

To the Members, Non-Members and Friends of the American Farm Bureau Federation of Douglas County, Oregon

Dillard, Oregon, July 5, 1922.

As there seems to be a real need of better understanding of the aims, objects and an appreciation by the people of the accomplishments and purposes of the farm bureau it was decided at our last meeting of the executive board to set out a letter of information to our members and friends who should be and we believe would be members if they knew of the many accomplishments of the farm bureau, and of the need of this organization for the future prosperity of agriculture. In the few words that this organization has been accomplishing many things that have been a great help to not only the farmers alone but to the nation as a whole in a broad way both economically and legislatively.

We feel we can do no better than to let our Representative at Washington, Mr. Gray Silver, in his letter to Hon. A. F. B. F., our state secretary, in answer to certain correspondence referred to him as reported by our paper, The Oregon State Farm Bureau News, in giving an outline of some of the work done and things accomplished by or through the instrumentality of the American Farm Bureau Federation:

It was the American Farm Bureau Federation when money was getting tight in 1920 and before there was time for legislation, that got rulings from the federal reserve board that permitted drafts and bills of lading attached to wheat, rice, cotton and some other farm commodities while in transit to be given the privilege of banking and trade acceptances which was helpful.

It was the American Farm Bureau Federation that, when the bankers of the Pacific coast failed and refused to finance the sugar beet growers of Utah and Colorado, got the governor of the federal reserve board to go west and after visiting the beet growing sections of Utah and to go on to San Francisco.

There he called a meeting of the Marine House Association of that state and told the members that unless they would agree to put up the needed funds to accommodate the beet growers of Utah that he would do his office at Washington to do the result was that the bank of Salt Lake City within thirty days was notified that \$20,000 had been placed to their credit in the Clearing House Association of San Francisco.

Back in 1918 many of the boats on the Great Lakes were laid up due to inability to obtain freight because of the agreement which the railroads had with the interstate commerce commission on rail hauls between Chicago and New York. The rate on this haul from Chicago to New York was fixed at 13.8 cents per hundred, whereas from Buffalo, the end of the route, to New York it was 10 cents per hundred pounds. This left that portion of the haul where there was lake competition, nearly three-fourths of the distance, only 3.8 cents. This was disastrous to boat traffic.

The American Farm Bureau Federation realized the situation and that it would take a long time to change the situation through the regular hearings of the interstate commerce commission. It therefore, took the matter up directly with representatives of the railroads and with the interstate commerce commission arrived at an adjustment which reduced the new increases in rates on that part of the haul between Chicago and Buffalo.

This opened up boat traffic immediately with a carrying capacity as high as 2,300,000 bushels of wheat from Chicago and other lake ports to Buffalo in a single trip. At the same time railroads had stated recently that 100,000 new cars were necessary, the revival of the boat traffic, however, released so many

cars to the west that it was not necessary to build the new ones which would have cost around \$300,000,000 for 100,000 cars. The farmers would have had to pay a very large proportion of the cost of these cars. It was the American Farm Bureau Federation that was instrumental in sending 30,000 cars into the corn and wheat belt in the summer of 1920 when it almost was impossible to get them. At that time, also, money was so scarce that it was difficult to finance the loading of the cars, but the federation went to the Federal Reserve board and got \$30,000,000 transferred from New York city to the interior banks, that the farmer might be accommodated.

It was the American Farm Bureau Federation that made the fight for the re-establishment of the War Finance Corporation. At that time the committees in both the senate and house refused to include farmers' cooperative marketing associations in the bill, and it was the A. F. B. F. with the agricultural bloc in the respective houses that put in the bill the provision which permitted co-operatives to borrow directly from the War Finance Corporation as well as at the time to provide for loans to cattle companies. Under these two provisions there have been more than \$250,000,000 loaned to farmers, (a round 70 per cent of which has been loaned to co-operatives).

It was the American Farm Bureau Federation which during the tight money time fought for and secured the passage in congress of a bill adding \$25,000,000 to the farm loan board for working capital which made it possible for them to handle long-time loans more rapidly.

It was the American Farm Bureau Federation that urged and obtained the passage of the bill when money was high-priced that allowed the federal farm loan banks to pay a greater rate of interest than the original law had allowed, which permitted the farm loan board to meet the conditions which then existed in the financial world, and in that way free farmers from excessive rates of interest which unscrupulous bankers and profiteers were then charging.

It was the American Farm Bureau Federation that made the fight against all comers, and by courtesy of the agricultural bloc passed a bill in the senate, and will soon pass it in the house, as the house banking and currency committee has made a favorable report, after one of the hardest fights we have ever had, that will give the American farmer a representative on the Federal Reserve board. This bill will take out the requirement making it mandatory to name at least two bankers on the board, and will include agriculture in the list of our national activities to be considered in selecting members of the board. In that way it will take from the financial group the class favor they have enjoyed since the passage of the Federal Reserve law, and put agriculture on equality with other groups in financial matters.

It was the American Farm Bureau Federation that has urged, and we think successfully, during this session of congress a commodity-financing bill that will free farmers for all time from brokerage, commission and other charges that have been exacted of them heretofore by banks, bankers and near friends of banks and bankers, and will at the same time give them an entrance to the national reservoirs of money and credits on an equality with other people so they will not be compelled to pay a high retail price for money to people who have bought it at wholesale.

It was the American Farm Bureau Federation that took a referendum among its members showing the excessive cost of money in the form of interest, commission and brokerage which was being charged the farmers in 1921, and went to the secretary of the treasury with the information and got a promise from him that discount rates would be lowered. This promise has been kept, and the Federal Reserve discount rate of money has been reduced from 6 per cent to 4 1/2 per cent with prospect of its being one-half per cent lower in the not-distant future. After the passage of the Each-Cummings law when the railroads were willing to pay 8 per cent for money, it was the American Farm Bureau Federation that protected and secured a 7 per cent maximum ruling from the interstate commerce commission.

As to the "necessity for lobbies or blocs at Washington, D. C., I would say that when the sessions of congress were not continuous, but only met a few months of the year, some of the special interests at that time employed counsel who would come over and visit the members of congress at their homes or boarding-houses. At that time there was a comparatively small amount of lobbying, for the members of congress spent the greater part of the year at home among their constituents and in that way their constituency had direct access to them, and the members were able to know their wishes.

But as the governmental duties began to take more of their time, causing congress to sit for longer periods, special interest groups spent more and more time at Washington. When the large office buildings were built for the accommodation of our members of congress, they largely set up in Washington a permanent residence, staying here practically all the time except a few months preceding the election on election years. Soon thereafter they began the regulation of business in a large way, first through the interstate commerce commission. With big business already having representatives

here, labor recognized the importance of their being on the ground, for the rulings of the interstate commerce commission had to do very closely and vitally with the largest and best organized group of labor. So labor built a temple in Washington and set up headquarters here. Soon various other groups came here and set up headquarters, for congress continued to pass regulatory measures and to stay in Washington all the time. It was necessary for those groups asking special favors to be in close touch with the representatives in congress that would advocate the measures in which these groups were interested.

By the time the American Farm Bureau Federation was organized in 1919 and came to the city of Washington in January, 1920, there were 140 or more Washington headquarters for the different groups of our national life. In setting up Washington headquarters, the Farm Bureau was doing the essential and obvious defensive thing for the farmers. The farmers moved in here so they could keep close contact with congress and at the same time watch the groups which have been securing legislation in the form of special class privileges which the farmers believe harmful to their welfare.

Laws have been passed which allowed trade practices and aided industry in various ways; such as the protective tariff, Pittsburg Plus in steel, as well as special legislation and special financing of our railroads for the transportation group. Labor, through the Adamson law and other laws of that kind has participated in class benefits much in the same way as finance and transportation and industry. The farmer alone has neither asked nor gotten special class privileges. In our activities here we are doing what we can to see that agriculture does not continue to be penalized by the other groups, but rather, that we equalize or put all national groups on a fair parity in the recognition given by the federal government. In no way do we seek to penalize any of these groups, for we must have, and desire to have, a proper relation with labor and financial interests. Labor, of course, is our best customer, and we must see at all times that it is dealt with fairly. So we are not fighting a punitive fight, but, rather, a great constructive cause, helpful to all groups and classes alike.

Since arriving here, the Farm Bureau has well justified its existence in Washington. Among the more important measures which have been passed are, first, the packer bill. From this law the livestock growers of America will receive annually direct financial benefit to the extent of 80 times the budget of the American Farm Bureau Federation for the year 1921. In other words, for every dollar paid by the membership into the treasury of the A. F. B. F. They will prevent a repetition of such manipulation as occurred in 1920. At that time the grain market was depressed at home faster than the foreign market fell by selling phantom wheat and buying real wheat until the normal spread between producer and consumer of 28 cents per bushel was increased to a total of 86 cents per bushel. This laid a tribute on the producer of every bushel of wheat in the United States of 58 cents per bushel over and above normal prices. The speculators, of course, did not handle all the wheat and they were able to put into their pockets the 58 cents profit on what they handled, but the farmer lost on every bushel of wheat in his hands at that time for the domestic market had been broken down.

The cooperative marketing bill, fathered by the A. R. B. F. takes the jail out of the front yard of the farmer when they are attempting to do a perfectly right and proper thing in co-operatively marketing their own commodities. Sometimes it is very important to defeat proposed legislation as it is to have legislation enacted which the farmers favor. This was the case in the road legislation last summer when the bill proposed by Senator Townsend which would provide for the federal building of boulevards across the country and thus absorb the funds from the local communities used to build or maintain local roads. The Phipps-Dowell bill which finally was passed, and which was favored by the Federation, provides for farm-to-market roads and state cooperation in their construction.

So far we have fought a winning fight against the sales tax and thereby saved to the American farmer a great amount of money, so great I scarcely know how to estimate it. But to illustrate it one way: During the life of the excess profits tax there was collected from that source one and a half to two and a half billion dollars. If the sales tax were passed to take its place, the farmer's buying power being approximately one-half the buying power of the country, it would add one-half to the total amount of the money heretofore raised by excess profits tax to the farmers' tax bill, which is already large and burdensome, without relieving him of any of the other taxes which he is now charged with. By another method of estimating the 40 per cent of people who live on the farm possessing something like 50 per cent of the buying power of the country, but only 16 to 17 per cent of the earning power of the country, would have passed on to them 50 per cent of all the taxation collected by sales tax while the other groups, with the 60 or 4 per cent of the net earning power of the country, would be taxed upon only the other half of the nation's buying power. So the American Farm Bureau Federation has prevented enactment of that wicked attempt to set the unfair and unduly burdensome taxation on the farmer.

Quite as important as avoiding the sales tax, to the farmer is the writing of a tariff law which does not contain the American valuation clause. Should the tariff schedules carry American valuation instead of foreign valuation upon which to base the new tariff, if written upon the proposed rates, it would amount virtually to an embargo. This would increase prices of manufactured products unconscion-

ably and would be paid largely by the farmers in the form of higher prices for both domestic and foreign articles.

As we stand today in Washington the farmers have the best organization ever set up in this city by any group of people, and it has only been possible by the unstinted support which has been given the Washington representative by the farm folks from the states throughout the states of the union. It is so outstandingly successful that people representing other organizations, some of which should be friendly and some of which we expect to be antagonistic, have assailed the Farm Bureau for it has so overshadowed their own activities.

The Farm Bureau is not in politics because the commodities produced by its members are so large and so varied and so basic that its interests are not political but economic. Thus when the American Farm Bureau Federation established headquarters in Washington it did not set up a lobby as other business had but made a clearing house of agricultural information. In order that this great class might be properly served in a non-political way the agricultural bloc was organized. This was done by carefully preparing through research statistics and other proper ways, open to all people, the many things of interest to agriculture in particular and the country at large, as well as by a proper presentation of the facts and figures to the representatives from agricultural sections. These caused the development of a common cause and uniformity of procedure so that the agricultural bloc truly reflects for the first time in our nation a life in groups working with congress, open covenant openly arrived at. In the meetings of the bloc or before committees or in other ways the farmers' situation is openly, fearlessly and courageously presented. A majority of the committees, as evidenced by the measures passed, appreciate the service given by your Washington representative and gladly avail themselves of this source of information. The Farm Bureau has no reason for being in party politics, but by serving as it does, assists the elected representatives, whether they be of one political party or another, to serve more intelligently their constituency.

The Farm Bureau has been the one outstanding aggressive organization fighting for short time credits along with other credits for the farmer. The records of committee hearings and bloc hearings all show that the Farm Bureau in the main making the fight unaided and alone for what has been accomplished and for what we hope yet to accomplish have for that aid given by the National Grange.

"The Farm Bureau is the biggest organization of farmers the world has ever seen. It is an organization by the farmers, of farmers and for the farmers. It is three fold in its scope. It begins with the community and county organizations. It has a state organization to look after its interests, and finally a national organization. The foundation is right. The expenditures are carefully made, but unless the membership fees are paid the whole structure will fall.

The national organization looks to Oregon for many of its constructive measures. Should our organization fail, it will affect the entire national organization. Do you want Oregon to go down on record as the first state to fall down?

Our membership has grown to 15,000 in Oregon and in every way except financial support the Oregon State Farm Bureau is a great success.

We should remember at all times that ours is a farmers' organization, and that we have no right to expect others to carry a burden that at all times is our burden. The membership fee is the life blood of our organization, and if the Oregon State Farm Bureau is to go ahead, the membership fees must be collected. If your state executive committee and your state officers had not stood squarely behind the organizations, it would have failed long ago for lack of financial support. Are the county organizations now going to permit the suspension of a verile, live and great organization to go out of business for lack of appreciation and financial support?

Your attention is called to the full page advertisement in the May issue of the Oregon State Farm Bureau News which states that a referendum ballot on questions vital to farmers will soon be sent to all Farm Bureau members in good standing.

It will be necessary at the next legislature to have someone representing the Oregon State Farm Bureau at Salem, whose business it will be to watch every move made by our legislators. Do you want such a representative? Is it worth the amount of your dues to have someone look after your interests and report back to you?

Our enemies are counting that we will fail for lack of financial support from our members. A conversation was overheard recently between two men. One said, "We will have to do something to relieve these farmers; they are building a strong organization and we must recognize them." "Don't worry," the other replied, "what is everybody's business is nobody's. They won't pay up, and the leaders in the state office will go broke and have to shut up shop. Farmers won't stick, don't you know that?" Is he right or will we show him we can stick?

This is not a cold blooded money proposition. We are organized to get justice, to speak for agriculture; not with the voice of one man, but with the voice of the organized farmer combined so that it will be heard in office, in counting rooms and in legislative halls.

Your state organization is recognized as a power by other state farm bureaus and by the agricultural bloc. We have served you. Without our state organizations, our national or-

(Continued on page five.)

A BUSINESS COUPE FOR BUSINESS MEN

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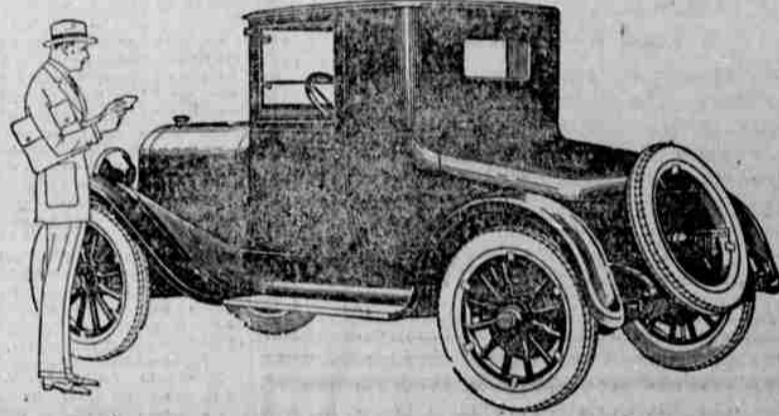
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GOSPEL MEETINGS START
A large tent was erected on the court house square today, and will be used for a series of gospel meetings sponsored by the church of Christ which owns the building on South and Cobb streets. Rev. F. M. McGlasson will conduct the services, which will probably start tomorrow and be held each night during the week.
School District No. 21, Camas Valley, Ore., desires bids on the building of a class room adjoining the school house. Specifications may be had from the clerk. By order of the board, B. R. Richter, Clerk.



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