarily, would sign a five year contract guaranteeing delivery of all their wheat. It was considered necessary that at least 60% of the total wheat acreage be under contract before the pool commenced operations. Elevator facilities and one-half the initial capital would be provided by the United Grain Growers Limited and the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company.

Here was the plan which years later was, in essence, put into operation by the provincial wheat pools. Compulsory marketing was becoming steadily more unlikely. The Meighen government, with a general election in the offing, was not prepared to alienate the business interests in the grain and milling trade and the consumer interests in Eastern Canada, through reestablishing a government board to handle the marketing of wheat. In the West, the clamor for some sort of marketing agency grew. Many farmers felt that they would receive more for their wheat if the Canadian Wheat Board were reestablished. The President of the Canadian Council informed a meeting of a Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association local that the price of wheat would undoubtedly be at least \$2.50 if the Board were in operation. ²⁴⁷ This belief was encouraged as Winnipeg wheat prices in September 1920 began to fall. If the government would not reestablish compulsory marketing, then grain growers must turn to cooperative marketing. By its acceptance

(247) Speech to the Wynyard local, reported in the Regina Leader, Oct. 24, 1920.

of the Murray plan, the Council of Agriculture was apparently in the forefront of the movement for pool marketing.

But through a series of events and by its own actions, the Council not only lost the leadership in the new movement but eventually found itself in the position of being criticized for attempting to prevent the farmers from obtaining pool marketing. The Council meeting of December 1920 accepted the Murray plan but considered it of sufficient importance to be referred to the associations. Meanwhile a Wheat Markets Committee was created, consisting of the representatives of the western affiliates, to make arrangements for the pooling of the 1921 crop.

But the delay caused by referring the matter to the associations proved disastrous. Wheat prices on the Grain Exchange continued to fall, dropping from \$2.78 in September 1920 to \$1.76 in April, 1921, within seven months a fall of over one dollar. Farmers grew more alarmed and more confused. Some favored the contract pool scheme while others, encouraged by the remarkable success of the Progressive Party in the elections of 1921, believed that the Wheat Board could be re-established.

Grain growers were further confused by indecision on the part of their leaders. J.B. Musselman of the Saskatchewan Association drew attention away from the Council's plan by proposing the establishment of a voluntary provincial pool with the backing of the Saskatchewan government. He condemned the Murray plan as "fraught with so many herculean difficult-

ies and perils." ²⁴⁸ Provincial pools must be created to prepare the way for the more grandiose scheme suggested by the Council. In Alberta, Henry Wise Wood, viewing the pool idea from a long run point of view, urged caution at a time when farmers wanted action. Mr. Rice-Jones, General Manager of the United Grain Growers Limited, agreed with the project of provincial pools but seemed concerned with the necessity of preserving the existing farmers' companies. E.A. Partridge, the aged leader from Sintaluta, took Premier Meighen to task during the election campaign of 1921 for his failure to give the farmers a Wheat Board, only to incur the ire of Mr. Musselman who declared Mr. Partridge's actions to be "an attempt to create prejudice against the farmers' companies and the elected leaders of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association and the Canadian Council of Agriculture." ²⁴⁹ With such a failure of leadership, it is small wonder that confusion spread among the rank and file of the farmers' movement.

Other events served to complicate the situation. The activities of the Royal Commission, headed by Judge Hyndman and appointed to enquire into the administration of the Canada Grain Act, caused grave concern to the United Grain Growers Limited and to farmers generally. The company was charged with malpractices in the handling of grain and was finally forced to take out an injunction restraining the Commission. The challenge to the validity of the Grain Act, resulting from the appointment of the Commission, worried many

(248) Grain Growers' Guide, June 1, 1920, page 20.

(249) Yates, S.W., The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool (Victoria:1947) page 37.

farmers. The activities of the Commission caused grain growers to wonder whether the time was opportune for the creation of a wheat pool.

In March 1921, the Martin government in Saskatchewan appointed James Stewart and F.W. Riddell, both formerly with the Canadian Wheat Board, to advise the government as to the practicality of the pool method of marketing wheat. Their report recommended the reestablishment of a Board or failing that, a voluntary pool omitting any legal contract. This view, propounded by two head executives of the governmental compulsory marketing agency, caused more confusion in the West where controversy raged on such questions as the Wheat Board or a voluntary pool and a contract or a non-contract scheme.

For the Council, only compromise was possible. At a meeting in December, 1921 the pool project was abandoned for the time being on the grounds that 60% of the wheat acreage could not be signed for a five year period and that, regardless, the contracts were not enforceable. ²⁵⁰ Instead of adopting the alternative suggested by the Saskatchewan association, namely continuing the pressure for a Wheat Board, the Council again abdicated leadership temporarily by referring the question to the associations despite the fact that the representatives of the associations sat at the Council board. In earlier days, the national organization would have decided the matter and proceeded with action. Such a course was no longer wise in view of the increasing disunity becoming apparent in the

(250) Yates, S.W., op. cit., errs, p. 31, when he states that as early as May, 1921, the Council abandoned the Murray plan.

farmers' movement on such questions as political activity and marketing methods. Meanwhile the course of vacillation was losing valuable time and gaining no respect from the rank and file of the grain growers.

Finally at the annual meeting in February, 1922, the Council took a definite stand in favor of the reestablishment of the Wheat Board. As the price of wheat continued to fall from \$1.80 in August, 1921 to \$1.11 in November, agrarian opinion had mounted in favor of the known system of government marketing as against the untried pool system. A resolution was adopted: "That this Council favors the reinstatement of the Canada Wheat Board for the handling of the 1922 wheat crop and until such time as world conditions again became normal." ²⁵¹ From one point of view, the Council was quite correctly voicing the opinion of the associations. Yet the commercial affiliates from the West were known to be lukewarm towards government interference in the grain trade. The national organization was designed to give leadership to the farmers' movement. At its meetings, held in camera, questions could be discussed dispassionately, with none of the pressure or passion marking conventions. The Council, in view of the small likelihood of the reestablishment of the Wheat Board, might have given leadership, through education at least, to the pool movement. But the Council decided, undoubtedly in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the grain growers, to press for compulsory marketing through a government agency.

(251) Minutes of Council, February 27, 1922.

Now that a decision had been reached, the national organization brought pressure to bear on the federal government. A delegation of the Council went to Ottawa in March of 1922 to press the matter. When it was found that concurrent legislation was necessary from the provinces concerned, pressure was applied on that level. When the Manitoba legislature seemed reluctant to follow the lead of sister prairie provinces in passing the necessary legislation, the Council passed a resolution urging that this be done. ²⁵² The federal legislation authorizing a board provided for the concurrence of at least two provinces: action could therefore be taken, especially in view of the surprising victory of the United Farmers of Manitoba in the elections of that year and the resultant delay in forming a government.

But a vacuum occurred when no one with the necessary experience could be found to assume the chairmanship of the proposed board. The Council lost an invaluable opportunity through failing even to attempt to overcome the vacuum. The national body might have aided either in the search for suitable personnel for the new board or, realizing that the prospects for such a board were hopeless, have advocated once more the Murray plan. Neither course was adopted: the Council had cast its lot in favor of a Wheat Board. Eventually when it became obvious that no board at all would be established, the prestige of the national organization received a stunning blow.

To overcome the dilemma Premier C.A. Dunning of

Saskatchewan made a proposal stating: "I have waited hoping that the meeting of the Canadian Council of Agriculture would result in some carefully considered suggestion as to grain marketing methods which should be followed in the future but have been disappointed." ²⁵³ Such a strong statement from an agrarian leader was indicative of the growing impatience with the Council's failure to provide leadership in a new direction after the setback over the Wheat Board. Mr. Dunning proposed to merge the two farmers companies to form a cooperative export company. The pool would be voluntary, without any contract. When the Saskatchewan elevator company refused, the belief grew that the existing farmers companies did not want the farmers to have a pool. Since both companies were affiliates and the financial mainstay, the Council, in time, was subject to similar accusations.

When the Manitoba legislature defeated a bill to provide concurrent legislation and when no suitable persons could be found to head a board for the other prairie provinces, there existed no further likelihood of the establishment of any kind of a government agency to handle the marketing of wheat. The Council had identified itself with the move for such an agency. Wise counsel would long before have foreseen the very definite possibility of defeat on this question and would have prepared an alternative, namely, voluntary cooperation.

The Council received still another opportunity to assume leadership on the issue of marketing methods. When

(253) Yates, S.W., op cit., page 42.

the death knell sounded, "the farmers' organizations turned immediately to the consideration of a voluntary cooperative marketing plan along the lines which had been considered in 1920."²⁵⁴ By bringing forward the Murray plan, or some such scheme the Council might have reassumed leadership in search for a suitable method of marketing. But further vacillation occurred and too much time had already been lost.

At the request of the United Grain Growers Limited, a special meeting of the western affiliates was called for July 4, 1923.²⁵⁵ The oldest of the farmers' companies could see what the Saskatchewan company and the S. G. G. A. obstinately continued to overlook, that grain growers were determined to have a pool system of some kind or other. The Honorable T. A. Crerar presented a memorandum which, if accepted, would have initiated arrangements for an interprovincial pool under the aegis of the national organization.

The U. G. G. plan called for the Council to take the initiative in the formation of a wheat pool. The necessary finances would be provided on loan by the two western companies. A pool of the voluntary type was suggested, with perpetual contracts, any member being allowed to withdraw on reasonable notice. The new marketing agency would be governed by a directorate, the first of which would be named by the Council. While the facilities of the farmers' companies would be used, the pool would have complete control over the sale of its grain. By the terms of the memorandum, the inter-

(254) Grain Growers' Guide, Sept. 24, 1924, (ed).

(255) No minutes available. Information derived from the Grain Growers Record (Winnipeg, 1944), page 66.

provincial pool would be created independently of the United Grain Growers Limited and the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company. Such an arrangement would avoid charges of domination and would not prejudice the established companies if the experiment failed. On the other hand, if the plan succeeded, then in time the older companies might be merged with the pool.

The U. G. G. proposal, if accepted, would have prevented the disunited efforts later taken on the provincial level. Unity, always an aim of the organized farmers, would have been achieved in the experiment. Action, which was being demanded by the rank and file of the farmers' movement, could have been taken at once. The Council of Agriculture would receive credit for giving the farmers a pool and might have regained its failing prestige and influence.

But it was too late. Too much time had been permitted to elapse. The opponents of the pool system of marketing had been given time to organize themselves and make their presence felt. The Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company was regarded by many farmers as being bitterly opposed to the experiment. One prominent grain grower, in his diary, charges the top officials of the company, J.B. Musselman, F. W. Riddell and J.A. Maharg, with deliberately acting to prevent interprovincial cooperation. He believed that these men considered the formation of a pool to be a threat to their company.

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(256) Yates, S.W., op cit., page 57. The reference is to A. J. McPhail. See the Diary of Alexander J. McPhail, edited by H.A. Innis, (Toronto, 1940), page 37 f.f..

Despite the revolt against interlocking directorates at the 1921 S. G. G. A. convention, these men, together with the Honorable George Langley, had no small influence with the association and with the provincial government. The excuse put forward by these men, perhaps with sincerity, was that the Saskatchewan association should support a provincial pool which would be started with government backing. If this were done the S. G. G. A. would receive the credit and would gain prestige and influence to combat the activities of the new association, the Farmers' Union, which had been gathering strength in the province since 1921. In any case, the Saskatchewan representatives on the Council were no longer favorably disposed to an interprovincial pool.

In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, farm leaders, as in the case of Premier Dunning, had tired of waiting for the Council to take decisive action. Opinion now favored separate provincial action. The day before the special meeting of the Council, the board of the United Farmers of Alberta met and decided to proceed alone with the organization of a provincial pool, at the same time promising cooperation later in the establishment of an interprovincial selling agency. The proposal of the United Grain Growers Limited had come too late.

Henceforth, the Council of Agriculture was more or less outside the pool movement, which proceeded on the provincial level. Through vacillation and failure to take decisive action the national organization had lost its chance to head the new experiment. In 1920 the Council had been the first group to put forward a sound plan for a pool. The fortunes of the Council had been linked with the reestablish-

ment of the Wheat Board and, when no government board was created, the prestige and influence of the Council received a shattering blow. Even then, the situation might have been saved had the Council again brought forward with determination the Murray plan. But agreement could not be secured at this late date chiefly due to the Saskatchewan affiliates being out of step with the farmers' movement in the demand for a central cooperative marketing agency. The Council had failed, at this crucial time, to provide leadership and would in time reap the consequences.

A major force behind the drive for a pool was the Farmers' Union, an organization outside the Council. No longer did the national organization represent all the important farmers' groups in the West. The Union had been formed in 1921 "with the object in view of supporting and affiliating with farmers' organizations in all the large producing countries to obtain control of all main farm produce, to regulate and obtain reasonable prices above cost of production. ²⁵⁷ A new concept had arisen on the prairies. Formerly grain growers had accepted the fact that they were producing for a world market: the new group visualized control of production for the purpose of influencing the world price. The Farmers' Union was more of a militant and radical nature than the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association and prospered at a time when farmers demanded action. As the Union grew in strength, and prospects for a pooling agency grew brighter, the Saskatchewan affiliates of the Council, the membership

(257) Yates, S.W., op cit., page 9.

association and the elevator company, began to lose ground.

Creation of provincial pools proceeded apace with marketing agencies being established in Alberta in 1923 and in Saskatchewan and Manitoba the following year. The Council was largely ignored in the preparations. Aaron Sapiro, the American expert and orator who spread the pool gospel across the prairies, appeared in Canada largely through the efforts of the Farmers' Union. Only with great reluctance did the Saskatchewan affiliates support the visit financially. Such an obvious attitude encouraged many farmers to believe that the affiliates and the Council did not really want the experiment to succeed. Sapiro proposed nothing new - the fundamentals had been outlined in the Murray plan of 1920. This pool expert "who passed like a brilliant meteor from point to point, leaving behind him, as it were, a trail of light stretching like the tail of a comet across the heavens"²⁵⁸ might well have been sponsored in Western Canada by the Council of Agriculture. The head of an affiliate, T. A. Crerar of the U.G.G. Limited first brought the idea of a visit before the grain growers in December, 1922. But with the lack of enthusiasm and even opposition on the part of Saskatchewan leaders, the opportunity was lost.

Sapiro's visits adversely affected the Council in another way. Although he continually emphasized the need for unity, yet his coming caused dissension and bitterness hitherto unknown in the farmers' movements. Some opposed Sapiro strenuously, believing him to be the sales agent for American

(258) Ibid, preface.

financiers bent on controlling the grain trade of the world. Those who believed in him would brook no opposition. During the course of his tours through Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1923 and the early part of 1924, the brilliant Jewish lawyer tended to ignore the importance of, and the need for, the established farmers' organizations. To him the creation of a pool was the all-important object. "You have everything here to solve the problem except harmony. One organization wants to form a pool but won't do it unless it gets credit. Another wants to try but wants to be the big cheese after the project is started. I tell you, this is no time to think of prestige."²⁵⁹ Sapiro turned the attention of grain growers away from the older associations and companies, the affiliates of the Council, who had vacillated so long on the question of a cooperative marketing agency.

As the three provincial pools gained in strength and size, the prestige and importance of the Council declined. The national organization had thrown its weight behind the movement for the reestablishment of the Wheat Board. When that failed, instead of unified support being given to a project for an interprovincial pool, valuable time was lost in bickering, jealousies and the conflict of personalities. There seems little doubt that much of the blame must rest with the Saskatchewan affiliates. Control there remained with men like Musselman and Langley through their influence in the provincial government, the elevator company and the associat-

(259) Speech in Saskatoon, August 6th, 1923. Quoted in Hugh Boyd, op cit., page 110.

ion. Such leaders feared the creation of a pool as a threat to their own security. When obliged to give reluctant support to the new idea, they succeeded in having Saskatchewan go its own way in the formation of a provincial agency, in an attempt to allay the increasing importance of the Farmers' Union. The Council was forgotten by the Saskatchewan agrarian leaders in their struggle for self-survival.

The pool idea, towards which the Council was believed by many farmers to be only lukewarm, swept the West. The established companies, the United Grain Growers Limited and the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company soon felt the adverse effects on their business. The Farmers' Union made great inroads into the membership of the S.G.G.A. In Alberta and Manitoba, the membership associations had taken the lead in formation of provincial pools and were known to be less enthusiastic about the old order in the farmers movement. As affiliates lost ground or interest, the Council was adversely affected. A further blow was sustained when the new agencies by-passed the national organization in their efforts to create an interprovincial pool, which came into being in 1924 as the Canadian Cooperative Wheat Producers Ltd.

It was an unfortunate, even disastrous error on the part of the Council that early and persistent efforts were not made to include in membership the new provincial pools. Amazing lassitude is again evident. In February of 1924 an Alberta delegate to the Council raised the question. Each succeeding meeting discussed the issue but refused to go further than a resolution passed in March, 1925 "favoring the fullest possible coordination of the farmers' grain marketing

concerns... so as to assure harmony amongst them and make available the full strength of all of them in the service of the farmers." ²⁶⁰ No real agreement within the Council could be reached. Not until late in 1925 were the pools approached. Finally, the withdrawal in 1926 of the Saskatchewan elevator company, made desperate efforts necessary.

The delay may have been caused by a fear that the new selling agencies might brusquely rebuff an overtures. Many pool members were known to believe that the Council of Agriculture was dominated by the farmers' companies and was no longer representative of the movement. As early as 1923, the United Farmers of Manitoba had shown their dislike for the existing arrangement. "Be it resolved that immediate steps be taken to change the name of the Canadian Council of Agriculture to that of the National Executive of the United Farmers of Canada and that the financial and trading organizations connected therewith withdraw from any official connection with such organization." ²⁶¹ The events of succeeding years served only to make this opinion more general among the rank and file of the farmers' movement.

Blame for the procrastination in offering membership to the pools cannot be laid to the membership associations. Both the U. F. M. and the U. F. A. had been intimately connected with the creation of new marketing systems and many farmers in each province held dual membership. Even the S. G. G. A. was not opposed to the admission of the pools. After

(260) Minutes of Council, March 5, 1925.

(261) Minutes of the annual convention, United Farmers of Manitoba, at Brandon, January 9 - 12, 1923.

early reluctance, caused by the then powerful influence of leaders like Musselman, Maharg, and Langley, the Saskatchewan body had joined with the Farmers' Union in sponsoring a pool. It was a delegate of the S. G. G. A., G. F. Edwards who, more frequently than any other representative, kept raising the issue in Council meetings and urging the acceptance of the pools.

Nor can any great fault be found with the attitude of the United Grain Growers Limited. In 1923 the oldest co-operative in the West had brought forward a proposal for an interprovincial pool which might well in time have meant the loss of the company's identity. When the Council refused outright acceptance, the U.G.G. Ltd. gave every assistance to the experiments which followed. The Alberta pool received a grant of \$10,000.00, the purchase of a seat on the Grain Exchange, and the offer to guarantee its bank account to \$250,000.00, all vital assistance to anyone who remembered the early days of the Grain Growers Grain Company. As well the company lent two of its executives to the new agency in 1923 at the height of the shipping season. ²⁶² The U. G. G. officials, while foreseeing the possible threat to the existence of the company, realized that western farmers wanted a pool. President T. A. Crerar expressed his favorable opinion towards membership for the pools both publicly and ²⁶³ at the Council board.

The delay was likely caused by two factors, a

(262) See The Grain Growers Record (Winnipeg, 1944) page 66 f.f.
(263) Minutes of Council, March 26, 1925.

fairly general tendency in the Council to await the outcome of the experiment, and the attitude of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company. At the start, the pools were little but experiments attempting something new. No definite assurance could be given that a majority of farmers would sign a five year contract or that they would honor such an agreement. Hence, support was gained for the 'wait and see' attitude. There seems little doubt that the Saskatchewan company was reluctant to see the pools included in membership. J.B. Musselman was generally believed to be adamantly opposed to the new marketing system. At first the company was confident that its position could not be shaken. As early as 1922 Mr. Crerar had attempted to induce the company to join in sponsoring an interprovincial pool but Musselman and Maharg refused. ²⁶⁴ The Saskatchewan commercial organization gained over the years the reputation of being difficult to get along with and Musselman was irreconcilable on the subject of the pool. As events forced their hand, Musselman and Maharg in late 1925 finally agreed that the pools become members. But these leaders were very likely behind the stand taken that the new members must be prepared to enter without any substantial reform of the Council. The pools were known to be certain to refuse acceptance on such terms. As the second largest financial supporter of the Council of Agriculture, the lukewarm attitude of the Saskatchewan company undoubtedly had its effect.

Meanwhile efforts were being made by the Council

(264) Information kindly given by Senator T. A. Crerar.

to offset rebuffs in the West by gains elsewhere - a new and painful process for an organization long based on the support of the grain grower. Dissension and agricultural depression on the prairies resulted in less revenue to the Council. ²⁶⁵

In 1923 the United Farmers of Quebec were included in membership. But by that time, farm organizations from the Maritimes had ceased to attend through lack of interest in such questions as politics and pools. The United Farmers of British Columbia clung to their high tariff attitude and could not be seriously considered for membership. But the financial position of the Council was not improved. In the case of Quebec, special monetary arrangements had to be made to allow the U. F. Q. to enter. ²⁶⁶ In Ontario both the association and the cooperative company were in difficulties resulting from the debacle of the Drury government in 1923 and the latter had finally to be permitted to pay the lower fee of a membership organization. The only feasible source of increased strength and revenue for the Council of Agriculture was to be found in the wheat pools of Western Canada.

The uncertain situation was brought to a head in 1926 when it became apparent that Saskatchewan might no longer be represented in the national body. The loss of the largest wheat growing province would be fatal to a staple organization such as the Council of Agriculture. At the meeting of November, 1926, the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company was not represented, having been at last absorbed by the growing

(265) In 1925 payments totalled \$20,100.00, receipts only \$14,363.00. See Financial Statement, 1925.

(266) Minutes of Council, March 3, 1925.

provincial pool. The blow was financial as well. The company had been the second largest financial supporter of the national organization, each year contributing only slightly less than the United Grain Growers Limited. ²⁶⁷ At the same meeting, delegates were apprised that with the impending amalgamation of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association and the Farmers' Union, there might very likely be no representation in the future from the provincial association. The loss of all representation from Saskatchewan would be a vital blow to the Council, already criticized as not truly having the right to speak for the farmers of Canada.

Determined action was taken at last. A committee was appointed to confer with leaders of the new association, the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section. Little hope existed for the inclusion of the pools. Earlier in 1926, in reply to an invitation to join, the Alberta and Saskatchewan Pools refused while Manitoba promised to consider the matter. If the national organization was to be rescued, some sort of an arrangement must be reached with the new association. But no agreement could be achieved.

The reasons for the refusal of the Saskatchewan body and the pools to join the Council are difficult to assess. The most general objection was the domination of the Council by the farmers' companies, the Saskatchewan elevator company and the United Grain Growers Limited. Since the days of the national organization's political activities, this belief had steadily gained support. It was the answer returned by the

(267) See financial statements 1920 - to - 1925 inclusive.
The statement for 1926 is missing.

new membership association in Saskatchewan: "That the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section, are willing to affiliate with the Canadian Council of Agriculture as soon as the Canadian Council of Agriculture is composed of bona fide farmers and not receiving support from any commercial organization."²⁶⁸

The farmers' companies from the West undoubtedly wielded great influence in the Council. The same cannot be said for the cooperative companies in Ontario and New Brunswick whose interest in the Council was considerably less than that of their respective associations. Due to the distance and less interest, representation from the affiliates east of the Head of the Lakes had usually been from the associations. But such was not the case with the western companies. From their inclusion in membership in 1916 the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and the United Grain Growers Limited had been well represented at all meetings of the Council. During the period of political activity, when the commercial affiliates contributed most of the large sum being spent, the U. G. G. Ltd. even had a full quota of delegates from both the eastern and western sections of the company, thus increasing that company's delegation to twice the size of that of the ordinary affiliate.

As the expenditure of the Council increased, the additional revenue came and could only come, from the wealthy farmers' companies. In 1910, a budget of \$400.00 had been considered sufficient. During the participation in politics

(268) Darby, A.E., The Canadian Council of Agriculture (Winnipeg, 1930) page 5. Also Minutes of Council, April 4-6, 1927.

the expenditures averaged \$14,000.00 while in 1925 annual outlay reached over \$20,000.00. As the need for revenue increased, so did the dependence of the Council on the commercial affiliates. Naturally, in such a situation, the opinions of the company's representatives bore great weight. As well, the companies contained the forceful and driving personalities of the grain trade in the period. Such men would tend to dominate discussions of the national body. Some justification must be given to the charges of domination of the Council by the farmers' companies.

On the other hand, only partial evidence can be found of such influence being used to the detriment of the farmers' movement. The companies represented the commercial side of the movement and had a right to be heard at meetings of the organization representing the farmers of Canada. Without their financial aid, the existence of the organization would almost certainly have ceased. The attitude of the United Grain Growers Limited through the years can hardly be criticized. The company contributed heavily in finances and to the discussions. Its representatives were usually those foremost in urging the Council on a course of action later proved wise. In 1923 it had been the President of the U.G.G. Ltd., the Honorable T. A. Crerar, who pressed the national organization to overcome its indecision and give the grain growers a pool. It seems certain that without the financial assistance extended by the company the provincial pools might never have come into existence or at least not as quickly as they did.

Such an accolade cannot be extended to the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company. Officials of this affil-

iate not only wielded great influence in the Council but used this influence to the detriment of the western grain growers. By 1920, Messrs. Musselman, Langley and Maharg had established themselves in a very strong position. Their great influence was to be found in the provincial government, the elevator company and the association. The 1921 revolt at the S. G. G. A. convention against interlocking directorates first shook this position. As the Association grew weaker with the economic depression and the rise of the Farmers' Union, refuge was taken in the company.

There seems little doubt that these officials, especially Musselman, were opposed to a pool system on any other basis than one controlled by the company. As early as 1921 Musselman put forward a plan for a voluntary provincial pool, just at the time when the attention of grain growers was focussed on the possibility of a Wheat Board or at least an interprovincial selling agency. This pool would be governed by a board, appointed jointly by the elevator company and the association. As one authority on the period expressed it: "Obviously this meant that the interests of the Cooperative Elevator Company were to be fully safeguarded.."²⁶⁹

In 1923, when Crerar proposed an interprovincial pool sponsored jointly by the two companies, the Saskatchewan officials would have none of it. It is only correct to ascribe much of the blame to these men for the indecisive attitude on the pool question taken by the Council of Agriculture. Only after much delay and with obvious reluctance did

(269) Yates, S.W., op cit., page 36.

the elevator company give any funds to the S. G. G. A. to support a provincial pool and then very likely the action was taken as an attempt to stop the growth of the Farmers' Union. When the pools were well established and their admittance to the Council was being mooted, it may be assumed that the Saskatchewan leaders were behind the refusal to reform the Council, a prerequisite to the pools entrance. The general attitude and stand taken by the elevator company officials did grave injury and lent truth to the charges of commercial domination.

But dislike of the great influence in the Council wielded by the commercial affiliates could not have been the fundamental reason for the refusal of the U. F. C. (Sask. Section) and the pools to join. After the amalgamation of the elevator company and the provincial pool in 1926 only the United Grain Growers Limited remained to represent the commercial side of the farmers' movement in the national organization - a company which had been a great help to the provincial pools in a crucial period. But objection to the presence of the U. G. G. Ltd. could no longer be taken after March 1928, when both the company and its subsidiary, the Grain Growers' Guide withdrew from membership. In the letter of resignation, Mr. Creerar made it abundantly evident that the move was being taken to clear the way for the membership of the pools and the U. F. C. (Sask. Section). "Having in view the present situation however, and the criticism the Council is getting because of the U. G. G. Membership in it, the company has decided to withdraw its membership, and by so doing remove the obstacle which apparently ^{is} standing in the way of unity." ²⁷⁰

At the same time, to provide the Council with funds while the process of change was underway, the company made the handsome offer of its usual grant for an additional 12 months.

But the United Farmers organization in Saskatchewan still refused to join the Council. A joint meeting was held of their representatives and those of the Council in June of 1928 in Regina. ²⁷¹ Some progress was made in that the necessity for a national coordinating body was agreed upon as was a proposal that this body should consist of the United Farmers' organizations of Ontario and the three prairie provinces. The U.F.C. (Sask. Section) remained adamant and without its inclusion, the pools could not be expected to join. The Saskatchewan association excused its action by stating that the Council had not strictly adhered to the spirit of the association's request by accepting funds from the U. G. G. Ltd. after the company's withdrawal and also that the national organization could not be adequately supported financially by the four associations alone.

Both excuses were weak. The United Grain Growers Limited assistance was only temporary while the reorganization was being completed. It was given to continue the valuable work then being carried on before the Tariff Board by Mr. A. E. Darby. The excuse that the national organization could not be financed is even more ridiculous. In March of 1927, Mr. G. E. Edwards, a prominent leader in the U. F. C. (Sask. Section) had written to Mr. Ward, secretary of the national organization, expressing regret that his association would not be repre-

(271) Minutes of Conference held in Y.M.C.A. Regina, June 11, 1928.

sented and suggesting a new financial basis for the Council. Each association would be levied a membership fee of 25¢ per member, which in Mr. Edwards estimation would give the national organization \$20,000.00 a year. At the Regina joint conference in 1928 there had been informal agreement that such an arrangement would provide adequate revenue. This opinion seems correct. If the will had been there the Council could have been financed.

More fundamental reasons existed than dislike of commercial domination for the refusal of the new farmers' organizations to join the Council of Agriculture. The domination charge was merely the excuse most often expressed publicly. Other factors were of greater importance.

The concept of pool marketing, while it burst upon the prairies as a new and untried experiment, was in fact but a further step towards the goal of cooperation. "The Grain Growers' organization of Western Canada have steadily pursued this object .. although both the point of attack and the attack formation have been shifted from time to time." ²⁷³ At first the farmer had sought government intervention to relieve the prevailing injustices of the system of marketing controlled by private enterprise. When this failed, a farmers' company, the Grain Growers Grain Company was established to operate through the recognized channels but without the excessive profits made by the elevator companies and the Grain Exchange

(272) Letter G. F. Edwards to J.W. Ward, March 29, 1927. In the Saskatchewan Archives.

(273) Patton, H.S.- Grain Growers Cooperation in Western Canada. (Cambridge, 1928) page 351.

firms. A further advance was made in the successful demand for government owned or supported elevator systems. But the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company and the United Grain Growers Limited, the more lasting results of these actions, failed to fully satisfy the ideal of cooperation. Neither distributed profits on the patronage dividend basis. Profits were returned to shareholders or used for the general advancement of the farmers' movement.

The pool idea was designed to implement the principle of cooperation in the marketing of wheat. Members received an initial payment on delivery and interim payments with final distribution being made at the end of the crop year on the basis of extent of participation. The selling agency disposed of the wheat through direct selling to millers and importers, thus eliminating the speculation element. The Grain Exchange would be by-passed in favor of orderly marketing and stabilized prices.

The imagination of more visionary agrarians was attracted by the possibilities of such a system. "As often happens, ambition took soaring wings and pictured the producers in all the large wheat producing countries forming similar organizations, and through centralized international control of the product, wheat in this case, securing a price that would compensate the costs of production." ²⁷⁴ Western Canada was being given the opportunity to lead the way, an opportunity which must be seized. Farmers who had organized originally on the foundation of special privileges to none and dislike of the tariff and

(274) Creerar, T.A.- Canada's Wheat Problem. Winnipeg Free Press Pamphlet No. 10, page 9.

trusts saw no anomaly in the proposal for an international monopoly of wheat producers.

The pool concept swept across the prairies, carrying before it the supporters of the established system of marketing. The Grain Exchange became even more an object of wrath and hatred. The farmers' companies had marketed their grain through the Exchange and therefore were wrong. The Council of Agriculture, closely identified with these companies and considered by many farmers to be dominated by them, was wrong as well. To pool members there appeared to be no place in the new system for the outworn appendages of the old. As one authority expressed it: "The new wine of cooperative pooling has demanded new bottles."²⁷⁵

The farmers' movement had been undergoing a process of change over a period of years. The Farmers' Union was born in Saskatchewan in 1921 out of the post-war difficulties, evidenced most sharply by the drastic fall in the price of wheat the previous winter. The Union was organized as a national body and had every expectation of becoming so in fact. The new group had little interest in joining a national organization which extended membership to associations on a provincial basis.

When the Union merged with the S. G. G. A. in 1927, the new association was called the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section), looking towards the formation of a national body representing the provincial U. F. organizations. The Council of Agriculture, containing commercial representation, was to be ignored in favor of a new national organization

(275) Patton, H. S.- op cit., page 392.

comprising only the United Farmers groups and working in close cooperation with the pools.

Even with the withdrawal of all commercial affiliates there existed little hope that the Council could regain its former position as spokesman for the farmers of Canada through becoming the representative of the provincial United Farmers sections. The transformation would be too great. The Council was a conference body acting only on the agreement of autonomous affiliates. The provincial sections of the U. F. C., united through a uniform constitution would be much more highly centralized. The new national organization would be organized for action, with less of the delay and circumvention necessary to secure united action in the old. The Council of Agriculture was outdated.

But a more cogent reason existed against the identification of the U. F. C. (Sask. Section) and the pools with the Council. The reason is found in the fundamental difficulty of the Council in its declining years - personalities. In the early days the grain growers movement was led by men of great ability and remarkable selflessness. As the commercial side of the movement became increasingly important, the leaders had as much of the former quality but less of the latter. The statement is especially true of leaders of the Saskatchewan affiliates.

Until the amalgamation of the two associations and the absorption of the elevator company, a triumvirate held great influence in the farmers' movement within the province and in the Council. Through a system of interlocking directorates and positions in or connections with the government of the day, Musselman, Maharg and Langley controlled the activities of the organized farmers in Saskatchewan. Eventually the control was

overthrown with the rise of the Farmers' Union, internal revolt and the creation of a pool, but it was not soon forgotten. A delegate to the amalgamation conference of 1925 stated the general belief: "I said it would be a bad thing for this organization to promote leaders and keep them in a position for such a length of time that Musselman, Maharg and Langley had got into at one time."²⁷⁶

This power was abused, to the detriment of all, including the Council of Agriculture. The actions of Musselman, Maharg and F.W. Riddell aroused the suspicion that they were opposed to the pool system. Their opposition did not end within Saskatchewan but was carried to meetings of the national organization, to its great misfortune. It was believed that these men were using the Council as a means to thwart the farmers' desire for a pool. "They want to hide behind the Canadian Council."²⁷⁷ The zealous advocates of the new system of marketing wanted no part of an organization which had been used in this fashion.

A radical wing had grown up within the farmers' movement. It arose within the ranks of the Progressive Party and its members, such as L. C. Brouillete and Mrs. Violet McNaughton, brooked no opposition to their belief that a new era for democracy was dawning. The bitterness and dissension were increased by Mr. Crerar's action in leading the remnants of the Progressive Party into the Liberal fold in 1926. As

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- (276) Minutes of the Conference of the S. G. G. A. and the Farmers' Union, June 5-6, 1925, page 75, in Saskatchewan Archives.
- (277) Innis, H.A.- The Diary of A. J. Macphail (Toronto, 1939), page 121.

agrarian political activity lessened, the enthusiasm was turned to the support of the pools. The radicals formed a leading group in the newly organized U. F. C. (Sask. Section) and refused to have anything to do with such leaders as Musselman and Maharg whose zeal for democracy was less pronounced. Between political activity and the rise of the pools, the grain growers' movement had become torn with the bitterness of conflicting ideals and personalities. The great forte of the Council of Agriculture had always been its ability to secure general agreement among the farmers' organizations. Such agreement was no longer possible.

Throughout the period of decline, the Council continued most of its usual activities. Pressure tactics through small delegations and resolutions were used on the Federal Government with success being achieved in the restoration finally of the Crows' Nest Pass Agreement in 1927. The agreement has meant much to Western Canada and its restoration was due in no small part to the pressure brought to bear by the Council from 1922 on. Certain amendments to the Canada Grain Act including the reform of the Board of Grain Commissioners were obtained. It is interesting to note that in its submission on banking to the Dominion Government in 1928, the Council advocated the establishment of a central bank.

"The work of resisting demands before the Tariff Board for upward changes in the tariff and of supporting reductions therein became during 1927, 1928, and 1929, the chief activity of the Council." ²⁷⁸ An Economic Research Department

(278) Darby, A.E.- The Canadian Council of Agriculture, 1925 to 1930 (Winnipeg, 1930) page 12.

had been established in 1923 headed by A. E. Darby who, later in 1928, succeeded J. W. Ward as Secretary of the national organization. Although hampered by lack of funds and by the prevailing apathy, the Council of Agriculture was still vitally concerned with opposing the policy of protection. Through Mr. Darby, the Council, for the first and only time, had a permanent lobby in Ottawa, acting the recognized role of a pressure group. However, it was becoming apparent that the organization had the right to speak for a steadily lessening number of farmers. If any group had the right to speak for the grain growers, that group must contain representation from the pools and from the Saskatchewan association. As funds for the work decreased and as the strength of non-member organizations increased, the prestige and influence of the Council declined.

As with most farmers' organizations, the Council of Agriculture died a lingering death. The turning point in its existence had been the failure to achieve the reestablishment of the Wheat Board. The period of political activity shook the prestige of the national body and when the Council subsequently failed to provide the western grain grower with either a compulsory or voluntary system of marketing, its fortunes began to ebb with a vengeance. When both the pools and the U. F. C. (Sask. Section) refused membership, even after the withdrawal of all commercial affiliates, the cause was hopeless.

The Grain Growers' Guide, long a staunch supporter of the Council, did its best to close the widening gap in the ranks of the organized farmers, through such editorials as that written in the dark days of 1926: "We hope the time is near at hand when the leaders of the important farm organizations..

can get together like sensible people and put the Council in a position where it is adequately staffed and financed to speak for and represent agriculture."²⁷⁹ But the tide had turned against the old system, its supporters and appendages. The words of the subsidiary of the United Grain Growers Limited were ignored. Even the Guide's last act of assistance, withdrawal from membership in 1928, proved of no avail.

Meetings of the Council continued to discuss the question of its future, but with the final rebuff of the U. F. C. (Sask. Section), apathy settled in the Council. At the annual meeting of 1930 "it was agreed that no further move toward reorganization of the Council could at present be made."²⁸⁰ The United Farmers of Ontario had recovered from the troubles occasioned by political activity and with the United Farmers groups in Alberta and Manitoba were the only farmers organizations now actively represented in the Council. Basic accord still could not be reached with the British Columbia association while Quebec and the Maritimes had long since lost interest. Every concession, even to the withdrawal of the financial mainstays had been made to induce the Saskatchewan association to join but the bitterness and hatred caused by the conflict of ideals and personalities were too great.

The last official meeting of the Council occurred at Winnipeg in February, 1931.²⁸¹ It is interesting to note that while apathy prevailed on the question of the organizations'

(279) Grain Growers' Guide, Dec. 1, 1926, page 7.
(280) Minutes of Council, March 18, 1930.
(281) Minutes of Council, Feb. 2-3, 1931.

future, such was not the case with the discussion of the delegates on widely different topics. The Council was now a body for talk rather than action and the discussion as always reflected to a very great extent prevailing agrarian opinion. Resolutions were passed condemning war and supporting the International Court of Arbitration. Conscription of wealth before manpower in case of hostilities was advocated and cadet training in the public schools regarded unfavorably. Better pensions and loans for veterans were demanded. The Grain Exchange was abused and such agricultural topics as freight rates, farm loans, produce, weeds, the Hudson Bay Railway and even weather forecasting were all discussed.

But little action was taken as to the future of the Council itself. A new slate of officers was elected and a manifesto agreed upon embodying the Council's policy. Agreement could no longer be reached even on the question of asking the United Grain Growers Limited to rejoin and put the finances of the organization on a stable basis. The matter of enlarging the Council was referred to the affiliates where it came to rest. Formal record of the Council ends in February, 1931 with a financial statement being available for the first six months of 1932. At that time, monetary resources totalled \$33.77. Mr. Darby, the Secretary, had gone to work for the Winnipeg Grain Exchange and was replaced briefly by Mrs. A. Grey and then Mr. F. Downing. A copy is available of a brief presented in the name of the Council to the Superintendents of Insurance at Toronto as late as September, 1933. But the national farmers organization was merely emitting the last gasps in a lingering death. Formal record concludes in February, 1931 and such must be taken as the end of the Canadian Council of Agriculture,

the body which had once been proudly described as having...

"a position of influence on public opinion in Canada second
282
to no other similar organization."

(282) Grain Growers' Guide, Dec. 1, 1926, page 7.

have been Chapter X - Conclusion tariff.

"The Canadian Council of Agriculture was established in 1909 for the purpose of providing a channel through which the provincial farmers' organizations might combine their efforts when dealing with interprovincial and national problems." ²⁸³
So wrote J. W. Ward, Secretary of the organization from 1922 to 1928, its most critical period. Actually, although its supporters avoided referring to it as such, the Council was the pressure group of agriculture.

The national farmers' organization arose mainly because of the economic wrongs then prevalent in Western Canada. The injustices of a marketing system controlled by private enterprise and the effects of the policy of Protection led grain growers to organize, first provincially and then on a broader scale. United action would force the government to rectify these wrongs and would offset the efforts of the rival pressure groups of industry and labor.

As a pressure group, the Council had its peculiarities and problems; for example, except for a very brief period, no permanent lobby was maintained at Ottawa. Delegations were sent there frequently but the emphasis was placed on results through formal briefs and submissions rather than through influence on individual Members of Parliament. Lack of finances and the dislike of farmers generally for such methods prevented the establishment of a permanent lobby. If a lobby, the usual method of a pressure group, had been maintained, greater success might

(283) Ward, J.W., The Canadian Council of Agriculture, Winnipeg, 1925, p. 3.

not be relied upon, were refused admission. At first, this refusal to admit agricultural groups with different interests meant strength and unity to the Council. Later, when the support of grain growers wavered, no other group was ready to fill the vacuum since none had been admitted. The national organization from the first had been dominated by the West. When Western interest slackened, Ontario took over the leadership but the Council, based on a staple, had lost its real strength. As well, refusal to broaden the basis of membership meant reliance on the financial support of the farmers' companies, and, in time, damaging and not unfounded charges of commercial domination.

While real and important successes were achieved on other matters, the Council of Agriculture failed in its fight against the National Policy. Opposition to the tariff had provided the cement holding together the national farmers' organization. Undoubtedly its exertions immediately following the World War and in the late 'twenties' served to prevent or lessen increases in the customs tariff. But, on the whole, the Council had small effect on the National Policy.

Finally, as dissension in the farmers movement grew with the conflict of ideals and personalities on questions like political activity and the pools, the Council of Agriculture declined steadily. Its great forte had always been the securing of united action by the farmers. When this was no longer possible, the usefulness of the agricultural pressure group had ended.

APPENDIX I

Draft Constitution of the Canadian Council of Agriculture

1. This Association shall be called the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

The objects of the Association shall be:

- (a) To organize the farm population of the Dominion for the study of social and economic problems having a bearing on the happiness and material prosperity of the people.
 - (b) To collect such material from scientific and literary sources; the annals of class movements and the records of legislative enactments of our own and other countries as are necessary for the proper information of our people and disseminate the same.
 - (c) To formulate our demands for legislation and present them through the officers of the Association to the notice of parliament and our different legislative bodies.
 - (d) To encourage the entry of our farmers into active membership in one or the other of the political associations according to individual predisposition as a means to make the political parties without distinction responsive to and representative of the demands of the people who form the bulk of the population.
 - (e) To urge the adoption of cooperative methods by our members (but outside our association) in the purchase and sale of commodities that equity may be established in the business of exchange.
2. Any association of farmers entirely independent of government control in the Dominion of Canada organized to give effect to any or all of the purposes set forth in the preamble of this constitution shall be eligible for membership in this association.
 3. The members of the Council shall consist of the executives of each of the affiliated associations, provided that no affiliated association shall be represented by more than five members.
 4. The officers of the association shall consist of a President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer, to be elected from the members of the Council at each annual meeting.
 5. Five members, to be not less than three associations shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at the annual or special meeting. The Council shall hold a meeting at least once a year.

Appendix I (2)

6. The time and place of meeting shall be fixed by the President, providing that a meeting must be held when demanded by any three associations having membership in the Council. One month's notice of meeting must however be given, except a majority of associations declare for an emergency meeting, when one week's notice shall suffice.
7. The expense incurred for the conduct of the business of the Council shall be provided for by a pro rata levy on the membership of the affiliated associations as shown in the last annual report of each.
8. Travelling expenses of delegates to the Council shall be pooled and the flat rate borne by the association which they represent in proportion to the number of delegates sent.
9. Living expenses of delegates when in session shall be borne by the association they represent.

NOTE: It is recommended that all associations seeking affiliation under the Council shall prefix their respective constitutions with a preamble setting forth the objects for which they are associated in the general terms of the preamble to the constitution of the Council.

THE FARMERS' PLATFORM

The following are the resolutions presented to the Government on December the Sixteenth, 1910, by the Canadian Council of Agriculture

THE TARIFF

The tariff demands of the organized farmers of Canada made to Sir Wilfrid Laurier were in the following words:

"This delegation, representative of the agricultural interests of Canada, desire to approach you upon the question of the bearing of the Canadian customs tariff.

"We come, asking no favors at your hands. We bear with us no feeling of antipathy towards any other line of industrial life. We welcome within the limits of Canada's broad domain every legitimate form of industrial enterprise, but in view of the fact that the further progress and development of the agricultural industry is of such vital importance to the general welfare of the state that all other Canadian industries are so dependent upon its success, that its constant condition forms the great barometer of trade, we consider its operations should no longer be hampered by tariff restrictions.

"And in view of the favorable approaches already made through President Taft and the American Government looking towards more friendly trade relations between Canada and the United States this memorial takes form as follows:

"1. That we strongly favor reciprocal Free Trade between Canada and the United States in all horticultural, agricultural and animal products, spraying materials, fertilizers, illuminating, fuel and lubricating oils, cement, fish and lumber.

"2. Reciprocal free trade between the two countries in all agricultural implements, machinery, vehicles and parts

of each of these; and, in the event of a favorable arrangement being reached, it be carried into effect through the independent action of the respective governments, rather than by the hard and fast requirements of a treaty.

"3. We also favor the principle of the British preferential tariff, and urge an immediate lowering of the duties on all British goods to one-half the rates charged under the general tariff schedule, whatever that may be; and that any trade advantages given the United States in reciprocal trade relations be extended to Great Britain.

"4. For such further gradual reduction of the remaining preferential tariff as will ensure the establishment of complete free trade between Canada and the Mother land within ten years.

"5. That the farmers of this country are willing to face direct taxation in such form as may be advisable to make up the revenue required under new tariff conditions.

"Believing that the greatest misfortune which can befall any country is to have its people huddled together in great centres of population, and that the bearing of the present customs tariff has the tendency to encourage that condition, and realizing also that in view of the constant movement of our people away from the farms, the greatest problem which presents itself to Canadian people today is the problem of retaining our people on the soil, we come doubly assured of the justice of our petition.

HUDSON'S BAY RAILWAY

"Whereas, the necessity of the Hudson's Bay Railway as the natural and the most economic outlet for placing the products of the Western prairies on the European market has

has been emphasized by the Western people for the past generation;

"And whereas, the Dominion government has recognized the need and importance of the Hudson's Bay railway and has pledged itself to its immediate construction, and has provided the necessary funds entirely from the sale of Western lands;

"And whereas, the chief benefit to be derived from the Hudson's Bay railway will be a reduction in freight rates in Western Canada, due to actual competition, which could be secured only through government ownership and operation of the Hudson's Bay railway;

"And whereas, anything short of absolute public ownership and operation of the Hudson's Bay railway will defeat the purpose for which the road was advocated, and without which it would be in the interests of Western Canada that the building of the road should be deferred;

"Therefore, be it resolved that it is the opinion of this convention that the Hudson's Bay railway and all terminal facilities connected therewith should be constructed, owned and operated in perpetuity by the Dominion government under an independent commission."

TERMINAL ELEVATORS

"Whereas, we are convinced that terminal elevators as now operated are detrimental to the interests of both the producer and consumer, as proved by recent investigation and testimony of important interested bodies, we therefore request that the Dominion government acquire and operate as a public utility under an independent commission the terminal elevators of Fort William and Port Arthur, and immediately establish similar

terminal facilities and conditions at the Pacific Coast, and provide the same at Hudson's Bay when necessary; also such transfer and other elevators necessary to safeguard the quality of export grain."

THE BANK ACT

"Whereas, it is generally believed that the Bank Act, forming, as it does, the charter of all Canadian banks for a ten year term, by its present phrasing prevents any amendment involving curtailment of their powers enjoyed by virtue of the provisions of such charter, be it resolved: That this Ottawa convention of delegates desire that the new Bank Act be so worded as to permit the act to be amended at any time and in any particular."

CO-OPERATIVE LEGISLATION

"Resolved, that in the opinion of this convention it is desirable that cheap and efficient machinery for the incorporation of co-operative societies should be provided by Federal legislation during the present session of parliament."

CHILLED MEAT INDUSTRY

"The government be urgently requested to erect the necessary works and operate a modern and up-to-date method of exporting our meat animals.

"We suggest that a system owned and operated by the government as a public utility or a system of co-operation by the producers through the government, in which the government would supply the funds necessary to first instal the system and provide for the gradual repayment of these funds and interest by a charge on the product passing through the system, would give the needed relief, and make Canada one of the most pros-

perous meat producing countries in the world."

THE RAILWAY CASE

The organized farmers asked that the Railway act be amended so that the railway companies be compelled to bear a fair share of the responsibility for killing stock, and also:

"1. That the principle of fixing the tariffs in accordance with the competition of other roads or the density of traffic or volume of business handled be disallowed.

"2. That a true physical valuation be taken of all railways operating in Canada, this valuation to be used as a basis of fixing the rates, and the information to be available to the public.

"3. That the Board of Railway Commissioners be given complete jurisdiction in these matters as well as in all other matters of dispute between the railways and the people, and to enable them to do this that the law be more clearly defined."

Article 1.

This association shall be called the "Canadian Council of Agriculture."

Objects

The objects of the Association shall be:

(a) To encourage the farm population of the Dominion to organize for the study of educational, economic, social and political problems having a bearing on the happiness and material prosperity of the people.

(b) To constitute itself a medium through which the various organizations in membership may act collectively where their common interests are concerned.

(c) To establish a bureau for the collecting and disseminating of statistics and other information bearing on rural welfare.

(d) To provide unity of action on matters of common interest to the organizations in membership and to formulate demands for legislation and present the same to the Parliament of Canada.

(e) To investigate methods of taxation for providing National revenue and disseminate information thus secured through Farmers' organizations.

Article II.

The Council shall consist of the Executives (or their appointees) not more than four (4) in numbers of the Manitoba Grain Growers Association, Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association, United Farmers of Alberta, Alberta Co-operative Elevator Company, Grain Growers Grain Company, United Farmers Cooperative of Ontario, Grain Growers' Guide, United Farmers of Ontario, Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, and any other provincial wide farmers' organizations that may be admitted into membership by a majority vote of those present at any regularly constituted meeting of the Council, provided that notice of application for admission has been given by the Secretary in writing, to each of the members not less than thirty (30) days prior to such meeting. 284

(284) The Alberta Cooperative Elevator Company and the Grain Growers Grain Company united to form the United Grain Growers Ltd. which formally began operations Sept. 1st. 1917. The representatives of the new firm did not replace the representatives of the two organizations of which it was composed, at the Council until March 11th, 1918 the first meeting after the amalgamation had occurred. It is strange that the new constitution should not refer to the new organization rather than to the old but the technicality is not important.

Article III

The officers of the Council shall be elected at each Annual Meeting and shall consist of a President and a Vice-President who shall be elected from among the members, and a Secretary who may or may not be a member.

Article IV

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the Vice-President, and three other representatives and officers of the Council to be elected at the Annual Meeting.

Article V

Ten members representing not less than five organizations shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at an Annual or special meeting provided that a lesser number of representatives may adjourn the meeting.

Article VI

The Council shall hold meetings at least twice a year.

Article VII

The time and place of meeting shall be fixed by the President, provided, however, that a meeting shall be called when requested by any three (3) organizations having membership in the Council.

Article VIII

That the annual membership fees for the Council be twenty-five (25) cents per shareholder for the commercial companies with more than five thousand shareholders; ten (10) cents for the commercial companies with less than five thousand shareholders; Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) as a minimum fee for a commercial company; Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) for the Associations with more than five thousand members; and One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) for Associations with less than five thousand members.

Article IX

Necessary travelling expenses of representatives when attending meetings of the Council shall be paid by the Council.

Article X

The constitution may be amended at any meeting of the Council by a two-third majority vote of the members present provided that notice of such proposed amendment has been given at a previous meeting of the Council.

Report of the Committee appointed to consider future
Development work of our Council. March 12, 1918. 285

The work of the Council is of an educational and legislative character, and is in the nature of that of a clearing-house for the Provincial organizations. In detail your committee would summarize it as follows:

- (1) The gathering and tabulating of information concerning economic questions in which the farmers of the Dominion are particularly interested.
- (2) Distributing this information in pamphlet form and by means of newspaper and magazine articles, supplemented by addresses by qualified speakers.
- (3) Acting as the mouthpiece of the farmers' organizations when the time is ready for a public pronouncement on these matters.
- (4) Presenting the findings on these questions to the Government and watching the course of new or of any legislation regarding these subjects.
- (5) Scrutinizing proposed legislation and securing legal advice as to the effect on the farmers' interests.
- (6) By working in close co-operation with Provincial organizations and acting as a medium for the interchange of provincial ideas and as a means of personal discussion between the officers of the organizations, to prevent the

(285) This portion of the report is taken from the complete report presented to the Council and contained in the Minutes of Council, March 11th, 1918.

Appendix IV (11)

possibility of a public difference of opinion between the organizations which would, of course, be detrimental to the farmers' interests.

(7) To conduct an educational campaign for the purpose of building up a national spirit, particularly with a view to absorbing the foreign element, promoting unity and fostering a national spirit amongst the various races of which our population is composed.....

THE FARMERS' PLATFORM

Following herewith is the Official Text of the Farmers' Platform, 1918. Also known as the New National Policy.

1. A League of Nations as an international organization to give permanence to the world's peace by removing old causes of conflict.

2. We believe that the further development of the British Empire should be sought along the lines of partnership between nations free and equal, under the present governmental system of British constitutional authority. We are strongly opposed to any attempt to centralize imperial control. Any attempt to set up an independent authority with power to bind the Dominions, whether this authority be termed parliament, council or cabinet, would hamper the growth of responsible and informed democracy in the Dominions.

The Tariff

3. Whereas Canada is now confronted with a huge national war debt and other greatly increased financial obligations, which can be most readily and effectively reduced by the development of our natural resources, chief of which is agricultural lands;

And whereas it is desirable that an agricultural career should be made attractive to our returned soldiers and the large anticipated immigration, and owing to the fact that this can best be accomplished by the development of a national policy which will reduce to a minimum the cost of living and the cost of production;

And whereas the war has revealed the amazing financial strength of Great Britain, which has enabled her to finance

, not only her own part in the struggle, but also to assist in financing her Allies to the extent of hundreds of millions of pounds, this enviable position being due to the free trade policy which has enabled her to draw her supplies freely from every quarter of the globe and consequently to undersell her competitors on the world's market, and because this policy has not only been profitable to Great Britain, but has greatly strengthened the bonds of Empire by facilitating trade between the Motherland and her overseas Dominions - we believe that the best interests of the Empire and of Canada would be served by reciprocal action on the part of Canada through gradual reductions of the tariff on British imports, having for its objects closer union and a better understanding between Canada and the Motherland and at the same time bring about a great reduction in the cost of living to our Canadian people;

Fosters Combines

And whereas the Protective Tariff has fostered combines, trusts and "gentlemen's agreements" in almost every line of Canadian industrial enterprise, by means of which the people of Canada - both urban and rural - have been shamefully exploited through the elimination of competition, the ruination of many of our smaller industries and the advancement of prices on practically all manufactured goods to the full extent permitted by the tariff;

And whereas agriculture - the basic industry upon which the success of all our other industries primarily depends - is unduly handicapped throughout Canada as shown by the declining rural population in both Eastern and Western Canada, due largely to the greatly increased cost of agricultural

implements and machinery, clothing, boots and shoes, building material and practically everything the farmer has to buy, caused by the Protective Tariff, so that it is becoming impossible for the farmers generally, under normal conditions, to carry on farming operations profitably;

And whereas the Protective Tariff is the most wasteful and costly method ever designed for raising national revenue, because for every dollar obtained thereby for the public treasury at least three dollars pass into the pockets of the protected interests, thereby building up a privileged class at the expense of the masses, thus making the rich richer and the poor poorer;

And whereas the Protective Tariff has been and is a chief corrupting influence in our national life because the protected interests, in order to maintain their unjust privileges, have contributed lavishly to political and campaign funds, thus encouraging both political parties to look to them for support, thereby lowering the standard of public morality.

Definite Tariff Demands

Therefore be it resolved that the Canadian Council of Agriculture, representing the organized farmers of Canada, urges that, as a means of remedying these evils and bringing about much-needed social and economic reforms, our tariff laws should be amended as follows:

(a) By an immediate and substantial all-round reduction of the customs tariff.

(b) 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

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made in the remaining tariff on British imports that will ensure complete Free Trade between Great Britain and Canada in five years.

(c) By endeavoring to secure unrestricted reciprocal trade in natural products with the United States along the lines of the Reciprocity Agreement of 1911.

(d) By placing all foodstuffs on the free list.

(e) That agricultural implements, farm and household machinery, vehicles, fertilizers, coal, lumber, cement, gasoline, illuminating fuel and lubricating oils be placed on the free list, and that all raw materials and machinery used in their manufacture also be placed on the free list.

(f) That all tariff concessions granted to other countries be immediately extended to Great Britain.

(g) That all corporations engaged in the manufacture of products protected by the customs tariff be obliged to publish annually comprehensive and accurate statements of their earnings.

(h) That every claim for tariff protection by any industry should be heard publicly before a special committee of parliament.

Taxation Proposals

4. As these tariff reductions may very considerably reduce the national revenue from that source, the Canadian Council of Agriculture would recommend that, in order to provide the necessary additional revenue for carrying on the government of the country and for the bearing of the cost of the war, direct taxation be imposed in the following manner:

(a) By a direct tax on unimproved land values, including all natural resources.

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- (b) By a graduated personal income tax.
- (c) By a graduated inheritance tax on large estates.
- (d) By a graduated income tax on the profits of corporations.
- (e) That in levying and collecting the business profits tax the Dominion Government should insist that it be absolutely upon the basis of the actual cash invested in the business and that no considerations be allowed for what is popularly known as watered stock.
- (f) 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.

The Returned Soldiers

5. With regard to the returned soldier we urge:
- (a) That it is the recognized duty of Canada to exercise all due diligence for the future well-being of the returned soldier and his dependents.
 - (b) That demobilization should take place only after return to Canada.
 - (c) That first selection for return and demobilization should be made in the order of length of service of those who have definite occupation awaiting them or have other assured means of support, preference being given first to married men and then to the relative need of industries, with care to insure so far as possible the discharge of farmers in time for the opening of spring work upon the land.
 - (d) That general demobilization should be gradual, aiming at the discharge of men only as it is found possible to secure steady employment.

(e) It is highly desirable that if physically fit discharged men should endeavor to return to their former occupations, and employers should be urged to reinstate such men in their former positions wherever possible.

(f) That vocational training should be provided for those who while in the service have become unfitted for their former occupations.

(g) That provision should be made for insurance at the public expense of unpensioned men who have become undesirable insurance risks while in the service.

(h) That facilities should be provided at the public expense that will enable returned soldiers to settle upon farming land when by training or experience they are qualified to do so.

6. We recognize the very serious problem confronting labor in urban industry resulting from the cessation of war, and we urge that every means, economically, feasible and practicable, should be used by federal, provincial and municipal authorities in relieving unemployment in the cities and towns; and, further, recommend the adoption of the principle of co-operation as the guiding spirit in the future relations between employer and employees-between capital and labor.

Land Settlement

7. A land settlement scheme based on a regulating influence in the selling price of land. Owners of idle areas should be obliged to file a selling price on their lands, that price also to be regarded as an assessable value for purposes of taxation.

8. Extension of co-operative agencies in agricult-

ure to cover the whole field of marketing, including arrangements with consumers' societies for the supplying of foodstuffs at the lowest rates and with the minimum of middleman handling.

9. Public ownership and control of railway, water and aerial transportation, telephone, telegraph and express systems, all projects in the development of natural power, and of the coal mining industry.

Other Democratic Reforms

10. To bring about a greater measure of democracy in government, we recommend:

(a) That the new Dominion Election Act shall be based upon the principle of establishing the federal electorate on the provincial franchise.

(b) The discontinuance of the practice of conferring titles upon citizens of Canada.

(c) The reform of the federal senate.

(d) An immediate check upon the growth of government by order-in-council, and increased responsibility of individual members of parliament in all legislation.

(e) The complete abolition of the patronage system.

(f) The publication of contributions and expenditures both before and after election campaigns.

(g) The removal of press censorship upon the restoration of peace and the immediate restoration of the rights of free speech.

(h) The setting forth by daily newspapers and periodical publications, of the facts of their ownership and control.

(i) Proportional representation.

(j) The establishment of measures of direct legislation through the initiative, referendum and recall.

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(k) The opening of seats in parliament to women on the same terms as men.

(l) Prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquors as beverages in Canada.

Presidents of the Canadian Council of Agriculture

1910	D. W. McCuaig	Manitoba Grain Growers Association
1911	J. Bower	United Farmers of Alberta
1912	R. C. Henders	Manitoba Grain Growers Association
1913	R. C. Henders	Manitoba Grain Growers Association
1914	J. A. Maharg	Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association
1915	J. A. Maharg	Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association
1916	J. A. Maharg	Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association
1917	H. W. Wood	United Farmers of Alberta
1918	H. W. Wood	United Farmers of Alberta
1919	H. W. Wood	United Farmers of Alberta
1920	R. W. E. Barnaby	United Farmers of Ontario
1921	R. W. E. Barnaby	United Farmers of Ontario
1922	H. W. Wood	United Farmers of Alberta
1923	W. A. Amos	United Farmers of Ontario
1924	W. A. Amos	United Farmers of Ontario
1925	W. A. Amos	United Farmers of Ontario
1926	G. F. Edwards	Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association
1927	A. J. M. Poole	United Farmers of Manitoba
1928	Bruce McNiven	United Farmers of Ontario
1929	Bruce McNiven	United Farmers of Ontario
1930	H. E. G. H. Scholefield	United Farmers of Alberta
1931	J. J. Morrison	United Farmers of Ontario

Secretaries

1910-11	E. C. Drury	United Farmers of Ontario
1912-13	E. J. Fream	United Farmers of Alberta
1914-17	R. McKenzie	Manitoba Grain Growers Association
1918-21	N. P. Lambert	

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1922-28 J. W. Ward

1928-30 A. E. Barby

1930-31 Mrs. Anna Gray, F. Downing

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