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## Signs of the Times in Alberta

Long in the van of radical politics, there are signs that the people of Alberta intend to keep on exploring new paths. Leaders in the provincial election campaign are making the subject of monetary reform an outstanding issue. Even the Conservatives show themselves to be aware of it by taking the traditional conservative position of being "unequivocally opposed." It is rather comical to find the Conservative party going on record for "individual initiative and enterprise" while Conservative policy is drifting rapidly toward the servile state.

The provincial Liberals are appealing to the Alberta electorate with the pledge to employ three of the most expert Social Credit advocates to draft a plan for the province which the Liberal party would submit to the legislature. On the general question of monetary reform the Liberal platform declares:

Usury once in control will wreck any nation. Until the control of the issue of currency and credit is restored to government and recognized as its most conspicuous and sacred responsibility, all talk of the sovereignty of Parliament and of Democracy is idle and futile.

It goes on to make definite proposals for action to deal with the monetary situation.

The United Farmers have held office in Alberta since 1921. They came in as the result of a movement among the farmers away from old party politics. Under the leadership of Henry Wise Wood, the United Farmers of Alberta became the strongest political organization in the province. It is instructive to recall how conservatives attacked the U.F.A. leader as a dangerous man, but since he retired from active public life, he has been honored as one of the veterans of good citizenship in Canada, even included in the honors list with the C.M.G.

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The United Farmers are appealing to the electorate for a renewed vote of confidence. They claim to have pioneered the movement for monetary reform in Alberta. The strongest challenge to the administration comes, however, from the militant movement under leadership of William Aberhart, to put definite measures of monetary reform into effect in Alberta without waiting until the Dominion parliament has been persuaded. Aberhart is the outstanding figure in provincial politics, just as Henry Wise Wood used to be. He is, indeed, one of the few men in Canada to have come into the front rank of leadership during the recent years of economic crisis. He is being attacked just as the reactionaries used to attack the veteran leader of the U.F.A., but it is possible that William Aberhart will some day rank with the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett as a national figure in Canadian politics. He is a man of undoubted integrity with a striking platform presence. He has one vital quality of leadership, ability to inspire confidence: behind it is a deep sincerity of purpose, pressing forward with dynamic energy. It is something new in Canadian politics to have a high school principal giving this leadership, but many people in other parts of the country as well as in Alberta may be ready to welcome it.

There are C.C.F., Labor and other candidates in the Alberta provincial field, but the multiplicity of candidates is less confusing than it would be in other provinces because of Alberta's method of voting. Without actually having proportional representation, Alberta has the alternative vote. Instead of marking the ballot with an X against the name of one candidate, the voter has the privilege of marking first, second, third and subsequent choices, where several candidates are nominated for one seat. By this method of voting, the electorate is at least assured of being represented by the candidate with a majority of votes. It may be that no party will have a clear majority of seats in the next legislature, but there are signs that the majority will be pledged to action in the direction of monetary reform so far as anything can be done in the province.

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