

W. R. MOTHERWELL AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT  
IN SASKATCHEWAN, 1905-1918

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A THESIS

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## PREFACE

It would be difficult to find a study relating to the history of Saskatchewan which did not at some point touch upon rural life. From the period of settlement until very recent times agriculture has been of overwhelming significance in the province and it has produced some outstanding leaders. If one were to look for a "hero" among them probably none would be found whose stature equalled that of William Richard Motherwell. His name has become almost a legend in the province. A stone cairn on the Trans-Canada Highway at Indian Head, an impressive federal building in Regina, a northern lake -- all bear his name. They perpetuate the memory of a man whose career embraced four periods of service to agriculture:

(1) Pioneer farmer and leader of a powerful grain growers' organization, 1882-1905; (2) Minister of Agriculture for Saskatchewan, 1905-1918; (3) Minister of Agriculture for Canada, 1921-1930; (4) Private member of the House of Commons, 1930-1940.

It is proposed in this thesis to examine Motherwell's contribution to the development of agriculture during his career in provincial politics. It will be shown that he made extensions and innovations in governmental assistance to the industry. He promoted good farming practices through a variety of educational activities. He assisted grain growing through policies which included the development of a hail insurance scheme and active participation in the formation of a co-operative elevator company. He

encouraged stock raising through financial assistance and a co-operative system which combined provincial operation with local ownership. He implemented recommendations of several royal commissions during his ministry. During World War I he devoted his energies to the best means of promoting Saskatchewan's contribution to the allied effort. His policies were essentially an application of the principles of conservation, diversification, and co-operation to the creation of a sound agricultural economy. These policies are set forth in Chapters II to VII; Chapter VIII provides an assessment and evaluation of them. It will be seen that this approach excludes consideration of Motherwell's participation in the non-agricultural policies of the government and in such political activities as party organization, electioneering, and handling of patronage. Moreover, it excludes reference to his private life, beyond reviewing (in Chapter I) the early career which led to his selection as Minister of Agriculture and which influenced the nature of the policies he was to pursue.

A.R.T.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### A FARM LEADER EMERGES

The appointment of William Richard Motherwell as Saskatchewan's first Minister of Agriculture brought to the office a professionally trained agriculturalist with an experience of over twenty years in pioneer settlement, community activities, politics, and the farmers' movement. Motherwell was born in 1860, the son of an Irish farmer near Perth, in Lanark County, Ontario. His boyhood was spent in the pattern of rural Ontario life. He went to the country school during the winter months and worked on the farm in the busy summer season. After reaching the age of sixteen he combined farm work with attendance at the Perth Collegiate Institute where he completed his matriculation in 1879. He then enrolled in the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph and graduated with high class honours in 1881.<sup>1</sup> Thereupon he and two of his fellow students headed West to see the country and investigate the possibility of homesteading. They spent some time in exploring southern Manitoba, secured work in the harvest fields at Portage la Prairie, and returned to Ontario for the winter.<sup>2</sup> In the following spring of 1882 Motherwell came west to Brandon by rail, and

1. See biographical sketch, "Mr. Scott's Colleagues", Regina Leader, Sept. 13, 1905.

2. Motherwell's experiences in 1881 are described in detail by F.J. Workman in the first of a series of articles, based on personal interviews with Mr. Motherwell, published in the Leader-Post (Regina), July 22-29, 1940.

then travelled by wagon and ox-team to Fort Qu'Appelle where he engaged a land surveyor to help him locate a homestead. There being no land available south of the Qu'Appelle he chose a site north of the river in the Pheasant Hills country, thus becoming one of the first settlers of the Abernethy district.

Motherwell had made a wise choice. The Dominion land surveyor responsible for the outline survey of Township 20, Range 11, west of the 2nd meridian, described its soil as a first-class, rich clay loam, well adapted for settlement.<sup>3</sup> Pheasant Creek crossed the south-east portion of the township and wood was in plentiful supply immediately to the east. This township having been sub-divided in 1883, Motherwell filed his homestead entry for the north-east quarter of Section 14 on March 26 of that year.<sup>4</sup> At the same time he made entry for the adjoining south-east quarter as a pre-emption. He then embarked on the careful program of husbandry that was to make his farm, later called Lanark Place, one of the finest in the province. By 1889, in making application for his homestead patent,<sup>5</sup> he was able to report that he had broken 100 acres and had enclosed seventy-five acres with a pole fence. His modest house, eighteen by twenty-four feet in size, was valued at \$400, and he had erected a log stable, sixty by thirty feet, valued at \$100. He then had thirty head of livestock, a marked increase over the yoke of oxen and three horses with which he had begun. He was granted letters patent for

3. C.F. Miles, in Descriptions of the Townships of the North-West Territories (Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1886)

4. Sask. Department of Agriculture, Lands Branch, Entry in Township General Register.

5. Archives of Saskatchewan (hereafter cited as AS), Department of the Interior, Homestead Files, No. 215741.

his homestead on December 3, 1889,<sup>6</sup> and completed the purchase of his pre-emption on May 31, 1890.<sup>7</sup>

Subsequent improvements to his farm included the building of an impressive house of cut field stone in 1897 and a stone barn in 1907. The material, obtained from nearby coulees, was gathered stone by stone for several years before enough was assembled for building. This substantial program was undertaken on the earnings of the farm, without any outside financial assistance.<sup>8</sup> The planting of shelter belts and shrubbery began with cottonwood cuttings obtained from the Indian Head Experimental Farm. Motherwell told of "cutting off branches from the cottonwood trees and of tying them together with the halter shank and bringing them home in the waggon on the return trip from Indian Head where he had been drawing grain a distance of about twenty-five miles."<sup>9</sup> Many of his trees were planted from seed.<sup>10</sup> The caragana hedges were eventually strong enough, he said, "to turn a bull or stallion".<sup>11</sup>

Motherwell's name has frequently been associated with the discovery of the dry farming technique of summerfallowing. At least one account<sup>12</sup> states that the discovery was made on his and a number of other farms in the Indian Head district in 1886, as a result of fields having been left fallow while the men were absent during the North-West Rebellion the

6. Ibid.

7. Township General Register, op. cit. Mr. Motherwell acquired additional property in later years but his farming operations were always carried out from the original homestead on which he continued to reside.

8. AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture file (1): F.H. Auld to J.G. Rayner, June 13, 1917.

9. Ibid.

10. AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture file (1): A.F. Mantle to F.M. Chapman, Sept. 19, 1914.

11. Personal Papers of Dr. F.H. Auld: Motherwell to F.H. Auld, Sept. 17, 1934.

12. W.J. Rutherford, "Economic Resources of Saskatchewan", in Canada and Its Provinces, (Toronto: Publishers' Association of Canada, 1914), Vol. XX, Part 2, p. 560.

previous year. Evidence now available indicates that, while Motherwell engaged a man to drive his team in transporting supplies for the troops, he managed to sow his land in 1885. He broadcast the seed by hand and harrowed it in with a two-year old Shorthorn bull.<sup>13</sup> This situation is confirmed by his application for homestead patent in which he showed that in 1885 he cropped all the acreage he had broken by that year.<sup>14</sup> In a letter written many years later, Motherwell stated: "Eight-six was our first experience of a real dry year. ... Where an occasional fallow had been made the year previous--85--the resultant crop of wheat thereon ran from 15 to 25 or 30 bush."<sup>15</sup> Another resident<sup>16</sup> of the Abernethy district relates that Tom Rogers, who homesteaded the south-east quarter of Section 28, left his farm, on which he had broken and cropped a few acres in 1884, to take advantage of the lucrative pay for transport drivers in the Rebellion. He made arrangements with neighbours to plant his field. Apparently it was prepared for seeding but owing to the scarcity of labor some or all of it was left fallow. In 1886 this acreage produced a crop which yielded much better than neighbouring fields. Motherwell was much impressed by this phenomenon and drew it to the attention of his friend, Angus MacKay, of Indian Head. The latter investigated the conditions under which the grain had been grown; this was the basis for the experiments he proceeded to undertake at the new Dominion Experimental Farm. The discovery of dry-farming, whether confined to the Rogers farm or to several, led to the almost universal application of the method on the plains of

13. AS, Office Files: R.T. Motherwell to L.H. Thomas, April 10, 1955.

14. AS, Dept. of the Interior Homestead File, no. 215741.

15. AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture file (1): Motherwell to F.H. Auld, Dec. 28, 1934.

16. Ralph P. Stueck. See AS, Office Files: R.T. Motherwell to L.H. Thomas, op. cit.; Stueck to L.H. Thomas, March 26, 1955.

western Canada.<sup>17</sup>

Motherwell commenced to practice summerfallowing and was rewarded in the dry year of 1889 with a crop of thirty bushels to the acre on his summerfallow.<sup>18</sup> In 1894 he began to grow brome grass seed which he had imported directly from Austria. This proved a profitable crop, with the advantage over wheat that it did not lodge, ripened ahead of frost, yielded a seed that was worth seven times as much as wheat, and, since it weighed so heavily for its bulk, required less trips to market.<sup>19</sup> In 1904, when the railway station was built within two miles of his farm, Motherwell went into oat growing extensively, and still later he began to grow winter rye because of its advantages in the western climate.<sup>20</sup>

Motherwell's interest in improved farming practices led him to take an active part in the local agricultural society at Indian Head. In 1887 he took prizes for seed grain at fairs sponsored by local agricultural societies at Fort Qu'Appelle, Wolseley, and Indian Head.<sup>21</sup> He entered an essay contest sponsored by the Indian Head Agricultural Society and won a first prize.<sup>22</sup> His paper, entitled "Oat Growing for the Qu'Appelle Valley",

17. Dry farming techniques may well be traced into antiquity. In Canada a form of summerfallowing was known to the Red River settlers who left their fields fallow one year out of five or six. See W.L. Morton, "Agriculture in the Red River Colony", Canadian Historical Review, XX, 560. A similar practice was followed by the Mennonite immigrants in Manitoba. W. Fream, "Canadian Agriculture", Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, 1885, notes: "The Mennonite farmers ... find it desirable to allow a bare fallow every fourth or fifth year, this being about the only case of fallow in Manitoba." The re-emergence and adaptation of the practice to semi-arid regions in North America in the 1880's appears to have been independent of earlier experience and occurred almost simultaneously in a number of districts in the United States as well as at Indian Head.

18. AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture file (1): A.F. Mantle, typed copy of manuscript prepared for Prairie Farm and Home, Christmas, 1914, p.3.

19. Ibid., p. 4.

20. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

21. Journal (Regina), Oct. 14, 1887.

22. AS, Dept. of Agriculture File No. 1037, Indian Head Agricultural Society: Report of Institute held at Indian Head, March 8, 1901.

was published in the Nor'West Farmer in 1901.<sup>23</sup> In this practical discussion, he stressed the need for proper preparation of the soil and the use of sound, well-cleaned and treated seed. He advocated early seeding, at a rate on the thin side to allow for nature to induce the grain to stool according to the capacity of the soil and the available moisture. His conversion to the "gospel of dry farming" was reflected in his counsel: "Do not begrudge a nicely prepared plot of fallow for a portion of your oat crop at least."

In the Abernethy community Motherwell was an elder of the Presbyterian church, <sup>clerk</sup>~~secretary~~ of its Session for a time, and chairman of the Church Building Committee. He was active in financial support and volunteer labor when construction of a stone church was begun about 1900.<sup>24</sup> He also served on the committee which undertook the organization of the local school district. When Abernethy S.D. No. 300 was erected, February 20, 1894, Motherwell was elected a trustee, served as secretary-treasurer for seven years, and then became chairman of the Board of Trustees until he entered the government.<sup>25</sup> He had also been appointed a Justice of the Peace for the North-West Territories in 1892.<sup>26</sup> In 1894 he took part in the organization of his township as a Statute Labour and Fire District.<sup>27</sup>

In 1891 Motherwell made an abortive foray into politics. He was

23. The Nor'West Farmer (Winnipeg), April 20, 1901, p. 239.

24. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1890's: Abernethy Presbyterian Church.

See also F.J. Workman, op. cit., Leader-Post (Regina), July 29, 1940.

25. Saskatchewan Department of Education, School District File No. 300.

26. O.C. No. 1631, N.W.T., July 1, 1892. Re-appointed, O.C. No. 2367, 1897.

27. The North-West Territories Gazette, September 1, 1894. The Statute Labour and Fire District was a rudimentary form of local government in the N.W.T. See A.N. Reid, "Local Government in the North-West Territories", Saskatchewan History, Vol. II, No. 1, p.4.

one of the organizers<sup>28</sup> of a meeting at Fort Qu'Appelle to select a candidate to oppose William Sutherland, the sitting member for the electoral district of North Qu'Appelle in the Legislative Assembly of the North-West Territories. The meeting drew only a small turn-out. Motherwell, whose name was proposed as a candidate, declined to stand on the grounds that the meeting was not representative of the constituency. The invitation to delegates had been mishandled with the result that some districts, including the town of Fort Qu'Appelle, had been overlooked. The local paper, the Vidette, commented editorially:

Mr. W.R. Motherwell ... gave his reasons for refusing to accept the honor at their hands in a most manly and straight forward manner, and by so doing he proved himself to be a man of strong convictions and honest intentions, and well qualified to look after the interests of all of his constituents should he at any time be honored with the confidence of his neighbors as their representative in the Assembly or any other position of trust, and should he at any future time allow his name to be placed in nomination as an independent candidate he may be sure of the support of very many of all shades of politics.<sup>29</sup>

Three years later he undertook his first election campaign. A general election to select a new Legislative Assembly for the North-West Territories had been called for October 31, 1894. At a public meeting in Fort Qu'Appelle William Sutherland appealed for re-election while he was opposed by G.F. Guernsey who had announced his candidacy. In brief speeches following those by the candidates, A. Hamilton and W.R. Motherwell "alluded to a number of irregularities in the performance of certain work in the Balcarres and Abernethy districts."<sup>30</sup> At that time public works expenditures in the North-West Territories were administered by the sitting member in his electoral district. Sutherland replied to the charges at the meeting by

28. Qu'Appelle Vidette, Oct. 29, 1891.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., Oct. 18, 1894.

promising to look into the matter and to discontinue contracts with parties who might have accepted payment for work which they had not satisfactorily completed. On nomination day, October 24, Motherwell was nominated in addition to Sutherland and Guernsey. At the public meeting that day Motherwell "reiterated two or three cases of boodling, and stated that that these not being explained to his satisfaction was the grounds for his coming out at this late hour."<sup>31</sup> The Vidette, despite its comments on Motherwell at the time of the 1891 election, strongly supported Sutherland and made light of Motherwell's candidacy. In one column it printed an uncomplimentary bit of verse, which avoided the use of names beyond the rather obvious title, "Smotherwell's Soliloquy", and in another column concluded its report of a public meeting at Abernethy at which the candidates had spoken with this note: "The meeting ... closed with cheers for Sutherland and groans for Motherwell, both of which were given with a will and considerable spirit."<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, the electors of the Abernethy poll gave Motherwell a majority, as did neighboring Balcarres, but he trailed behind in the other eleven polls in the riding. Sutherland won handily with 312 votes, Guernsey polled 183; Motherwell received only 71.<sup>33</sup>

Motherwell published a card of thanks in these words: "Thank you, friends, you fought nobly, but defeat is not necessarily disgrace, nor victory honorable."<sup>34</sup> The wording was prophetic. Suggestions of irregularities in the North Qu'Appelle expenditures continued. Motherwell took the lead in pressing for an official investigation with the result that, in 1895, Premier Haultain was appointed a special commissioner to enquire

31. Ibid., Oct. 25, 1894.

32. Ibid.

33. Corrected returns as published in Qu'Appelle Vidette, Nov. 8, 1894.

34. Ibid., Nov. 1, 1894.

into the charges. Motherwell expressed his strong feelings over delays in the matter in a letter to Haultain:

...your policy on this question has been from the first (to use a hackneyed phrase) one of masterly inactivity. ... You have seen fit to treat us with contempt and indifference, as if we were a lot of soreheads clamoring about nothing. While admitting that external circumstances might probably point in that direction for a time, you are surely now persuaded that such grave offences have been committed that the safety of the public interest demands a remedy.<sup>35</sup>

Motherwell stated bluntly that should Haultain persist in balking the investigation he would "refer the whole subject to the Dominion government and ask for a thorough enquiry on their part."<sup>36</sup> However, Haultain, in his report to the Assembly in 1896, confirmed the charges, although he exonerated the member of personal complicity therein.<sup>37</sup> Sutherland promptly resigned. A bye-election was called for December 1, 1896. While D.H. McDonald early announced that he would be a candidate,<sup>38</sup> rural demand for a public meeting to consider nominations resulted in a gathering of seventy electors in the Town Hall at Fort Qu'Appelle on November 14.<sup>39</sup> Three men, Messrs. Miller, Nicholls, and Motherwell, were nominated. Motherwell framed the principal issues in three questions:

- (1) Is it your wish to perpetuate the painful past in regard to the expenditure of public money in the district? (2) Has the time not come when the great agricultural interests of this district demand such recognition and representation of their views in the Legislature as their importance justify?
- (3) Would it not be in the interest of good government to assist in organizing an energetic though fair opposition to the present Executive?<sup>40</sup>

McDonald also addressed the meeting and then withdrew with his supporters while a ballot was taken. Motherwell was declared the choice of the

35. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1890's, Sutherland-Boyd case: Motherwell to Haultain, June 27, 1896.

36. Ibid.

37. The Vidette (Fort Qu'Appelle), Nov. 5, 1896.

38. Ibid., Nov. 12, 1896.

39. Ibid., Nov. 19, 1896.

40. Ibid.

meeting.

Attendance at the ensuing Motherwell-McDonald campaign meetings was hampered by extremely cold weather, but both candidates found space in the local paper to publish an "Address to the Electors". Motherwell's was brief. He appealed for support "as one whose interests are entirely the same as your own, and believe that in justice to yourselves you will determine that the Farmer's Candidate shall be your next representative in the Assembly."<sup>41</sup> The Vidette took up a neutral position and stated:

Naturally the contest has become more or less a question of the relation of either candidate to the past history of the constituency and the claims of each from a personal and business point of view to the support of the electors. Which-ever candidate is successful, his majority will not, we think, be a very large one."<sup>42</sup>

Motherwell polled 157 votes, far short of the total of 382 received by D.H. McDonald.<sup>43</sup>

Following this second defeat at the polls Motherwell abandoned any personal political ambitions for a time, although in Dominion politics he appears to have supported James M. Douglas more or less actively,<sup>44</sup> and worked on behalf of the Liberal party in his immediate district.<sup>45</sup> Shortly he turned to other means of advancing the interests of the farmers which he had sought to represent in the territorial Assembly.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., Nov. 26, 1896.

43. Ibid., Dec. 10, 1896.

44. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1890's: F.W. Pinkess to Motherwell, July 11, 1896. James Moffat Douglas was supported by the Liberals and the Patrons of Industry in the election of 1896, ran as an Independent Liberal in 1900. (See Gilbert Johnson, "James Moffat Douglas", Saskatchewan History, Vol. VII, No. 2, pp. 47-50.)

45. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1890's, Personal. This file contains annotated "Instructions to Scrutineers" issued by the national Liberal party for the election of 1896.

The circumstances surrounding the formation of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association have been described by a number of writers.<sup>46</sup> The Manitoba Grain Act of 1900,<sup>47</sup> drafted to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Shipment and Transportation of Grain of 1899, provided for general supervision of the grain trade by a warehouse commissioner and granted the farmer the right to ship his own grain and build flat warehouses to facilitate loading. It required the railway to furnish loading platforms where necessary. These provisions were expected to end the monopoly in grain handling extended to elevator companies by the railway and which had been attended by such evils as low grades, short weight, excessive dockage, and unfair prices. However, the crop of 1901 proved to be the largest the country had yet known; the railway was quite unprepared to move it. Elevators plugged up; farmers could not deliver their grain. The frustrations of the farmers were expressed in the Indian Head district at a meeting called by John Sibbold and John Millar. Motherwell attended this meeting but deplored the violence which was threatened by the more radical farmers.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, some sort of concerted action was indicated.

Motherwell and his neighbour, Peter Dayman, got together to discuss the situation.<sup>49</sup> They met in the living room at Lanark Place which might thus be said to be the cradle of the grain growers' movement in Saskatchewan. It was a cheerful, well-lighted room, with simple but comfortable

46. E.G., H.J. Moorhouse, Deep Furrows (Toronto: George J. McLeod, 1918); H.S. Patton, Grain Growers' Co-operation in Western Canada (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928); L.A. Wood, A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1924).

47. Statutes of Canada, 63-64, Victoria, Chapter 39.

48. See Patton, op. cit., p. 32; Moorhouse, op. cit., p. 46.

49. Moorhouse, op. cit., p. 46.

furnishings and a few Victorian adornments--a hanging lamp, two stuffed owls on the mantel over the fireplace, and enlarged portraits of Motherwell's parents on the white plaster walls. Motherwell, dressed in overalls and flannel shirt, heavily bearded and wearing a walrus moustache, made use of the table-height stone window sill to draft notices for a meeting of farmers to be held in Indian Head on December 16, 1901.<sup>50</sup> Both Dayman and he, the former a Conservative, the latter a Liberal, signed the notices to avoid the possibility of partisan interest being attached to the undertaking.<sup>51</sup>

The date of the meeting was chosen to coincide with the much heralded debate on the extension of the Manitoba boundary between Premiers Haultain of the North-West Territories and Roblin of Manitoba. With many people in town for the debate in the evening, the afternoon meeting in the fanning mill factory drew a sizeable turn-out of some seventy-five farmers. The aroused farmers agreed to form a Grain Growers' Association.<sup>52</sup> Motherwell was elected provisional President, and a meeting to draft a constitution was set for Indian Head on January 2, 1902. At this second meeting, Motherwell recapitulated the causes leading to the formation of the association:

50. This description of the setting for the meeting at Lanark Place was supplied by R.T. Motherwell in letter to A.R. Turner, December 30, 1954 (AS, Office files).

51. This was to avoid the fate of the Patrons of Industry, an American movement transplanted to Canada, which flourished in Western Canada in the mid-90's, but disintegrated before the end of the decade due to political candidacies and internal quarrels. See Wood, op. cit., Chap. 11.

52. See Moorhouse, op. cit., pp. 49-52, for description of the Indian Head meeting of Dec. 16, 1901.

There could be no doubt that there were many grievances to correct and he had every faith in the solution of many difficulties through the combined wisdom of the farmers of the West. The eastern papers had recently conveyed the news of the completion of the grain blockade. It was a most serious state of affairs and one which affected not alone every grain grower, but also every merchant, mechanic and professional man in the country. Cessation in moving the grain practically meant cessation of business. The aim of the association would be to indicate and press for a practical solution of as many problems now before them as were susceptible of solution.<sup>53</sup>

Motherwell, and other members of the Board of Directors, proceeded to address local meetings in eastern Assiniboia with the result that several branch associations were organized.<sup>54</sup> The Directors then convened the first annual convention of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association at Indian Head on February 12, 1902. In his presidential address, Motherwell reiterated his belief in the efficacy of concerted action and voiced the traditional agrarian antipathy to "big business":

The day has gone by for our remaining scattered, unbanded communities, a tempting bait to the ambitious designs of others. No one can deny that the farmer extracts the wealth from the soil by his industry and skill, in conjunction with the forces of nature, and no one can deny that in the past his rights have been ruthlessly trodden upon by dealers and transportation companies. It is a fact that in other branches of agriculture, such as dairy, fruit, and stock interests, all have recognized organizations, and it seems strange that grain growers have not before this realized the importance of organizing also.<sup>55</sup>

He went on to suggest practical steps that would alleviate the difficulties in grain handling. Changes should be made in the Grain Act to require the railways to supply loading platforms within a reasonable time after demand and to grant the right to load cars from vehicles whether there was a platform or not.<sup>56</sup> These proposals were incorporated in resolutions of

53. The Nor'West Farmer, Jan. 6, 1902, p. 22.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid., Mar. 5, 1902, p. 187

56. Ibid.,

the convention, together with another which would require the local railway agent to apportion cars, where there was a shortage, in the order in which they were applied for, and in cases where such cars were misappropriated by applicants not entitled to them the penalties of the act to be enforced.<sup>57</sup> The resolutions, pressed upon the federal government and debated in Parliament, were adopted as amendments to the shipping clauses of the Manitoba Grain Act at the session of 1902.<sup>58</sup>

The crop of 1902 surpassed the bountiful harvest of 1901. Despite the new provisions of the Grain Act, the C.P.R. was unwilling or unable to revise its practices in line with them. Elevator companies continued to command the available supply of cars. Loading platforms without cars were of no help to the farmers. Motherwell and Peter Dayman went to Winnipeg on behalf of the Grain Growers' Association and secured promises from C.P.R. officials that they would carry out the intent of the car-distribution clause of the Grain Act. The promises, however, were not translated into action at the local stations. The Association then took the more drastic step of laying a charge against the C.P.R. agent at Sintaluta for an infraction of the Grain Act in his allocation of cars. The celebrated case, tried before two magistrates at Sintaluta, resulted in the agent being fined fifty dollars and costs. The C.P.R. eventually appealed the case to the Supreme Court but that body upheld the magistrates' decision.<sup>59</sup> Speaking at a Grain Growers' meeting in Regina, March 27, 1903, Motherwell said, "The C.P.R. has got to keep the law no matter how many prosecutions we have to enter."<sup>60</sup> The company, however, bowed to the

57. Ibid.

58. Statutes of Canada, 2 Edward VII, Chapter 19.

59. See Patton, op. cit., pp. 35-36 for details of this case.

60. Regina Leader, April 2, 1903.

inevitable with good grace and instructed its agents to distribute cars in the order in which they were booked.

In his Regina speech Motherwell warned that the farmers must not relax their vigilance. "So long as the farmers of the West grew a product like wheat, he said, "it would be necessary to have an organization."<sup>61</sup> While the elevator companies realized they would now have to conduct their business differently, the farmers should not depend upon them. They must avoid the "ruinous way" of selling by the load. It was better to sell in bulk or through farmers' elevators. The latter should provide only handling facilities, since, he maintained, if they bought grain, they would be in the same position as the other companies, and their prices would be governed "by the same combine."

The Sintaluta test case publicized the T.G.G.A. Its membership grew rapidly and spread into Manitoba, where Motherwell assisted in forming the first local association at Virden, January 3, 1903.<sup>62</sup> Two months later a Manitoba Grain Growers' Association was formed. Their strength augmented by two members of this organization, Motherwell and Gillespie of the T.G.G.A. proceeded to Ottawa to confer with representatives of the grain dealers and the railway companies with the result that further refinements in the shipping clauses of the Grain Act were made at the session of 1903. The principles of direct shipment and equality in car distribution were thus firmly established. The Grain Growers then turned to effecting improvements in the grading and inspecting of grain shipments, meeting again with success.<sup>63</sup> Motherwell continued to hold the position of President of the T.G.G.A. until his resignation following his entry into the Scott cabinet.<sup>64</sup>

61. Ibid.

62. Patton, op. cit., p. 37.

63. Ibid., pp. 41-42.

64. Motherwell's resignation became effective at the Annual Meeting of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, February 6-7, 1906.

Motherwell's prominence as a leader of the grain growers, combined with his professional training in agriculture and practical experience as a farmer, made him an eminently satisfactory choice as Commissioner of Agriculture<sup>65</sup> for the new province of Saskatchewan. While party politics had not, nominally at least, entered into the make-up of the Territorial Assembly, with the passing of the Alberta and Saskatchewan Acts in 1905 the Dominion political parties began to organize on a provincial basis. Motherwell attended the Liberal provincial convention held at Regina in August, 1905 to elect a leader and adopt a platform.<sup>66</sup> He was appointed to the Resolutions Committee and moved the resolution respecting Agriculture and Ranching.<sup>67</sup> He was also elected to the provincial executive as the representative for the North Qu'Appelle constituency.<sup>68</sup> The Regina Leader interviewed Motherwell "as to the report that he was likely to be a candidate in North Qu'Appelle in the Liberal interest at the forthcoming provincial election."<sup>69</sup> He replied that "so long as he held the position he now does as President of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association he had no intention or thought of entering political life."<sup>70</sup>

On August 30, Walter Scott, who had been chosen Liberal leader, wrote

65. The office was known as Commissioner of Agriculture until Dec. 18, 1909 when the designation of Minister of Agriculture was adopted. Motherwell also held the portfolio of Provincial Secretary, Sept. 12, 1905 to August 19, 1912.

66. Regina Leader, August 23, 1905.

67. Ibid. The brief resolution read: "Resolved that, inasmuch as the progress and prosperity of the Province will depend almost entirely upon the development of its agricultural and ranching industries, the Provincial Government should assist these industries in every possible way."

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

to Motherwell: "There will likely be quite a number of the friends gathered here next Monday, and if at all possible I wish you would make a point of being here. A number of things require to be discussed."<sup>71</sup> The occasion of course was the inauguration ceremony of the province of Saskatchewan. On September 5, Lt. Governor Forget asked Scott to form a government. In a public statement, Scott said that he at once invited Calder, Lamont and Motherwell to join him. "Messrs. Lamont and Motherwell requested me to give them until the end of the week for consideration, to which I consented. All rumours as to friction and difficulty which have been in circulation are, so far as I know, quite baseless. Each of the gentlemen had consented to join the Government and this morning (Sept. 12) the full cabinet was sworn in..."<sup>72</sup> The rumours had been associated with Lamont;<sup>73</sup> there is no record of the considerations Motherwell may have taken into account in the few days which elapsed before he made his decision.

The selection of Motherwell drew favorable notice in the provincial press.<sup>74</sup> The Prince Albert Advocate said: "In the new minister the farmers of Saskatchewan secure one of themselves, a man who has their confidence and esteem and whose sympathies and active exertion in the past give assurance of what may be expected in his present position of responsibility." His home town Abernethan remarked that "better judgment could not have been shown," while the Indian Head Prairie Witness commented on his character in these words:

No word or hint of wrong doing has ever been laid against him and the great and only charge ever laid against him during his career is this, that in his advocacy of anything he thought would be for the benefit of his community or country, he ever

71. AS, Scott Papers: Scott to Motherwell, Aug. 30, 1905.

72. Quoted in the Regina Leader, Sept. 13, 1905.

73. Cf. The Daily Standard (Regina), Sept. 12 and 13, 1905.

74. Excerpts from provincial newspapers re the appointment of Motherwell were reprinted in the Regina Leader, Sept. 20, 1905.

sought the reform itself regardless of what men might think of his course. He found what he believed was the right way and that he pursued, let the opinions of others be what they might. Had he been less of a reformer and more of a politician he might have had a larger modicum of what is termed popularity. But it stands to his credit today that he has never been in the slightest sense of the word, either an opportunist or a trimmer.

Motherwell was thus embarked on a career of service to Saskatchewan agriculture that was to last, on the provincial level, for thirteen years. At the first provincial election he was returned as member for the electoral district of North Qu'Appelle but lost the seat in 1908. An opening was found for him in the Humboldt constituency where he won a bye-election later that year. Subsequently he successfully contested the Kindersley riding in 1912 and 1917. Scott made this comment on Motherwell's mixed record in winning elections: "An unusually good man, Motherwell had less political sense than any other man of my acquaintance. Prior to 1905 he had run two elections and lost deposits both times. Another deposit lost by him, and his usefulness in any party is nil."<sup>75</sup> His colleague, Calder, is reported to have said, "Motherwell was the hardest man to elect, but his policies elected everyone else in the Cabinet."<sup>76</sup> These policies form the subject matter of this thesis.

75. AS, Scott Papers: Scott to W.L.M. King, Oct. 8, 1919.

76. Quoted by Miss I. Cummings (long-time secretary to Motherwell) in interview with author, Regina, July, 1957.

CHAPTER TWO



POLICIES FOR AGRICULTURAL ADMINISTRATION

The agricultural policies which Motherwell put into effect were necessarily confined to the areas of responsibility which constitutionally lay within his competence. It is proposed at the outset to set forth these powers of government and the institutional framework established in connection therewith. To begin with, the provincial authority was subject to a concurrent jurisdiction with the federal government. In addition the province assigned certain functions to local government and to other agencies. This division of authority had emerged prior to 1905, under the territorial government, although important modifications occurred during Motherwell's term of office.

In the field of agriculture the territorial government enjoyed the rights of a province as set forth in the British North America Act. Section 95 thereof gave to both the provincial legislatures and the Parliament of Canada the power to make laws in relation to agriculture, provided that provincial laws were "not repugnant" to any act of the senior government. The territorial government established a Department of Agriculture in 1897 to control its activities relating to agriculture, statistics, and public health, including hospitals.<sup>1</sup> By 1905 this department administered

1. Ordinances of the North-West Territories, No. 18 of 1897. Previously these services had been undertaken by the Department of Public Works and other branches of the Executive Committee of the N.W.T. Legislative Assembly.

a wide range of services.<sup>2</sup> It supervised agricultural societies, sponsored institutes and demonstrations, compiled statistics, and issued informational bulletins. It registered livestock brands, administered the several ordinances designed to control animals running at large, imported pure bred livestock for resale to farmers, inspected shipments of livestock, and operated a bacteriological laboratory which primarily served the needs of the public health branch but also analysed samples relating to animal diseases. It carried out programs for the destruction of noxious weeds and predatory animals. It administered regulations for the control of prairie fires and appointed fire guardians. It supervised local rainfall and temperature stations under the direction of the Dominion Meteorological Office at Toronto. Finally it registered harvest labour requirements and assisted in the allocation of harvest excursionists.

The provincial department continued to provide these services inherited from the territorial government, and added extensively thereto during Motherwell's term of office. The initial organization of the Department included the Deputy Commissioner's office, which handled accounts, statistics and livestock matters, and the following branches: Fairs and Institutes, Weeds and Seeds, Dairying, the Bacteriologist, the Provincial Health Officer, and the Brand Recorder. A Bureau of Information and Statistics was organized within the Department during December, 1906, to consolidate the previous work in this field with the objective of compiling information concerning the natural resources, industrial possibilities, and agricultural and industrial progress of the province.<sup>3</sup> A Bureau of Labour was created in 1911, placed under the Department of Agriculture, and the problem of

2. Compiled from Annual Reports of the Dept. of Agriculture, N.W.T., 1898-1905, and by reference to the Ordinances of the North-West Territories.

3. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1906.

securing harvest labour assigned to it. In the same year the Livestock Branch was established. In 1913 the Co-operative Organization Branch was set up, and the Game and Museum Branch established to deal with the work of that nature previously handled by the Weeds and Seeds Branch. In 1914 the Department instituted a district representative service, established an office of Provincial Veterinarian, and set up a Debtors' Relief Organization.

Some indication of the growth of the activities of the Department is reflected in its annual expenditures. In the 14 months ended February 28, 1907 expenditures for agriculture and statistics totalled \$65,256.09. The following year, ended February 29, 1908, they amounted to \$92,822.03. Five years later (year ended February 28, 1913) they had reached \$195,330.55. This level of expenditure remained fairly constant throughout the war years, and was \$182,879.37 in the year ended April 30, 1918.<sup>4</sup>

While the framework of provincial administration was being elaborated, and various services added, the federal government, by virtue of its concurrent power, had become active in the area. In the North-West Territories the Department of Agriculture managed creameries, operated the Dominion experimental farm at Indian Head, contributed speakers for institute work, encouraged territorial entries in national and international exhibitions, and, through its Veterinary Branch, provided regulations and inspection relating to the health of animals. The North-West Mounted Police operated

4. These figures were compiled from the Saskatchewan Public Accounts. To provide a comparative basis with the figure for 1918, advances for butter and eggs, entailed in the operation of creameries, were deducted from the totals for the earlier years. The payments on this account were \$38,192.10 (1907), \$19,545.07 (1908), and \$238,428.63 (1913). These expenditures were offset by receipts from the sale of butter and eggs as follows: \$36,196.84 (1907), \$16,974.55 (1908), and \$232,961.32 (1913).

quarantine stations for imported livestock, assisted in veterinary services,<sup>5</sup> assumed responsibility for hide inspection,<sup>6</sup> and were constituted fire guardians under territorial ordinances. The federal government also exercised important regulatory powers relating to the transportation and marketing of grain. Much the same situation prevailed after the formation of the province. Examples of concurrent jurisdiction in practice during Motherwell's ministry will be treated later. The federal department decided to discontinue its management of creameries, believing, as its Minister pointed out, that it "could not consistently continue to operate the creameries in the Northwest with provincial autonomy established."<sup>7</sup> The Saskatchewan department, as we shall see, assumed responsibility for this service.

The policies and regulations governing the disposal of public lands in Saskatchewan had important implications for agricultural development. While the management of crown lands was assigned to the provinces by the B.N.A. Act, this power was not extended to the three prairie provinces, but retained by the federal government for the purposes of Canada.<sup>8</sup> Since this reservation continued until 1930, the Saskatchewan department was not involved in the management of crown lands in the period under review. Motherwell regarded the question of jurisdiction as a political and constitutional problem in which he shared the views of the Scott government as a whole.<sup>9</sup> At the same time it was inevitable that entrants for crown lands

5. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, N.W.T., 1898, p. 61.

6. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, N.W.T., 1900, p. 63.

7. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Sessional Papers of Canada, 1906-7, Paper No. 14, p. ix.

8. Statutes of Canada, 4-5 Edward VII, Chap. 42, Section 22.

9. See his early view, reported in the Morning Leader (Regina), April 6, 1906, and his support of annual resolutions on the matter in the Legislative Assembly after 1911.

would present various problems to the Saskatchewan minister, and Motherwell carried on a great deal of correspondence with federal officials on their behalf. He was quick to take up cases where some injustice seemed apparent or to intercede where a settler was honestly trying to fulfill his homestead duties but because of circumstance requested some relaxation of the federally prescribed regulations.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to federal and provincial jurisdictions in agriculture, certain responsibilities devolved upon local government. This policy had its beginning in the territorial period when provision for local participation was made in such matters as controlling prairie fires and compelling the destruction of noxious weeds.<sup>11</sup> When the Saskatchewan government passed the Rural Municipality Act in 1909<sup>12</sup> certain powers relating to agriculture were assigned to rural municipalities. Local councils might pass by-laws to provide for planting trees on highways and public places, to prevent prairie fires, to grant aid to agricultural societies, and to provide ways and means of exterminating animals harmful to agriculture. Other sections of the act relieved the department of the administration of the herd and pound ordinances and of weed inspection in areas organized as rural municipalities.<sup>13</sup> The hail insurance scheme embarked upon by the territorial

10. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Homesteads. This file contains 14 folders of correspondence of this nature.

11. As early as 1886 provision had been made for Fire Districts (See A.N. Reid, "Local Government in the North-West Territories", Saskatchewan History, Vol. II, No. 1, pp. 1-13). The Municipal Ordinance (Consolidated Ordinances of the North-West Territories, 1898, Chap. 15, and revisions, 1899-1904) accorded municipalities the power to make grants to agricultural societies, plant trees on highways and other public places, and compel the destruction of noxious weeds.

12. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1908-9, Chap. 6, assented to Jan. 23, 1909.

13. Similar responsibility for the appointment of inspectors and enforcing the provisions of The Noxious Weeds Ordinance was extended to Local Improvement Districts by an amendment to the Local Improvements Act (Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1908-09, Chap. 7, Section 12).

government, and to which reference will later be made, was subsequently revamped and passed over to the control of the rural municipalities.

The provincial department also recognized the rôle of various agricultural associations in carrying on work of an educational nature. Thus annual grants were made to the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, the Cattle, Horse, Sheep, Swine, and Poultry Breeders' Associations, the Winter Fair Board, and the Regina and Saskatoon Exhibition Associations,<sup>14</sup> as well as to agricultural societies for exhibition work. Of a different nature was a grant paid for a number of years to the Salvation Army to assist in its work of bringing agricultural workers and domestics to the province. Much more significant, however, was the part to be played by the provincial university. Indeed, as it came to pass, Motherwell transferred to it some of the most important work of his department.

The need for an agricultural college in the new province had received general recognition. The Territorial Grain Growers' Association, meeting at Moose Jaw, February 6-7, 1906, passed this resolution:

We, the Grain Growers' Association, recognize the fact that Saskatchewan is pre-eminently an agricultural province, and that the majority of the people will always be agriculturalists. In view of this, we would most respectfully urge our legislators to establish an agricultural college at the earliest possible moment.<sup>15</sup>

14. An annual grant of \$500 was paid to the S.G.G.A. from 1907 to 1915. An annual grant of \$1,000 to the Sask. Stock Breeders' Association appears in the Saskatchewan Public Accounts for the fiscal years 1907-08, 1908-09, and 1909-10. The annual grants to the separate stock growers' associations commenced in the fiscal year 1910-11 at the level of \$500 for the Cattle Breeders', \$400 for the Horse Breeders', and \$300 each for the Sheep and Swine Breeders' Associations. These grants continued throughout the period under review but varied in amount; e.g., they totalled \$4,400 in 1912-13, but only \$1,400 in 1917-18. An annual grant of \$300 was paid to the Sask. Poultry Breeders' Association from 1907-08 to 1917-18.

15. The Nor'West Farmer, February 20, 1906, p. 166.

In the Throne Speech debate in the Legislative Assembly later that year, J.A. Sheppard, M.L.A. said "he hoped that an agricultural college would soon be established."<sup>16</sup> Demonstrating his own concern, Motherwell had, in 1906, instituted a program of providing scholarships to encourage Saskatchewan boys to attend agricultural college at Winnipeg or in eastern Canada. To these were added scholarships for girls to take home economics.<sup>17</sup>

The University Act of 1907, under which the provincial university was established, did not specify areas in which instruction would be given. However, in the debate during the passage of the bill through the Legislative Assembly, Calder, the Minister of Education, remarked that the government "looked forward to the time when the university would include instruction in all the sciences and industrial and commercial education as well."<sup>18</sup> Haultain, the leader of the opposition, stressed that "among the subjects embraced should be ... that most important of the professions, agriculture."<sup>19</sup> Newspaper reports of the discussion on this bill fail to indicate that Motherwell expressed an opinion in this regard. However, simultaneously the government put through a Supplementary Revenue Act, providing for the levying of a direct tax on occupied lands in the province, five per cent of the revenue from which would go to the establishment and maintenance of an agricultural college and five per cent to the establishment and maintenance of the University of Saskatchewan.<sup>20</sup> This Act seemed to envisage the establishment of separate institutions in the tradition of the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph, with which Motherwell was so familiar

16. The Canadian Annual Review, 1906, p. 458.

17. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1908, p. 54.

18. Report of debate in the Legislative Assembly, Regina Standard, March 13, 1907.

19. Ibid.

20. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1907, Chap. 3, Section 15.

and which he apparently wished to see adopted in Saskatchewan.<sup>21</sup> In addressing the Provincial Educational Convention at Regina, May 22, 1908, Motherwell said:

I hope that the time is not far distant when we shall have an agricultural college in this province; and when that time comes I shall do all in my power to see that the College is housed and equipped in a manner consistent with the dignity of the profession that it is designed to serve and that it is not less liberally endowed and provided for than the university itself.<sup>22</sup>

A separate institution would seem to be implied in this statement in "An Address to the Electors", issued by Premier Scott prior to the provincial election of August 14, 1908: "The organization of an agricultural college will be an important feature in the work of the next Legislative term."<sup>23</sup>

Since the University Act was so framed as to ensure the freedom of the institution from governmental control, a decision to embark on any program in agriculture was the prerogative of its responsible officers. The relation of agriculture to the University was raised by the Chancellor at the first Convocation on January 8, 1908 and by Professor W.C. Murray in his letter accepting the invitation to be a candidate for the presidency.<sup>24</sup>

At a meeting of the Board of Governors held at Regina on August 20, 1908 it was decided to interview "the provincial government with a view to constituting an agricultural college as a department of the University",<sup>25</sup> and, at its next meeting, on September 2, a committee comprised of the new

21. Cf. W.C. Murray, "The University of Saskatchewan", Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Vol. XXXV, 1941, p. 108.

22. AS, Department of Agriculture files, Agricultural Education.

23. The Canadian Annual Review, 1908, p. 491.

24. W.C. Murray, op. cit. Note that the first Convocation was twice postponed. When it finally met on January 8, 1908, Chancellor Wetmore delivered an address; so it may be assumed that this was the occasion cited by Dr. Murray.

25. W.C. Murray, op. cit., p. 106.

President and two members representing the Senate and the Board of Governors was instructed to inspect various universities in the United States. President Murray reported to the Senate on November 19 that the committee "found opinion among University men and men in the agricultural colleges overwhelmingly in favour of keeping a College of Agriculture in a new province in close relation with the University. While fifteen or twenty years ago separation seemed best, to-day the changed conditions are in favour of union."<sup>26</sup> Murray therefore recommended that the University embrace a "College of Agriculture with the Experimental Farm, School of Forestry and department of Veterinary Science."<sup>27</sup> In its report the committee which visited other universities elaborated the reasons for the recommendation:

We believe that union will prevent the waste due to separate institutions. ...While union will place at the disposal of the students of agriculture the literary, scientific and social advantages of the university, it will also bring the university students into closer touch with agriculture, and quicken their interest in the great industry of the province."<sup>28</sup>

The Board of Governors decided at its meeting on April 5, 1909 that the College of Agriculture "should be located at the same place as the provincial university, and that all departments of university work be centred in the same locality."<sup>29</sup>

Motherwell, meanwhile, decided to investigate the problem further, and sent his new deputy minister, W.J. Rutherford, to go over much the same ground covered by the University committee.<sup>30</sup> When Rutherford came to similar conclusions, Motherwell consented not only to the establishment

26. Ibid., p. 109.

27. Ibid., p. 108.

28. Ibid., p. 111.

29. Ibid., p. 107.

30. Ibid., p. 111.

of an agricultural college as an integral part of the University but decided also to transfer to it the educational and extension work then associated with his department.<sup>31</sup> Thus the University was embarked on an agricultural program which was to include, in addition to the instruction of intramural students and valuable scientific work, the holding of short courses at the University and throughout the province and the promotion and supervision of the varied activities of agricultural societies and Homemakers' clubs.

Motherwell's doubts with respect to combining the agricultural college with the University had apparently centered on the possibility that agriculture might suffer in the attention and finances it would receive at the hands of a university concerned with arts and science generally. As a safeguard against this, an amendment to the University Act was passed at the session of 1911 providing for an Advisory Council for the College of Agriculture.<sup>32</sup> It was to be comprised of eleven members, including the Minister of Agriculture and other representatives of the provincial government, the University, and various provincial societies.<sup>33</sup> Its duties were to inspect the facilities and work of the College, to consider the regulations of the University concerning the work to be carried on by the College and its extension department, to discuss plans for the advancement

31. The transfer of the management of agricultural societies was provided for in an amendment to the Agricultural Societies Act (Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1909, Chap. 31).

32. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1910-11, Chap. 24.

33. Ibid., Section 6: The Council was to consist of the Minister of Agriculture, the President of the University, the Dean of the College of Agriculture, the respective Presidents of the Sask. Grain Growers' Association, the Winter Fair Board and the Union of Saskatchewan Municipalities, two members appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, one appointed by the Board of Governors of the University, and two elected by the Convention of Agricultural Societies.

of the program of the College, and to report annually thereon to the Senate and Board of Governors, and to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

The experiment, unique in Canada, of integrating agricultural training with the general program of the University, worked well from the start.

In 1914 the Advisory Council in Agriculture reported as follows:

Your Advisory Council, having heard the report of the work of the College of Agriculture, including the Extension Department, and having inspected the buildings, residences and dining hall, classrooms and laboratories, barns, stables, poultry houses and shops, and also the equipment of the various departments; and having taken notice of the instruction being given to the 400 or more farmers assembled at the various short courses and conventions now in session, beg to express our approval and appreciation of the very excellent provision that has been made by the Board of Governors in these respects.

...

We note with great satisfaction the harmony and good fellowship that exists between the students and staff of all the faculties of the University. It appears to your Council that this condition of affairs is bound to result in great good to the future development and prosperity of Saskatchewan.<sup>34</sup>

Motherwell not only transferred some of the most popular activities of his department to the University; he also provided almost all of the original faculty in Agriculture from his staff. His Deputy Minister, W.J. Rutherford, became its first Dean; with him went departmental branch heads, John Bracken, as Professor of Field Husbandry, T.N. Willing, as Professor of Natural History, and F.H. Auld, as Director of Agricultural Extension. Later, President Murray wrote: "Be it said to their everlasting credit that the Minister and the Deputy Minister, as Dean of Agriculture, made the College of Agriculture and with it the University of Saskatchewan a great institution in the service of the highest things for the public good."<sup>35</sup>

Motherwell and his departmental officials co-operated closely with the

34. University of Saskatchewan President's Report, 1912-14, p. 4.

35. W.C. Murray, op. cit., p. 111.

College of Agriculture in its extension work. In commenting on the varied activities carried out during the years 1910 and 1911 -- farmers' meetings, agricultural fairs, competitions in standing fields of grain and good farming, ploughing matches, demonstration tests -- Dr. Murray noted: "There has been the most cordial co-operation between the Department of Agriculture and the University in working out these different movements for agricultural improvement. This highly desirable state of affairs is due in large part to the broad-mindedness of the Minister of Agriculture, Hon. W.R. Motherwell, and his Deputy, Mr. A.F. Mantle."<sup>36</sup>

It should be noted that Motherwell was careful to observe the spirit of the University Act in his dealings with the College of Agriculture. This is exemplified in his reply to a man who had applied to him for a position on the staff of the College:

... appointments to the staff of the Agricultural College are recommended by Dean Rutherford and endorsed by the Board of Governors of the University. It is not within the province of this department to recommend an appointee for any vacancy either in the faculty of Agriculture or any other faculty of the University as all these things come under the jurisdiction of the University Board of Governors.<sup>37</sup>

To an M.L.A. who had supported the applicant, Motherwell added:

... Dean Rutherford is very particular in making selections and would look upon it as unwarranted interference if I suggested anything in the nature of even hinting at an appointment for him.<sup>38</sup>

It is not inappropriate to comment here that Motherwell, through his own careful selection, was able to command the services of extremely able administrative officers to head the branches of his department and to occupy the office of Deputy Minister. When he took over the department,

36. University of Saskatchewan President's Report, 1910-11, p. 11.

37. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, U. of S. College of Agriculture file: Motherwell to C.S. Weight, June 5, 1913.

38. Ibid., Motherwell to M.L. Leitch, M.L.A., June 5, 1913.

the Deputy Commissioner was J.R.C. Honeyman, who had come to Canada in 1885 to homestead near Pense, but had spent five years in the N.W.M.P., worked for a time in the Indian Department, and had been a reporter for the Regina Leader and editor of the Moosomin Spectator before being appointed chief clerk of the Department of Agriculture in 1898. Motherwell regarded Honeyman as "a very good departmental clerk, but that was all he was. He was lacking in the knowledge necessary for one in his position."<sup>39</sup> Hence it is not surprising that he offered the position to A.P. Ketchen of Winnipeg in August, 1906.<sup>40</sup> Ketchen, a graduate of the Guelph college, former Assistant Dominion Livestock Commissioner, and at the time member of the editorial staff of the Nor'West Farmer, accepted, was appointed Acting Deputy on October 1, 1906, and confirmed as Deputy Commissioner on January 1, 1907. Ketchen died only eighteen months later, after suffering a paralytic stroke while judging a ploughing match at Creelman, June 26, 1908.

Motherwell engaged Professor William John Rutherford of the Manitoba Agricultural College to succeed Ketchen. He occupied the position until August 31, 1910 when he assumed his duties as first Dean of the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan. He was replaced by Alfred Frank Mantle who had come to the department from the Manitoba Free Press in 1909 to head the Bureau of Statistics and Information. Mantle enlisted in the Army in 1915 and was killed in action at Courcelette, France, on September 26, 1916. Francis Hedley Auld, who had been Acting Deputy, was appointed Deputy Minister on November 1, 1916, a position he was to occupy

39. Motherwell speaking in the Legislative Assembly, as reported in the Morning Leader (Regina), March 12, 1907.

40. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Ketchen file: A.P. Ketchen to Motherwell, August 9, 1906.

for thirty years.<sup>41</sup>

Motherwell's personal correspondence reflects his close relationship with his deputy ministers. The counsel of these very capable men was undoubtedly an asset in his public career. Conversely, his careful supervision and advice appears to have been equally important in the sound administrative record of his department. His stature as Minister is enhanced by his wise choice of assistants, including not only the deputy ministers but also the several branch heads<sup>42</sup> whom he brought to the department and who had distinguished careers to their credit.

41. F.H. Auld, a graduate of Prince of Wales College, Charlottetown, joined the department as head of the Bureau of Information and Statistics in 1906, became Superintendent of Fairs and Institutes in 1909, went to the University as Director of Agricultural Extension in 1910, and returned to the department in 1914.

42. Representative of these were John Bracken, W.A. Wilson, W.W. Thomson and J.G. Rayner.

## CHAPTER THREE

### POLICIES RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

A major feature of the work of agricultural agencies, Motherwell believed, should be educational work to promote better farming methods, which in turn would produce greater yields and improved quality in both grain and livestock. The ultimate objective of his educational policy was a sound and stable agriculture. As he saw it, this involved the not unrelated principles of conservation and diversification, both of which, as they applied to the area of low annual precipitation in the southern and western part of the province, he equated with dry farming. This message, he said, must be repeated over and over again:

Conservation is getting to be an old word but while old with many, it is still new in application to a good many. The Gospel of Salvation is an old story and yet we have to keep hammering away at the unbelieving. In the same way the gospel of dry farming, while getting to be an old story, is comparatively new to hundreds and thousands and so long as there are unbelievers, the work must go on.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps he best summed up all that he associated with dry farming in his "Ten Dry Farming Commandments",<sup>2</sup> composed during a lengthy absence in Chicago where, though remote from the scene of their application, he was concerned for the welfare of the land and the people who made their living

1. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agricultural Education: Motherwell to H. McKellar, Sept. 22, 1914.

2. See below, p. 39.

from it.

In his "commandments" he prescribed that the land be fallowed every third year and that no weeds be allowed to grow upon it. He admonished the farmer to plow early and deep, to use the harrow throughout the year, to sow early and deep enough to reach the moisture, and thinly enough to withstand the ravages of drought and hot winds. Thus would the farmer conserve and make best use of the limited moisture. He directed the farmer to diversify his operations by raising horses, cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry, and by growing pasture, fodder, and roots. Thus would he not dissipate too greatly in his lifetime the fertility of the soil and he would at the same time be protected against adversity.

Dry farming, as Motherwell enunciated it in his "commandments", was more than conservation and diversification; it was a way of life. He called upon the farmer to devote himself exclusively to his occupation and to study its problems unceasingly. He reminded him that "intelligent and timely hard work", as well as speeches and resolutions, were necessary to increase production. He advised the farmer not to live alone, but to join the Grain Growers' Association, the agricultural society, and any "like minded organization that is good", and to work through them for the welfare and upbuilding of Saskatchewan agriculture. He warned him to avoid "bigness", big farms and big outfits, and the mortgages that stemmed from them.

Motherwell knew that "no stereotyped method or system of farming can be devised that is applicable to all the varying conditions in so vast a domain as Saskatchewan."<sup>3</sup> Some of the methods of cultivation and all of

3. W.R. Motherwell, "Why Agricultural Operations in Saskatchewan Should be Diversified," An Address to the Agricultural Societies' Convention, Regina, Dec. 12, 1907, Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1907, pp. 178-181.

the advice on diversification in his dry farming commandments applied to the whole province. Exclusive wheat growing, owing, he said, to the large returns obtained at times, was predisposed "to encourage extravagance, imprudence, speculation, landlordism, and indifference to home-making as against money making, the credit system, elevator difficulties, the weed nuisance, together with a general tendency to drift off the farms into the towns and villages in search of a less anxious and strenuous life; whereas, diversification of farm products brings with it a certain ease of mind, sense of security and permanency on account of lessened risk...".<sup>4</sup> Hence Motherwell advocated diversification in grains and livestock throughout the province.

The extensive educational program was directed in large part to the new settlers. When Motherwell took office the great flood of immigration to the Canadian west was at its crest. The rural population of Saskatchewan numbered 209,301 in 1906; in 1911 it was 361,037; by 1916 it had reached 471,538! Another index of this growth is seen in the numbers of occupied farms which increased from 55,971 in 1906 to 96,372 in 1911, and to 104,006 in 1916. Many of the newcomers were unfamiliar with the requirements of Saskatchewan soil and climate for successful farming, and often they were further handicapped by a language barrier. In the older districts too, there was need to encourage better tillage and other practices. Moreover there was the problem of instructing rural young people to become good farmers. Motherwell threw himself wholeheartedly into this work, devising policies and participating in the various activities.

Much of the educational program which Motherwell carried out was not

4. Ibid., p. 181.

new, but rather a continuation or elaboration of that commenced in the territorial period. One of the earliest policies, dating from 1886, was the establishment and supervision of agricultural societies.<sup>5</sup> These were designed to give farming people the opportunity to meet and discuss their problems, hear speakers, sponsor competitions, and hold exhibitions or fairs. In an address to the Yorkton Agricultural Society in 1909, Motherwell said he looked upon the societies as co-partners with the Department of Agriculture. They were, he continued:

... the outside staff of the Department in matters pertaining to agricultural education, research, enquiry or experiment,  
 ... the best and most accessible medium through which we can reach the multitude of scattered settlements with their diversified conditions, difficulties and requirements, with the view of co-operating with them in the solution of the many new and difficult problems that are continually cropping up in the life of new settlers.<sup>6</sup>

Motherwell sponsored a number of refinements in the regulations governing these societies. He explained to the Legislative Assembly in 1906 that the tendency had been to introduce amusements and sporting events at the expense of the purely agricultural features. The object of his bill was to revive the latter as far as possible, by offering increased grants based on the number of members and of institute meetings, experiments, seed grain competitions and fairs.<sup>7</sup> As we have seen, Motherwell's most significant change of policy in this field was to transfer supervision of these activities to the University in 1910, although the minister remained responsible for the establishment of new societies, and the government for

5. Ordinances of the North-West Territories, 1886, No. 8.

6. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agricultural Societies: Motherwell to Officers and Members of the Yorkton Agricultural Society, Jan. 2, 1909.

7. Report of the debate, Morning Leader (Regina), April 25, 1906. The bill was given effect in the Act respecting Agricultural Societies, Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1906, Chapter 38.

annual grants to aid in their work.<sup>8</sup>

Motherwell personally devoted a good deal of time to agricultural societies, acting as honorary president of several, speaking to meetings, and, on occasion, travelling out to organize a new society.<sup>9</sup> He carried on a considerable correspondence devoted to resolving their difficulties. One of the requirements was that they must be thirty miles distant from each other. Motherwell, convinced of the efficacy of this provision in order that strong societies be established, refused numerous requests to relax it. His usual suggestion to such petitioners was they avail themselves of the opportunity for institute work, and join in the exhibition features of the society already established nearby.<sup>10</sup> The annual convention of these societies became one of the important agricultural gatherings in the province. Here directors of societies arranged their annual fair circuits, discussed provincial legislation affecting their work, and heard valuable papers read by competent authorities on various phases of farm life. Motherwell took an active part in these conventions.<sup>11</sup>

Motherwell also participated in the programs of the farmers' institutes, which were, in effect, educational meetings in various parts of the province, held in conjunction with local agricultural societies where the latter existed. These periodic meetings are to be distinguished from the earlier Farmers' Institutes, which existed for a time in the North-West Territories.<sup>12</sup>

8. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1909, Chapter 31, Sections 6 and 37.

9. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agricultural Societies: Motherwell to W.L. McGillivray, March 27, 1908.

10. Ibid., Motherwell to S.S. Simpson, April 5, 1910.

11. E.g., he opened the convention at Regina, Jan. 31 - Feb. 3, 1911, presided at an evening meeting, and spoke to the women's section.

12. See F.H. Auld, "Farmers' Institutes in the North-West Territories", Saskatchewan History, X, 41-54.

In 1907 the department sponsored seventy-four institute meetings, with the Minister speaking at six on the topic, "Features of Successful Grain Growing".<sup>13</sup> He continued to be active in this line of work, addressing in one year (1910) no less than twenty-six institutes on the themes, "Methods of Cultivation Suitable for Saskatchewan", "Making Homes on the Prairie", and "Tree Planting".<sup>14</sup> Motherwell regarded requests for foreign language speakers as a "natural desire", and arranged to have speakers familiar with the German language sent out on a number of occasions.<sup>15</sup> In addition to institute work, Motherwell made a practice of holding a series of meetings each year in his own constituency. Although these might have political implications, he chose to devote them to imparting practical information on agricultural matters. In the spring of 1915, the Manitoba Free Press noted: "The Hon. W.R. Motherwell ... recently made a trip through his constituency, and instead of talking politics he talked seeding, and many were the shrewd questions asked by the large audiences which attended these meetings."<sup>16</sup>

As well as emphasizing the spoken word, the department issued numerous publications designed to improve farm practices, a policy which had been instituted by the territorial government. Between 1905 and 1918 not less than seventy bulletins and special publications were issued. Representative of the subject matter were these titles: "Weeds of the Farm and Ranch" (printed in Icelandic, German, and English), "Hints for

13. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1907, p. 178.

14. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1910.

15. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Farmers' Institutes: Motherwell to E. Werner, Jan. 27, 1911.

16. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Grain: Clipping from Manitoba Free Press, March 22, 1915.

"Flax Growers", "The Grading of Cream", "Pioneer Problems", "Sheep in Saskatchewan", and "Practical Pointers for Farm Hands".<sup>17</sup> Motherwell was constant in his attention to this work. He called for publication of new titles as the occasion arose, edited proofs, and in some instances drafted the original himself.<sup>18</sup> The preparation of "Ten Dry Farming Commandments" was a personal project which he undertook during a stay in Chicago in the winter of 1914-15 to take treatment for sciatica.<sup>19</sup> These guide posts, which he framed in the pattern and language of the Decalogue, were subsequently issued by the department as a leaflet, and widely copied in the press.<sup>20</sup> Motherwell, as his correspondence indicates, often answered enquiries at length, rather than by sending out a bulletin or passing the letter on to a subordinate for reply.

In 1906 two innovations in agricultural instruction were the Travelling Dairy and the Special Seed Train. The former was an attempt by the Saskatchewan department to improve the quality of dairy butter by giving instruction in milking, handling and separating milk, cooling and ripening cream, churning, salting, working and preparing butter for market.<sup>21</sup> This project was continued until 1916. The Special Seed Train, organized by the Dominion government in co-operation with the Canadian Pacific Railway, toured the province to demonstrate the importance of clean

17. See C. MacDonald, Publications of the Governments of the North-West Territories, 1876-1905, and of the Province of Saskatchewan, 1905-52 (Regina: Legislative Library, 1952) for other titles.

18. See AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Farm Buildings, for his careful checking of proofs of a joint bulletin series with the College of Agriculture and the Department of Forestry, British Columbia; also AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture files (1), 1906-1919: Motherwell to Mantle, Jan. 2, 1915, for his outline of pamphlet on fall rye.

19. AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture files (1) 1906-1919: Motherwell to Mantle, Jan. 21, 1915.

20. See Dry Farming and Rural Homes, Vol. IX, May, 1915, p. 4.

21. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1906, p. 104.

seed. Accompanied by competent speakers, the train reached an audience of 28,000 persons. Motherwell joined the train for a time as one of the lecturers.<sup>22</sup> Much the same principle was revived in 1914 when a Better Farming Train, under the joint auspices of the department, the College of Agriculture, and the railways, was organized to tour the province. Some idea of its reception is seen in the fact that in 1915 18,000 men, 12,000 women, and 8,000 children visited the train.<sup>23</sup> It was in operation during the remaining years of the period under review.

Still another innovation of the period were the Good Farming Competitions. Early in 1909 John McDonnell, of the McDonald Hills district near Cupar, wrote to Motherwell for suggestions in connection with a competition he had decided to sponsor to determine the best all round agriculturalist in his district.<sup>24</sup> Motherwell replied that this might be called a "good farming contest", along the line of contests held in Manitoba for a number of years. He suggested a score card for grading the various activities on which entrants might be judged and offered the services of the department in providing judges.<sup>25</sup> The contest at McDonald Hills proved a success and was repeated in 1910. Subsequently the work was taken up by the Extension Department at the University. A number of ploughing matches were organized in the province in 1908. In 1909 there were ten; the department supplied judges, of whom Motherwell was one.<sup>26</sup> After 1910 services relating to these contests were also passed over to the Extension Department.

22. Ibid., p. 121.

23. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1915, p. 23.

24. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-13, Agricultural Competitions: McDonnell to Motherwell, March 29, 1909.

25. Ibid., Motherwell to McDonnell, April 1, 1909.

26. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1909, p. 122.

Just prior to the war Motherwell instituted two programs designed to bring educational activities and extension work closer to the people, both extensively in terms of covering the whole province, and intensively in sponsoring numerous projects in each municipality. The first, that of agricultural secretaries, was one of self-help on a municipal basis; the other, that of district representatives, was provided by the provincial government. Writing in 1913, Motherwell expressed the opinion that

... the revenues of our farmers could be increased fifty per cent if we had a good live man situated in every municipality who would co-operate with and advise the farmers on the one hundred and one things that are so necessary, particularly the new comers. Probably forty per cent of the settlers who go on our pioneer farms in Saskatchewan have no knowledge of agriculture in any country, much less prairie agriculture, and many of them make distressing and expensive mistakes largely for the want of some person to confer with and advise them.<sup>27</sup>

It was with this idea in mind that earlier in the year the department submitted to rural municipal councils two plans for local action.<sup>28</sup> The first plan suggested the employment of a paid agricultural secretary to take charge of weed inspection and direct the people in better farming methods. The second plan called for the employment of a person who would undertake a less ambitious program on a part-time basis. The department promised to provide advice, and the important material help of seed for variety tests and grain growing contests, to municipalities which employed secretaries. Fifty-five rural municipalities adopted the first plan, while a great many more undertook the second.<sup>29</sup> The scheme got off to an auspicious start, but indifferent tax collections in the drought year of 1914 and scarcity of

27. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agricultural Education: Motherwell to M.P. Tullis, Sept. 5, 1913.

28. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1913, pp. 89-91.

29. Ibid.

labour as the war progressed meant that the program did not get a fair trial. Motherwell summarized the experience in this plan in speaking to the rural municipal convention at Moose Jaw, March 7, 1918:

I have already referred to the ready response of many municipalities to the suggestion of spending a sum of money for the support of agricultural secretaries. I overlooked saying that a dozen or so still have agricultural secretaries and one municipality I am informed has appointed a man at a salary of \$2,000.00 per annum. I realise however, that many others did not continue to appoint agricultural secretaries. I also realise that it is a very difficult matter to find men who combine the high qualifications needed to carry on this kind of work successfully, and when they are found they must have the sympathy, the co-operation and the support not only of the council but primarily and essentially of the ratepayers. The ready response of our municipal councils and the large number of appointments the first year surprised us and shows us that some action is desired but I fear that the difficulty of finding the needed type of man will militate against the extension of the Agricultural Secretary system as at first proposed.<sup>30</sup>

Meanwhile the district representative service had also been inaugurated.

In discussing the need for closer contact with the farmers, the Deputy Minister, A.F. Mantle, stated in his Annual Report for 1913:

The most promising means of establishing this connection seems to be the district representative, or officer of the department, stationed in a definite area to link up the people in that area with the various branches of the department at Regina and of the College of Agriculture at Saskatoon.<sup>31</sup>

Among the recommendations of the Saskatchewan Educational Commission, 1913, whose investigations included agricultural education, was that "provision be made for the appointment of expert district representatives ... to assist the Department of Agriculture and the College of Agriculture in promoting the welfare of rural communities."<sup>32</sup> To some extent this policy was

30. AS, Motherwell Papers, Addresses and Articles, 1914-18: Press Release of Motherwell's Address to the R.M. Convention, Moose Jaw, March 7, 1918.

31. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1913, p. 8.

32. Report of the Saskatchewan Educational Commission (Regina; King's Printer, 1915), p. 48.

initiated in 1914 when the Weeds and Seed Commissioner placed five field representatives in different parts of the province. During the summer these men assisted with the Better Farming Train and held numerous institutes.<sup>33</sup> Their success led Motherwell, at the end of the year, to recommend that his deputy proceed with arrangements to open district offices.<sup>34</sup> The first district representatives were appointed in the spring of 1915 to take charge of district offices at Shaunavon, Swift Current, Rosetown, and North Battleford. These were all on the west side of the province where the Deputy Minister said "the serious loss from crop failure could have been largely averted by right tillage methods."<sup>35</sup> In 1918, commenting to the rural municipal convention on the occasion noted above, Motherwell said:

I do not wish to commit the government in any way to a rapid extension of the system, as the difficulty of getting the highest type of men will also be felt here. But, I think, that an arrangement can be made whereby the provincial government would be responsible for the selection of the men and the payment of their salaries while the municipalities in which they work could jointly contribute enough for travelling expenses, office help, printing and stationery. This is one way in which I hope the government and the municipalities can co-operate.<sup>36</sup>

It was in connection with the district representative service that Motherwell was able to initiate the program of demonstration plots which he had had under consideration for some years. The operation of a number of demonstration farms would serve to reach more of the rural population without overlapping with the work of the Dominion experimental stations.

33. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1914, p. 97.

34. AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture files (1) 1906-1919: Motherwell to Mantle, Dec. 23, 1914.

35. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1915, p. 12.

36. AS, Motherwell Papers, Addresses and Articles, 1914-18: Press Release of Motherwell's Address to R.M. Convention, Moose Jaw, March 7, 1918.

This belief he set forth in a private letter in 1911:

I have been for some time under the impression that a larger number of these small demonstration stations would serve our province better than a smaller number of large experimental farms. These, however, need not interfere in any way with the experimental farms under the direction of the Dominion government as we have them, as there is an excellent work for them to perform which they are performing in a very satisfactory manner; but there are hundreds of thousands of our farmers who never get within seeing or hearing distance of these farms who would doubtless find it convenient to visit a smaller farm nearby.<sup>37</sup>

To the editor of the Saskatchewan Farmer, Motherwell wrote in September, 1914:

Lectures, no matter how good they may be, are incapable of reaching some people. First, because they won't go to hear and second, even if heard, they won't follow. We must appeal to such through the eye by ocular demonstration. It is my hope to do some of this class of work in the western portion of our province during the coming summer, not on an extensive, expensive scale, but simply working in conjunction with one or more leading farmers in each municipality. This is for your own information only as I have not my plans sufficiently matured at this date to make them public.<sup>38</sup>

By March, 1915 Motherwell was ready to start the program. During a tour of the province he announced that the department would undertake a series of small demonstration plots, about twenty-five acres in size, which would be scattered throughout the province, particularly in the western portion, to demonstrate "what can be done by proper soil cultivation even in a dry country."<sup>39</sup> This scheme was carried out through the newly appointed district representatives. In one area alone, North Battleford, demonstration plots in growing fodder corn, fall rye, and proper methods of summerfallow, were arranged on thirty farms.<sup>40</sup> The next year Motherwell indicated that it was

37. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1910-18, Experimental Stations: Motherwell to W.S. Simpson, April 21, 1911.

38. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agricultural Education: Motherwell to McKellar, Sept. 22, 1914.

39. Canadian Annual Review, 1915, p. 654.

40. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1915, p. 21.

the hope of the department, associated with the College of Agriculture, to "inaugurate to a greater extent than at present educational demonstration work throughout the province by having some leading farmers in the newer districts co-operate with us by having such work carried on on their own farms under the direction and supervision of some of the College officials or our district representatives."<sup>41</sup>

As intimated in his statement quoted above, Motherwell had no intention of encroaching on the Dominion work in experimental farms. This policy he re-emphasized from time to time.<sup>42</sup> Meanwhile the Dominion government extended its system by establishing experimental farms at Rosthern in 1908 and Scott in 1911. Motherwell impressed upon the federal Minister of Agriculture the need for another station in the south-west, and recommended that it be located at Swift Current.<sup>43</sup> In 1920 that community was selected for the site of the fourth Dominion experimental farm in Saskatchewan. It should be noted too that Motherwell continued the practice, begun in 1904, of sponsoring an annual excursion to the farm at Indian Head. This became a popular event at which several thousand people, brought in part by special trains, arrived for a day at the farm, saw the work in progress, and listened to speakers, Motherwell usually among them.

Motherwell did view with considerable alarm the decision of the Dominion government in 1915 to establish illustration farms in Saskatchewan along much the same lines as his own demonstration plots. He wrote privately to Mantle:

41. AS, Motherwell Papers, Experimental Stations: Motherwell to J.M. Bruce, Mar. 2, 1916.

42. Ibid., Motherwell to J. Richardson, Jan. 25, 1909; Motherwell to Bruce, Mar. 2, 1916.

43. Ibid., Motherwell to Fisher, May 28, 1910 and March 25, 1911.

If the Dom. gov. is bound to go ahead with their Demonstration work in Sask. then by all means have them segregated, as it is very unwise for the two systems to overlap in any given territory. We are going in West of the 3rd & they should keep out of that territory and devote their attention to any other portion of the province if they must enter into this work. ... What does the eastern expert know of conditions & requirements in the drier and newer West? "Plow 7 inches deep in fall if you want to make sure of a crop the following year" is one of their mottos and methods. We don't want anyone let loose west of the 3rd preaching such agric. lunacy as that. I wd much rather we wd do all this class of work in the entire province, but inasmuch as we are not likely to have the means or the men to take care of it for many years, if the Dom. want to try their hand, keep them East of the 3rd which, while not as much in need of the help as West of the 3rd, is in more need than in Manitoba where that province is preparing to take hold.<sup>44</sup>

The Dominion government did proceed to operate illustration farms, several of which, at such places as Shaunavon, Cabri, and Maple Creek, were west of the third meridian. They were apparently conducted in such a way that Motherwell was able to approve of them, since, in an address at Maple Creek in 1917, he expressed his appreciation of this work, and recommended that the Dominion government, with its greater resources, establish at least two or three illustration farms in irrigated districts.<sup>45</sup>

Motherwell played a prominent part in two associations concerned with the advancement of agriculture in dry areas. These were the International Dry Farming Congress, and the Western Canada Irrigation Association. He served as President of both of them for a one-year term. His participation demonstrated his belief that their educational work was of significance to Saskatchewan farmers.

It was natural that Motherwell, the early convert to summerfallowing, should become interested in an undertaking to disseminate information on

44. AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture files (1), 1906-1919: Motherwell to Mantle, Jan. 2, 1915.

45. AS, Motherwell Papers, Addresses and Articles, 1914-18: Presidential Address to Western Canada Irrigation Association, Maple Creek, 1917 (typed copy).

dry farming. The germ of the Congress lay in the work of an American, Hardy Webster Campbell, who in the 1890's began to circulate publications on dry farming techniques. In order to consolidate his ventures, the Campbell System Farming Association was founded at Denver, Colorado in 1906.<sup>46</sup> The Association did not have time to get a program under way before internal differences of opinion over certain types of cultivation which it was proposed to advocate led to Campbell's withdrawal from the Board of Directors. His associates, principally representatives of railroad and real estate interests, proceeded to reorganize as the Scientific Farming Association and, in alliance with the Denver Chamber of Commerce, called a regional meeting of dry-farming exponents at Denver early in 1907.<sup>47</sup> This meeting launched the Trans-Missouri Dry Farming Congress "to encourage the use of every conservative practical method for developing the semi-arid regions of the West."<sup>48</sup> At the third Congress, to which representatives of foreign governments were invited, the name was officially changed to the International Dry Farming Congress.<sup>49</sup> While the early Congresses were devoted to speeches and discussions, an exposition of "dry-farmed" products was added in 1910, and an auxiliary Congress of Farm Women organized in 1911.<sup>50</sup> This expansion of the program was accompanied by an increased membership, which, together with gate receipts from the exposition and grants from state governments, became the main support of the Congress, in contrast with its early dependence on land companies and railroads. Between

46. For a history of the International Dry Farming Congress, see M.W.M. Hargreaves, Dry Farming in the Northern Great Plains (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 83-125.

47. Ibid., p. 95.

48. Ibid., p. 97.

49. Ibid., p. 120.

50. Ibid., p. 121.

Congresses, a small secretariat, which moved for the year to the centre selected for the next Congress, issued bulletins and a substantial periodical in which instructive articles by scientists and practical farmers were published.<sup>51</sup>

Motherwell made his first pilgrimage to the Congress when it came to Billings, Montana in 1909.<sup>52</sup> For the next decade he was almost always in attendance, and through his department he encouraged Saskatchewan farmers to send exhibits to the exposition. The department bore the cost of shipping and assembling the exhibits. Alberta farmers had also become interested; a strong Lethbridge delegation secured the Congress for their city in 1912. The Saskatchewan government made a grant of \$5,000 to support this venture,<sup>53</sup> which proved to be an outstanding success. A special Saskatchewan train took delegates to Lethbridge. It was not surprising that the province, since Alberta was excepted, took the award for the largest provincial or state delegation, and captured many individual trophies as well. Motherwell, who had been an annual speaker and a vice-president for three years by this time, was elected President of the Congress for 1913.

The Congress moved to Tulsa that year, while enthusiasts in Regina prepared to invite the gathering to the "Queen City" in 1914. For a time it appeared that Regina might have to substitute for Tulsa, where political rivalry threatened to disrupt the Congress.<sup>54</sup> Motherwell insisted that

51. Dry Farming Congress Bulletin, 1908-10; Dry Farming, 1911; Dry Farming and Rural Homes, 1912-15; The Agricultural Review, 1916.

52. Motherwell spoke on "What Good Soil Culture Has Done for Saskatchewan"; was elected a vice-president of the Congress. See AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Dry Farming Congress.

53. Ibid., Motherwell to John T. Burns, Secretary of the Congress, Jan. 11, 1912.

54. Ibid., Motherwell to Burns, Nov. 7, 1912.

the Congress should go back to the States that year in order to preserve the international flavor, but it required a personal visit on his part to Tulsa, some months before the Congress, to resolve the conflict between the Oklahoma state and U.S. federal departments of agriculture, and other state politicians, as to who should participate in the local Board of Control which was set up for each Congress. The Tulsa Congress, with Motherwell presiding, was a moderate success, but Regina's ardor had waned somewhat, and, with the advent of the war, the Congress was never secured for the city. Saskatchewan exhibitors at the Congress repeated their success in a number of products for several years. Among the consistent winners was Seager Wheeler of Rosthern who, after winning the Shaughnessy prize of \$1,000 for the best milling wheat at the Land Exhibition in New York in 1911, added to his laurels by winning the "sweepstakes" at the Congress on several occasions.

Motherwell's early enthusiasm for the Congress was clearly indicated in his participation and in statements, such as this, in 1910:

... in my estimation this Dry Farming Congress is one of the best educational movements of the day, in respect to better and more scientific methods of farming as applied to semi-arid districts or districts with less than twenty inches annual precipitation.<sup>55</sup>

By 1914 he was becoming a bit alarmed at the tendency of the Congress to go into problems of farming generally. Just prior to the Wichita Congress of that year, he wrote:

The dry farming enthusiasts are finding some difficulty in rallying the old timers and I feel it is my duty to go and tell them the wonderful tale of what has been accomplished in Saskatchewan with dry farming methods under exceptionally trying circumstances. I think it is high time to cut all these fancy frills ... and all kinds of questions incidental to farming and get right down to the root of the matter, taking care of our

55. Ibid., Motherwell to Hon. R. Lemieux, April 5, 1910.

annual precipitation so that every drop does the work allotted to it.<sup>56</sup>

The war tended to diminish Canadian participation in the Congress, although after the influenza epidemic had adversely affected attendance at the 1918 Congress the Saskatchewan government granted \$1,500 to help make up the financial deficit.<sup>57</sup> With the removal of the Congress, after 1917, to cities such as Peoria, Illinois and Kansas City in areas quite remote from Saskatchewan and her climatic conditions, the provincial department and exhibitors lost interest in the Congress. For several years, however, the Congress had been a useful vehicle for grouping together a body of principles and practices aimed at the conservation and best utilization of moisture in semi-arid regions. It had presented them in a graphic way, and provided the enthusiasm of numbers which undoubtedly reinforced the teachings of provincial authorities.

Motherwell was for a shorter time involved in the Western Canada Irrigation Association. That organization stemmed from a convention of persons interested in irrigation which met at Calgary in 1907.<sup>58</sup> While the constitution of this Association was framed to cover the three western provinces, its main support was derived from the irrigation districts in British Columbia and Alberta. By 1913 it was co-operating actively with a Water Users' Association at Maple Creek.<sup>59</sup> The latter secured the annual convention of the Western Canada association for 1917. Motherwell, presumably by virtue of his position as Minister of Agriculture in the host province, had been elected to the presidency for that year, although

56. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agricultural Education: Motherwell to McKellar, Sept. 22, 1914.

57. AS, Dept. of Agriculture, Deputy Minister's files, No. 200: Memo to Deputy Provincial Treasurer, June 5, 1919.

58. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Irrigation: Official Call, First Irrigation Convention of Western Canada, July 17, 1907.

59. Ibid., N.S. Rankin, Secretary, Western Canada Irrigation Association to Motherwell, April 11, 1913.

he had not been able to attend any of the meetings up to that time. Indeed, in opening his presidential remarks at Maple Creek, he said, "I am sure it was not because of my practical knowledge of irrigation that I was appointed to this position, but I accepted it to show my sympathy with any movement tending to advance agriculture."<sup>60</sup> That sympathy he further demonstrated the following year when he travelled to Nelson, B.C. to address the annual convention there. On both these occasions he was concerned to point out the relationship between dry farming and irrigation. They were, he said, "twin sisters"; both were solutions to the problem of insufficient rainfall during the growing season; both might be practiced on the same farm.<sup>61</sup>

The varied educational program reviewed to this point was, of course, directed principally to those already engaged in farming. Motherwell's concern for college-level agricultural instruction has already been noted.<sup>62</sup> There remained the important population of elementary and high school students. Agricultural training for this group, since it would involve the school curriculum, was essentially a problem for the Department of Education, but Motherwell had some interesting ideas on the matter.

Speaking to the Provincial Educational Convention at Regina in 1908, Motherwell noted that attempts to introduce the study of agriculture in public and high schools in Canada had met with little success.<sup>63</sup> This he believed was due to the indifference of the people, many of whom believed

60. Motherwell, Presidential Address, Maple Creek, 1917, op. cit.

61. Ibid., see also Dry Farming Practices and How to Improve Them, An Address by Hon. W.R. Motherwell at the Western Canada Irrigation Association Convention, Nelson, B.C., July, 1918 (Calgary: Western Canada Irrigation Association, 1918).

62. See above, Chapter Two.

63. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agricultural Education: Address to Provincial Educational Convention, Regina, May 22, 1908 (typed copy).

agriculture to be a menial occupation. Teachers themselves, he believed, were not interested in the subject; many of them were not competent to teach it, and, as a result, their pupils were not stirred with any great enthusiasm. He believed the remedy lay in impressing upon the minds of the teachers, and through them, upon the children, "a proper sense of the dignity of agriculture."<sup>64</sup> He went on to say:

I contend that there is no other calling open to man that affords a wider scope for the exercise and consequent development of all the higher faculties of his being than is to be found in agriculture.

We speak of our learned professions, and we say of one man that he is a geologist; .. we speak of another and we call him a chemist. ... We speak of another and call him a biologist; ... Any of these subjects is sufficient to engage the attention of the brightest and ablest minds for a lifetime. What shall we say then of a calling in which all of these sciences play so large a part? Surely it affords room for the exercise of the brightest and ablest scientific intellect.<sup>65</sup>

Beyond encouraging nature study, Motherwell did not envisage the introduction of agriculture in the public schools. He said:

Most of our country boys and girls do not get a sufficient drilling in the rudiments of general education, which, of course, should always precede any attempt at special education. I take it that the time of the average boy or girl under 14 or 15 years of age will be sufficiently occupied in securing a good working knowledge of English, mathematics, history, and other kindred subjects without attempting the intricacies of the natural sciences involved in agriculture.<sup>66</sup>

He did suggest, however, that some agricultural work might be introduced in the high schools, but was more prepared to advocate special classes for farmers' sons and daughters in a number of convenient centres, where, in addition to a certain amount of English and practical arithmetic, emphasis would be placed on the natural sciences involved in the practice of agriculture.

As noted above, the Saskatchewan government appointed a commission

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

under the chairmanship of D.P. McColl, Superintendent of Education, and with Dean Rutherford as one of its members, to investigate several phases of education, including agricultural education. The recommendations of this commission, which reported in 1913, were, as they related to school agriculture: (1) The introduction in the public schools of nature study and school gardening; (2) Short courses in agriculture in the high schools during the winter months; (3) The acceptance by the University of agriculture or household science in lieu of physics or chemistry in junior matriculation examinations, and similarly by the Department of Education in granting 2nd and 3rd class teaching diplomas.<sup>67</sup> These recommendations were very much in line with the views Motherwell had expressed five years before. The Department of Education took steps to implement some of them through the appointment in 1915 of two Directors of School Agriculture to supervise a program which included the training of teachers, teaching practical farm knowledge, encouraging school gardens and fairs, and improving school grounds.<sup>68</sup>

In the later years of Motherwell's ministry, the provincial program in agricultural education was aided considerably by federal funds. In 1912 the Borden government passed an Agricultural Aid Act<sup>69</sup> which made available \$500,000 to the provinces on a population basis to be used unconditionally. Motherwell announced that Saskatchewan would use its share, approximately \$34,000, for agricultural instruction through existing agencies.<sup>70</sup> The ready use made of these funds across Canada for similar purposes encouraged the federal government to make available the sum of \$10,000,000 over a

67. Report of the Saskatchewan Educational Commission, pp. 46-48.

68. Canadian Annual Review, 1915, p. 674.

69. Statutes of Canada, 2 George V, Chapter 3.

70. Canadian Annual Review, 1912, p. 534.

period of ten years under the Agricultural Instruction Act of 1913.<sup>71</sup>

During the first four years Saskatchewan apportioned the major part of its share to the University to increase its faculty in agriculture and expand its experimental and extension work. The Department used a lesser amount in carrying out its direct educational efforts, while funds were also assigned to the Department of Education to finance the agricultural training mentioned above.<sup>72</sup>

Motherwell's extensive educational program undoubtedly had a profound effect upon the development of agriculture in Saskatchewan. However, more than education in better farming methods was needed to meet many problems confronting the grain grower and the livestock man. Government action by way of regulation and assistance had been embarked upon in the territorial period; it was to be continued and extended under Motherwell.

71. Statutes of Canada, 3-4 George V, Chapter 5.

72. For an analysis of the expenditure of the Saskatchewan grant for the period 1913-17 (\$258,329.40), see Agricultural Instruction in Canada (Ottawa: Department of Agriculture, 1917), pp. 14-16.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### POLICIES RELATING TO GRAIN GROWING

#### 1. Crop Hazards

Grain crops in Saskatchewan, as elsewhere, are beset by natural enemies. Throughout the growing season the farmer may have to cope with noxious weeds, destructive animals, insect pests, and plant diseases. Making his occupation even more hazardous are the vagaries of the weather. Any one of frost, flood, wind, drought, or hail may result in partial or even total crop failure. Motherwell continued the territorial government's policy of intervention by way of regulation and assistance to control some of these hazards and to alleviate the effects of others.

Noxious weeds were probably the most harmful of the enemies attacking growing crops. Motherwell estimated that they had caused a \$25,000,000 loss to Saskatchewan farmers in 1915,<sup>1</sup> and he had tightened the regulations by several revisions of the Noxious Weeds Act. One of the more drastic steps permitted inspectors to destroy weeds, where owners or occupants of land failed to deal with them, and add the costs to the municipal assessment on the land.<sup>2</sup> Following protests by loan companies that such charges should not be made a priority over first mortgages, the regulation was relaxed only to the extent of limiting the maximum expense per quarter

1. Canadian Annual Review, 1915, p. 654.

2. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1908-9, Chapter 7, Section 13.

section.<sup>3</sup> The federal government through its Seed Control Act exercised a restraining influence on those who sold seed containing weeds; Motherwell made representations to the Dominion seed commissioner to have additional grains, as they came into use, brought under its provisions.<sup>4</sup> Yet, he remarked, "There is too much tendency to expect the state as represented by the federal, provincial and municipal governments to intervene in the matter of weed control."<sup>5</sup> He pointed to the obvious fact that no measures could be effective until "the man who grows weeds and thereby loses money sees that he himself must in the last analysis be his own weed inspector and weed eradicator."<sup>6</sup>

Almost as harmful was the ubiquitous gopher. While its control was left largely to municipal action, the department after a time undertook an extermination campaign by offering prizes to schools and individual students who killed the greatest numbers. Motherwell noted the result in the first year, 1917, with satisfaction:

The children of Saskatchewan have done exceptionally good work in reducing the numbers of the gopher pest in the province. ...the total number of gophers destroyed in the whole competition was 514,140 and out of this total number the winner of the Grand Prize destroyed 7,632 and Master Reiter alone, 2,092.<sup>7</sup>

Indicative of his personal interest in this problem was his eagerness to test a novel trap which had been designed by a farmer at Avonlea. There is no record of the ultimate fate of this invention which, it was claimed,

3. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Weeds and Agricultural Pests: Motherwell to C.W. Johnson, Aug. 6, 1915.

4. Ibid., Motherwell to G.H. Clark, Feb. 13 and Feb. 22, 1911.

5. AS, Motherwell Papers, Addresses and Articles, 1914-18: Press Release of Speech to R.M. Convention, Moose Jaw, Mar. 7, 1918.

6. Ibid.

7. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Weeds and Agricultural Pests: Motherwell to J. Filax, Reeve, R.M. #350, June 25, 1917.

would catch, kill and eject a gopher, then reset itself!<sup>8</sup>

The control of cutworms, wireworms, smut and rust was, during the period, largely a matter of experimentation and education. Rust occurred in serious proportions in 1916. Motherwell took steps at once to consult authorities in the United States in order to advise farmers when best to cut rusted crops and what policy to follow in using the straw for fodder.<sup>9</sup>

The recurrence of drought and crop failure raised the problem of supplying seed grain to impoverished farmers. In the territorial period seed grain had been distributed in 1886 and 1895. When a similar situation arose after the poor crop of 1907, Motherwell and Calder went to Ottawa early in February, 1908, where they secured a loan to enable the provincial government to take action.<sup>10</sup> Subsequently the Legislative Assembly approved this action of borrowing up to \$1,825,000 from the federal government to supply farmers with seed, and provided that liens be registered against their land as security for repayment.<sup>11</sup> Motherwell had to arrange for seed to be brought from Fort William, as supplies in the province were not sufficient. For this he was criticized by Haultain, who thought this action should have been taken in the fall before the grain had been shipped out. "As with regard to everything else that this government undertook," he said, "it was always very slow. Possibly that was due to the very deliberate way in which the Minister of Agriculture was apt to move."<sup>12</sup> He did not think the farmers need be grateful to the government since they could

8. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Gophers: Motherwell to L. Thompson, Oct. 16, 1915.

9. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Rust: Motherwell to Prof. H.L. Bolley, North Dakota Agricultural College, Aug. 31, 1916.

10. Canadian Annual Review, 1908, p. 475.

11. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1908, Chapter 8.

12. Reported in the Morning Leader (Regina), Apr. 7, 1908.

have obtained the seed themselves by mortgaging their crops.<sup>13</sup> However, many farmers would have had difficulty in making private arrangements, and if the government was to ensure recovery of its expenditure it must provide for cases where it might have to resort to execution of claims against the land itself. This eventuality was again recognized when, after the drought of 1914, the Dominion government supplied farmers with seed grain, fodder, and relief, but required the province to pass legislation providing similar security for the federal assistance.<sup>14</sup>

Motherwell contributed to the relief of farmers after the 1914 crop failure by setting up a Debtors' Relief Bureau in his department.<sup>15</sup> Through it voluntary arrangements were made with the creditors of applicants to permit the latter to sow and reap another crop before recourse was had to extreme collection measures. Even after the bountiful harvest of 1915 appeals continued to be received from debtors, but the agency was discontinued as "it was not considered in the public interest that the financial dealings of any class in the community should be regulated by the department except during unusual circumstances such as resulted from the crop failure of 1914."<sup>16</sup> When the need arose, the provincial government also passed legislation enabling rural municipalities to borrow money to finance the distribution of seed grain.<sup>17</sup>

13. Ibid.

14. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1915, Chapter 33.

15. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1914, p. 111. Note also that road construction projects were arranged for the western part of the province. Since this program was carried out by the Department of Public Works, Motherwell was not directly involved beyond recommending the work to be undertaken in his own constituency of Kindersley.

16. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1915, p. 10.

17. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1912, Chapter 31; 1917 (Second Session), Chapter 47.

As noted earlier, the problems of insufficient rainfall and soil erosion by wind were attacked through an educational program to promote suitable dry farming practices.<sup>18</sup> The climatic hazard which invoked major governmental action was hail. After the fraudulent conduct of some American agents in cheating a large number of farmers,<sup>19</sup> the territorial government instituted a voluntary scheme of hail insurance in 1902.<sup>20</sup> Administered by the Territorial Treasurer, this plan provided a maximum indemnity of \$4.00 per acre. The premium of fifteen cents per acre was submitted with an application fee of fifty cents. Deficiencies in the fund were paid out of the general revenue of the government. The plan, which gave the government a monopoly in the field, was continued by the new province in 1905.

Speaking to the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association in 1906, Motherwell observed that farmers had been indifferent to the plan, due perhaps to its voluntary nature and to the requirement that the premium be paid in cash. He stated that the two objections to the scheme were the uniformity of the premium without regard to the difference in the risk incurred and the difficulty in assessing the damage in partially destroyed crops.<sup>21</sup> To meet the objections of the grain growers Motherwell drafted a new bill the next year. According to George Langley, "When this bill was submitted to his party associates Mr. Motherwell could not get another man

18. See above, Chapter III. The converse situation of an over-supply of moisture was never extensive, although legislation, administered by the Department of Public Works, was enacted to provide for drainage districts and drainage projects (Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1909, Chapter 11).

19. Cited by Motherwell, Canadian Annual Review, 1906, p. 451.

20. Under authority of Ordinances of the North-West Territories, 1901, Chapter 9.

21. Canadian Annual Review, 1906, p. 451.

21a. Liberal Member of the Legislative Assembly; later Minister of Municipal Affairs (1912-21).

to give it his support; so the bill was torn up.<sup>22</sup> Instead, amendments were made in the original act to permit the farmer to insure for \$3.00, \$4.00 or \$5.00 per acre at premiums, respectively, of 11, 15, or 19 cents.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile the plan had been accumulating deficits of alarming proportions -- over \$100,000 in each of 1907 and 1908.<sup>24</sup> The government decided to abandon the scheme; the legislation was repealed at the session of 1908-09, and the field left open to private companies.<sup>25</sup> The S.G.G.A. deplored this action. At their annual convention in Weyburn in 1909 there was prolonged discussion of hail insurance, but it was decided to let the matter stand over until the next convention by which time it was hoped the government would frame some new system.<sup>26</sup> When such action was not forthcoming, they passed resolutions in 1910 and 1911 calling on the government to establish a compulsory provincial scheme to be financed by a universal land tax, subject to the right of a resident ratepayer to withdraw one section or less from the assessment and its benefits.<sup>27</sup> In 1912 the government decided to introduce a new scheme, but on a voluntary municipal basis.

In moving second reading of the government's bill, Motherwell noted that the rates charged by private companies had been very high.<sup>28</sup> In working with the S.G.G.A. in drafting the bill he had been mindful of the need for a comparatively low rate and a comparatively large insured acreage. The bill provided that a rural municipality could enter the scheme of its own

22. The Nor'West Farmer, Feb. 20, 1908, p. 137

23. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1907, Chapter 29.

24. See Public Accounts, Saskatchewan, 1908; 1909: Administration of the Hail Insurance Ordinance (Treasury Department).

25. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1908-9, Chapter 12.

26. Morning Leader (Regina), Feb. 19, 1909.

27. Grain Growers' Guide, Feb. 16, 1910, p. 31; Feb. 22, 1911, p. 10.

28. Morning Leader, (Regina), Feb. 17, 1912.

volition, whereupon it would assess its lands at the established rate, exempting urban and Dominion grazing lands. By giving due notice the individual farmer could withdraw fenced grazing or hay land and an unpatented quarter section upon which less than twenty-five acres had been broken. Twenty-five municipalities were required to join before the plan would go into operation. It would then be administered by a Hail Insurance Commission of three men, two to be chosen by the reeves of participating municipalities, and the chairman to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The indemnity was fixed at five cents per acre for every one per cent of hail damage over ten per cent. In committee the premium rate was debated at length; after strong representations by Motherwell and Langley it was set at four cents per acre for the first year.<sup>29</sup> Thereafter the Commission could fix the annual rate. If the funds at the end of the season were not sufficient to meet all claims the Commission was authorized to pay them on a pro rata basis.

The bill met little opposition in principle. Haultain said his group looked upon it "as at least a well-intentioned effort to meet what was undoubtedly an unfortunate and urgent situation."<sup>30</sup> With the enactment of this legislation, the hail insurance scheme got underway in 1913. Several amendments were consolidated in the Municipal Hail Insurance Act of 1915, including the provision that the Commission should report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs rather than to the Minister of Agriculture as had been the case previously.<sup>31</sup> The Commission realized a surplus in its first three years of operation; then came the disastrous hail season

29. Ibid., Feb. 24, 1912.

30. Ibid., Feb. 17, 1912.

31. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1915, Chapter 22.

of 1916. Despite the large premiums collected that year and a healthy reserve, the Commission had to settle claims pro rata. It had only \$1,500,000 to meet claims aggregating \$3,600,000.<sup>32</sup> Coping with this unfavorable development was no longer Motherwell's responsibility, but in his contribution to the Throne Speech debate, 1917, he pointed out that the difficulties in which the Commission found itself were due to the particularly bad storms of the previous year. The suggestion of the opposition to resurrect the original government system was no solution as that "had been tried and found wanting long ago."<sup>33</sup> Later in the session Langley, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, introduced a bill to enable rural municipalities under certain conditions to make up the unpaid balance of the 1916 claims,<sup>34</sup> and another which revamped the whole insurance scheme. The effect of the latter was to give control of the scheme in form, as well as in fact, to the rural municipalities.<sup>35</sup> The Act created a Municipal Hail Insurance Association comprised of delegates from the municipalities who would elect a Board of Directors to administer the plan.<sup>36</sup> Refinements in the setting of rates, indemnities, and withdrawal clauses were intended to safeguard the Association, and the Lieutenant Governor in Council was authorized to guarantee loans necessary to enable the Association to meet claims in any year.

## 2. The Harvesting and Marketing of Grain

The hazards which confronted the farmer during the growing season were indeed serious. The harvesting and marketing of the crop raised other

32. Morning Leader, (Regina), Feb. 28, 1917.

33. Ibid., Jan. 31, 1917.

34. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1917, Chapter 16.

35. Morning Leader, (Regina), Feb. 28, 1917.

36. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1917, Chapter 15.

problems of varying degrees of intensity. These led to government intervention by the federal and territorial authorities, and Motherwell found it necessary to continue and build upon this foundation.

Because of the need for extra laborers during the relatively short harvest season the territorial government had registered farmers' requirements and assisted in allocating harvesters brought in under special excursion arrangements with the railways. Motherwell's department, in this era of more farms and greater production, faced the annual problem of determining with some degree of accuracy the number of men actually required, the approximate date when they should arrive in the West, and the distribution throughout the province. Getting enough men was of course the basic problem. That the program met with considerable success is seen in the large numbers who were brought in: 3,742 in 1905; 14,034 in 1908; 21,491 in 1911; and, in the "bumper crop" year of 1915, 27,099. In that year temporary offices were opened at several centres in British Columbia in order to draw men from that province as well as from eastern Canada.<sup>37</sup> Minor troubles arose in connection with the conduct and welfare of the harvesters themselves. Motherwell was gratified to note, after the institution of provincial temperance legislation in 1915, that "the 27,000 necessary harvest hands this season came, helped in garnering the crops, and departed quietly with their earnings in their pockets, as contrasted with the frequent carousels and stranded stragglers of former years."<sup>38</sup>

The year 1915 also saw an acute shortage of threshing machines. Motherwell's department applied to the railways and obtained a special rate

37. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1915, pp. 178-179.

38. AS, Motherwell Papers, Addresses and Articles, 1914-18, Motherwell to Editor, Canadian Countryman, Nov. 20, 1915.

on threshing machines and crews. Departmental officers devoted a good deal of time to locating machines and arranging for their supply to districts where they were needed.<sup>39</sup> Regulatory functions were continued by Notherwell's department in connection with thresher employees, threshermen's liens, and, under the Noxious Weeds Act, preventing the spread of weed seeds in screenings and on moving outfits.

Undoubtedly the problems giving rise to the most widespread agitation occurred when the grain was ready for market. The wheat "blockades", which had been an important factor in the formation of the Grain Growers' Association, recurred from time to time and were the cause of considerable hardship. During the winter of 1906-7 the congestion reached such proportions that Notherwell had his departmental officials conduct an inquiry to ascertain the true situation.<sup>40</sup> Their conclusion was that at the end of February, 1907 about one-third of the grain had gone forward to the lakehead, one-third had filled the local elevators, and the remaining third, some thirteen million bushels, remained in the farmers' granaries, many of which were of temporary and poor construction. These findings were brought to the attention of the railway companies which renewed their efforts to get the grain moving before the wet spring weather.

Part of the difficulty lay in the lack of railway lines. Notherwell was in sympathy with the proponents of another outlet via Hudson Bay.<sup>41</sup> He was also associated in the Scott government's legislation at the session of 1908-09 to guarantee bonds issued by companies for the construction of

39. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1915, p. 11.

40. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1906, p. 60.

41. For example, see AS, Notherwell Papers, 1905-18, Railways: Notherwell to W.E. Knowles, M.P., Feb. 28, 1907.

branch railway lines in the province.<sup>42</sup> Shortly afterward he pointed out to a correspondent that the government had guaranteed the bonds of over 600 miles of railway, a program which, coupled with federal guarantees and C.P.R. extensions, promised considerable relief within a few years.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless the crop of 1911 produced another major blockade.

The annual report of the department for 1911 reflected the farmers' attitude to the situation, and, as an official report, expressed Motherwell's own view:

...there still remains about these figures a great deal to be explained away before the railways can be exonerated from the charge of not having lived up to their obligations as common carriers, heavily subsidized by the people, and consequently in duty bound to keep pace with the development of the country. The farmers of Saskatchewan are not concerned as to whether the car shortage is due to an insufficient number of cars, inadequate motive power, the lack of more second tracks, congestion in terminals, or a breakdown in the organisation of a railway, nor should they be expected to concern themselves with these technical questions. They know that the railways spend tens of thousands of dollars to bring settlers to the country and thereby commit themselves to the position that they can handle all the business offering and more as it shall offer. And they know, when the situation is examined, that only in the actual construction of branch lines, and not in their subsequent operation and the service given, are the railways living up to their obligations to the people as chartered, bonused and protected common carriers.<sup>44</sup>

Upon the close of navigation in 1911, the department made representations to the railway companies to extend special freight rates on wheat and oats to Duluth and Minneapolis. Considerable quantities were then forwarded for sale or storage in the United States, pending export.<sup>45</sup>

It was not surprising in view of these earlier experiences that the

42. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1908-09, Chapter 3.

43. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Railways: Motherwell to R. McKinnon, Jan. 26, 1909.

44. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1911, p. 9.

45. Ibid., p. 10.

crop of 1915 resulted in an even worse congestion, particularly along railway lines in the western part of the province. Early in 1916 Motherwell declared that millions of bushels of threshed grain lay exposed and could not get transportation either on railways or over impassable roads.<sup>46</sup> His strong representations to the Board of Grain Commissioners resulted in action being taken to allocate a larger proportion of cars to the affected area.<sup>47</sup>

While insufficient transportation facilities were a recurring problem, the most vigorous and continuous agitation of the grain growers had centered about the elevator system. The Manitoba Grain Act had afforded a measure of relief, but the provision of loading platforms had not proved as efficacious as expected. Small producers who found it necessary to deliver to the elevators in wagon lots complained of short weights, excessive dockage, unfair grades, low prices, lack of cleaning apparatus and special binning facilities, and mixing and substituting of grain. The Grain Growers' Grain Company, organized in 1906, did not undertake to operate elevators for some years. Motherwell observed, in 1907:

With regard to the Grain Growers' company I cannot see how any well informed person is justified in expecting any more from them than from any other grain company or any other member of the Grain Exchange. They are subject to the same marketing conditions and the same regulations, and give the same price, and I cannot see wherein is the difference although I am free to admit that some people look on it otherwise.<sup>48</sup>

One solution to the elevator question, adopted in a few districts, was the locally organized "farmers' elevator"; another was the plan for govern-

46. Canadian Annual Review, 1916, p. 722.

47. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Grain - Transportation: Motherwell to Dr. R.A. Magill, Chairman, Board of Grain Commissioners, Feb. 10, 1916.

48. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Grain Elevators: Motherwell to A. Shepherd, Nov. 23, 1907.

ment ownership of elevators which E.A. Partridge formulated in 1906.

Motherwell expressed his views on both of these schemes in a letter written early in 1907. The success of a farmers' elevator, he said, depended "almost entirely on the promoters, their knowledge of the trade, and their determination to stick together and make it a successful enterprise."<sup>49</sup> The experience had been that those organized with twenty or thirty shareholders had invariably got into difficulties; he believed that a smaller project organized by four to six farmers just as a shipping medium for their own and other farmers' wheat had a much greater chance of success. To the Partridge plan Motherwell said he was "diametrically opposed."<sup>50</sup> It called for provincially owned and operated elevators where grain would be weighed and graded through a government agency. Motherwell claimed that this feature made the scheme impracticable:

...[It] is evolved from start to finish without any reference whatever as to whether the Department of Trade and Commerce would put official inspectors and weighing masters in the proposed elevators. ...should the Dominion Government refuse, as they doubtless would, to install inspectors and weigh masters in as many elevators as we have shipping points throughout the three western provinces, what would become of this scheme? You can see that the whole idea is based upon a wrong assumption, and that is that the provinces have to do with the handling and inspection of our grain.<sup>51</sup>

"The whole thing," he remarked bluntly, "is entirely visionary, although it makes a very nice fairy tale."<sup>52</sup>

However, the Partridge plan was received with enthusiasm by the S.G.G.I. in convention in 1907.<sup>53</sup> At the close of the 1908 convention at Saskatoon

49. Ibid., Motherwell to D. McKinnon, Feb. 2, 1907.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Patton, op. cit., p. 81.

a permanent interprovincial council of the Grain Growers was organized, which took up as its first task the promotion of government elevators in the three prairie provinces.<sup>54</sup> At the spring session of the Saskatchewan legislature the opposition introduced a resolution calling on the government to investigate the subject, but on an amendment by Langley, supported by Motherwell, the question was postponed until after the Grain Growers had presented their case to the government.<sup>55</sup>

In November, 1908 the Grain Growers' representatives met with the three prairie premiers at Regina to urge uniform public ownership legislation in their provinces.<sup>56</sup> The premiers subsequently rejected the proposal on the constitutional grounds that it would invade federal jurisdiction.<sup>57</sup> Meanwhile, in the Saskatchewan legislature, Motherwell maintained that more elevators was not the solution. In his opinion "the proper solution of the existing difficulties was in what the Government hoped to do, that is, encourage the construction of branch railways and bring the railway as near to every farmer as possible with all the resulting advantages of loading platforms."<sup>58</sup> The next month, February, 1909, the Grain Growers in convention at Leyburn reaffirmed their stand on government operation, and decided to sponsor a publicity campaign thereon among their members.<sup>59</sup> That fall their secretary, F.W. Green, advocated the plan before the Assembly's Standing Committee on Agriculture. In December the Committee brought in a recommendation that the government "make searching enquiry into proposals looking to the creation and operation

54. S.G.G.A., President's review of year's activities, Morning Leader (Regina), Feb. 18, 1909.

55. Morning Leader, (Regina), Apr. 9, 1908.

56. Ibid., Nov. 27, 1908.

57. Patton, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

58. Morning Leader, (Regina), Jan. 7, 1909.

59. Ibid., Feb. 19, 1909.

of a system of elevators to effect the objects outlined by the Grain Growers' Association and to report its findings with all convenient speed so that action may be taken to give relief during the coming grain season."<sup>60</sup>

Speaking on this recommendation Motherwell stated that he was not in favour of government operation of elevators. He argued that as a result of the existence of the Grain Growers' Association and their commercial company, the extension of transportation facilities, and the formation of farmers' elevators, the farmers, particularly in the older districts, were getting nearer the Fort William prices than they ever had before. In the newer districts, however, grievances still existed. He believed, therefore, that inquiring into the matter from top to bottom and arriving at a solution was the proper procedure.<sup>61</sup> Premier Scott added that the grievances were well known, the government would endeavour as speedily as possible to put the recommendations into effect, and the inquiry would be into a practical scheme.<sup>62</sup> The motion was adopted unanimously.

The S.G.G.A. met at Prince Albert in February, 1910, where they reaffirmed their stand taken at Weyburn, and pledged themselves "to show a united front until our ends are attained."<sup>63</sup> Motherwell spoke at the convention. In reference to government ownership he said, "There were other methods that could perhaps be adopted of dealing with the question, and so long as they got the desired result, it did not perhaps matter which was taken advantage of."<sup>64</sup> He was in the unfortunate position of being unable to announce the membership of the proposed commission of inquiry.

60. Ibid., Dec. 15, 1909.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid., Feb. 11, 1910.

64. Morning Leader (Regina), Feb. 11, 1910.

He suggested that it might have five members, two of whom would be nominated by the Grain Growers.<sup>65</sup> Green at once informed the convention that he had a letter from Premier Scott promising that their organization would have three representatives.<sup>66</sup> The convention expressed its regret at Motherwell's failure to make a definite announcement and requested that three grain growers be appointed.<sup>67</sup> The government announced at the end of February the appointment of an elevator commission of three members, headed by Professor Robert Magill of Dalhousie University. The other members were George Langley and F.W. Green, both, of course, prominent grain growers. The executive of the S.G.G.A. promptly endorsed their appointment.<sup>68</sup>

The Elevator Commission submitted its report late in 1910. In a lengthy introduction it set forth the claims of the grain grower upon the state. He needed its assistance to provide "the basic conditions of transportation and communication, ...[and] for making known the conditions of successful farming."<sup>69</sup> He had the greatest claim upon the province, because on the grain, "the gold of the province", fell the burden of all the public services. Natural conditions were favorable to the development of a prosperous agricultural community, but they did not "relieve the legislature of the duty of furthering by every means in its power the main industry of the Province...".<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, "no province is rich enough ... to be able to afford the risk of investing millions of dollars in schemes that might fail. ... The Government should not only do something

65. Grain Growers' Guide (Winnipeg), Feb. 16, 1910, p. 7.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. Grain Growers' Guide (Winnipeg), Feb. 15, 1911, p. 7.

69. Report of the Elevator Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan (Regina: Government Printer, 1910), p. 17.

70. Ibid., p. 18.

for the farmer, but it should do the right thing for him."<sup>71</sup>

The Report then proceeded to examine and reject, in turn, a number of schemes proposed to the Commission, including municipal and district elevators, the proposal of the S.G.G.A., and the Manitoba system of government elevators upon which the Roblin government had embarked during the year. The Commission concluded that special legislation should be enacted to create a co-operative organization which would provide the maximum amount of local control consistent with ownership by the whole body of shareholders and management through a board of directors.<sup>72</sup> It outlined the institutional framework through which this might be achieved.

In keeping with these recommendations the Scott government drafted a bill which was presented to the Legislative Assembly at the beginning of February, 1911. The bill provided for a Grain Growers' Elevator Company of Saskatchewan with power to acquire and operate elevators, buy and sell grain, and do all things incidental to the storing and marketing of grain. Shares of the company were set at fifty dollars each and limited to ten per person. Locals were to be formed when supporters had subscribed to shares equal to the cost of the proposed elevator and had paid fifteen per cent of their value in cash. Furthermore the shareholders were to have a combined acreage of 2,000 acres for every 10,000 bushels of capacity of the proposed elevator. The Company would not commence business until twenty-five locals had been organized. It would be controlled by shareholder delegates from the locals. The officers of the S.G.G.A. were named as the provisional Board of Directors until the delegates could meet to elect a permanent Board. The Lieutenant Governor in Council was

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid., p. 96.

authorized to loan up to 85% of the estimated cost of construction or purchase of any local elevator. The detailed arrangements for payment of dividends, distribution of surplus funds, and creation of a reserve were to come into effect only after loans from the government had been repaid. The Legislative Assembly was also authorized to vote sums to cover expenses incurred in the organization of the company and its locals.

Copies of the bill were distributed at the Grain Growers' convention then assembled in Regina. The S.G.G.A., after a lengthy discussion, unanimously approved the co-operative scheme, subject to some minor revisions.<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile the longest debate in the history of the Saskatchewan legislature to that date ensued. Following Premier Scott's two-hour introduction of the measure on February 7, Haultain spoke for over four hours. He revealed his opposition at once and made it clear that he was "now more convinced than ever that Government ownership was the right course."<sup>74</sup> Much of his criticism centered about the rejection by the Commission and the government of the plan introduced by the Conservative administration in Manitoba. He maintained stoutly that "he didn't believe they had arrived at that depth of degradation that men could not be found to do their duty under government ownership without regard to politics."<sup>75</sup>

Motherwell, who followed Haultain, spoke for an hour, then adjourned the debate, and resumed his address for two and one-half hours the following day. In reference to the Manitoba plan he said, "We were pleased not because Manitoba, as we thought, had made a mistake, not because Manitoba,

73. Grain Growers' Guide (Winnipeg), Feb. 22, 1911, p. 32.

74. Morning Leader (Regina), Feb. 9, 1911.

75. Ibid., Feb. 10, 1911.

apparently, had got into a hole, but because we had escaped it."<sup>76</sup> He noted that the farmers' elevators had been isolated, whereas the system of elevators to be created would represent "a series of strong links welded into a strong chain." The central company was "the very crux of the bill, the feature which made it preferable in the farmers' eyes to the ordinary farmers' elevators."<sup>77</sup> He went on to point out:

There was nothing in the bill of a freakish or startling character. The principle of the bill was simply co-operation, and one would think the leader of the Opposition had never heard of that before. The same principle was embodied in the Dairymen's Act, which he had had the honor of chaperoning through the house. That act had been discussed in committee of the whole house for almost twenty minutes and not one word had been changed in the whole bill.<sup>78</sup>

He believed the opposition plan of government owned and operated elevators would require an absolute monopoly of storage facilities to secure it financially, a large capitalization at the outset, and would involve buying up the least profitable and useful elevators, and then closing up a number, which would result in interest charges and depreciation. The government policy of a co-operatively owned and operated system would have the advantage of financial support from those who would benefit from the system and its profits would be returned to the producer. It would pay only a fair price for elevators or construct new ones on a commercial basis. It would have freedom from political or partisan control and leave the province's credit unimpaired. It would give full control to the farmers; they would be loyal to it, and it would open up great possibilities for the future working out of the co-operative idea.

The opposition moved an amendment to the motion for second reading

76. Ibid., Feb. 13, 1911.

77. Ibid., Feb. 15, 1911.

78. Ibid., See below, Chapter V, for a discussion of the Dairymen's Act.

stating that the bill did not provide adequate relief for the farmer and that his disabilities could only be removed by a system of government elevators.<sup>79</sup> Motherwell participated in the ensuing debate for another hour and one-half. He reiterated his argument that the co-operative company would have the combined advantage of a line elevator company (trained management and sound financing) and of a farmers' elevator (local support and profit-sharing). It would be a large seller and dealer in grain, and could secure a seat on the grain exchange with the advantage of the commission savings resulting therefrom. He noted that there had been "a feeling abroad that they were doing too much for the farmers, but he held that anything which assisted to upbuild agriculture must in turn assist everybody else."<sup>80</sup> The opposition amendment was defeated on March 1. Haultain then adopted a more conciliatory attitude. His party, he stated, "would accept the bill not as something which they believed the farmers wanted, but as something which was aimed at removing evils under which the farmers suffered."<sup>81</sup> After Scott wound up the debate in a four-hour address, second reading of the bill was carried unanimously.

In committee stage a number of amendments were made in the clauses of the bill. The name was changed to that originally proposed by the Commission, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company.<sup>82</sup> A significant amendment proposed by George Langley was to enlarge the powers of the company "to do all things incidental to the production, storing, and marketing of grain."<sup>83</sup> The addition of the one word, "production", would

79. Journals of the Legislative Assembly, Saskatchewan, Feb. 17, 1911.

80. Morning Leader (Regina), Mar. 2, 1911.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid., Mar. 14, 1911.

83. Ibid.

give the company power to deal in commodities the farmer had to buy. Langley said it was not proposed that money obtained from the government would be used for the purpose; it would only be used in the grain business. The government split on this issue; Calder and Turgeon voted with Haultain against it, but, supported by Scott, McNab, and Motherwell, the amendment carried.

The Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company proved to be a marked success from the first. By the end of 1911 Motherwell could note:

I have much pleasure in reporting that this Elevator Company has got nicely on its feet and is being patronized liberally by the farmers in the vicinity of each local. There are now forty-six locals in all, organized. Of these thirty-one are in active operation, while the balance of the elevators are under construction.<sup>84</sup>

By the time of its second annual meeting in 1913, there were 13,156 farmer shareholders, grouped in 192 locals.<sup>85</sup> Meanwhile the Manitoba government had sought to disembarass itself of what had proved to be a disastrous enterprise. It was able to lease its elevators to the Grain Growers' Grain Company in 1912. The latter, after experiencing deficits in the first two years of operation, had the system working on a comparatively sound basis by the crop year 1914-15.<sup>86</sup>

The co-operative elevators served to remove many of the farmers' complaints about grain handling. Coupled with their original demand for provincial government elevators, however, had been an agitation for federal operation of terminal elevators. Motherwell believed initially that the same result could be obtained by government regulation:

84. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Grain Elevators: Motherwell to A.F. Totzke, M.L.A., Dec. 13, 1911.

85. Patton, op. cit., p. 111.

86. Ibid., pp. 95-96.

...in the estimation of practically everyone who is familiar with the trade the government control that was secured over these elevators by the amendments to the Grain Act of last session of the Federal Parliament [1908], has given to the producers practically every safeguard and security in the way of control that government ownership would give. There are a certain number who will always keep on clamoring for anything that savors of government ownership, apparently holding the view that without actual ownership there is no adequate control, but that is, to my mind, an entire misapprehension.<sup>87</sup>

But when in 1909 a private member's resolution in the Saskatchewan legislature urged that the federal government should own and operate terminal elevators, Motherwell supported it on behalf of the government.<sup>88</sup> Under the Canada Grain Act of 1912 the federal government obtained additional powers to control, build and operate terminals; in 1913 it proceeded to erect a terminal elevator at Port Arthur.<sup>89</sup>

By this time the grain congestion following the harvest of 1911 had resulted in an agitation for interior storage elevators in Saskatchewan. An opposition motion in the Assembly in 1912 called on the government to investigate the feasibility of establishing such a system in the province.<sup>90</sup> Motherwell pointed out that heavy costs would be involved, that any plan would necessitate the introduction of official grading and weighing which were federal matters, and that the Borden government was pledged to undertake control, ownership or operation of all the terminals. He moved an amendment, which was passed, to the effect that "in the opinion of this House the Government of Canada should institute an inquiry to determine if any system of interior storage is commercially feasible and such as will

87. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Grain Elevators: Motherwell to Wm. Martin, M.P., Jan. 27, 1909.

88. Morning Leader (Regina), Dec. 15, 1909.

89. Patton, op. cit., pp. 140-146.

90. Morning Leader (Regina), Mar. 8, 1912.

tend to prevent the recurrence of the present unfortunate condition of affairs in the province."<sup>91</sup> During 1913-14, the federal government, as it transpired, undertook the construction of interior terminal storage elevators at Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and Calgary.<sup>92</sup>

As a result of these federal and provincial policies the long standing demands of the grain growers relating to the handling and storing of grain had largely been satisfied by the end of Motherwell's ministry. Their problems of markets, machinery prices, and agricultural credit, which also concerned the stock grower, will be examined later.

91. Ibid.

92. Patton, op. cit., p. 146, n. 3.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### POLICIES RELATING TO THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY

Motherwell, as we have seen, believed that agricultural operations should be diversified, always having regard to the suitability of the particular district for such a system of farming. "As to the best line of farming to follow on all those excellent lands interspersed with slough and bluff and ... so admirably adapted for stock," he said, "there can surely be but one opinion -- mixed farming."<sup>1</sup> Early in his ministry (1907) he noted that shippers were bringing in horses by the trainload when farmers might be raising them at one-third the cost; cattle made a lot of work but "nevertheless many a household had been helped over the hard places" by having cattle and their products to sell; the average western farmer cordially hated the hog but it was folly to shut their eyes to the profits of this farm product; poultry was shipped in by the carload annually and yet very little attention had been paid to this interesting and profitable branch of farm industry.<sup>2</sup> His policies to stimulate mixed farming included, in addition to educational work, continuation of regulations designed to facilitate the conditions under which stock growers operated, operation of enterprises to foster dairying and poultry, assis-

1. W.R. Motherwell, "Why Agricultural Operations in Saskatchewan Should be Diversified," Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1907, pp. 178-181.

2. Ibid., p. 180.

tance to improve and increase the numbers of livestock, and departmental marketing of wool and livestock.

The regulation of the livestock industry, commenced by the territorial government, was continued in such matters as the registration of brands, the enrolment of stallions, the inspection of livestock shipments, the requirement that hazards such as open wells and stacks of grain be fenced, the protection of sheep and other animals from dogs, and the control of animals running at large. Regulations in regard to the latter required revision from time to time, particularly as they applied to the last stronghold of the rancher in the south-western corner of the province. A special provincial commission was appointed in 1914 to enquire into dissatisfaction in that area. As a result of its report in 1915,<sup>3</sup> refinements were made in the Stray Animals Act to relieve disabilities under which the stock growers were laboring in respect to herd law, pounds, fences and gates.<sup>4</sup>

The control of livestock diseases was subject to concurrent federal-provincial jurisdiction. The federal Health of Animals Branch assumed responsibility for certain major diseases requiring, in the cases of glanders and hog cholera, the destruction of diseased animals and payment of compensation to the owners. In 1914 Motherwell added a provincial veterinarian to the staff of his department. The latter directed diagnostic and educational services relating to diseases other than those in which the federal authorities had interested themselves.

Motherwell was particularly concerned about the control of bovine

3. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1915, Appendix B, pp. 313-314.

4. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1915, Chapter 32.

tuberculosis. Although native herds were relatively free therefrom, the importation of large numbers of livestock from eastern Canada threatened to increase the prevalence of the disease. The government itself required that the tuberculin test be given to cattle which it imported. In 1913 Motherwell suggested to the federal Minister of Agriculture that the shipment of tubercular animals be prohibited:

At the present time the general feeling of the Western farmer is that diversified farming must be resorted to generally in the future and in consequence districts new and old are looking around for suitable stock and a great many purchasers prefer dairy stock. This feature lends a favorable inducement to the speculator whose motives are purely selfish and in consequence he buys the cheapest stock which is always the poorest and which he sells at a handsome profit. Recent investigation on the part of the Public Health Branch of this government has revealed the fact that the importations of dairy stock are very largely affected with tuberculosis; in fact every reaction up to date has been traced to outside sources. There has not been one reaction from any native bred animals. From these results one is fairly safe in concluding that Saskatchewan stock is now practically free from tubercular trouble and also that this condition may be maintained by taking such precautions that will prevent the importation of tubercular animals. Such legislation must necessarily come from the Dominion Government and be administered by the Health of Animals Branch at Ottawa, and I should be glad if you would give this matter careful consideration with a view to affording our people some protection from a disease now admitted to be easily contagious and one of the most dangerous to the public health.<sup>5</sup>

The federal minister, Hon. Martin Burrell, replied that his department had been considering the matter during the past year. He noted that there was a feeling among eastern livestock men that to require tuberculin tests of all shipments of cattle would be an unnecessary hampering of trade; the purchaser of cattle had the matter in his own hands because he could buy subject to test. He was, however, considering a scheme to deal with this question in relation to the milk supply of cities.<sup>6</sup>

5. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Livestock Diseases: Motherwell to Burrell, Dec. 4, 1913.

6. Ibid., Burrell to Motherwell, Dec. 15, 1913.

Motherwell continued the correspondence, pointing out that he sought the eventual eradication of bovine tuberculosis, that the first step in that direction was to stop the importation of tuberculous cattle, and then to make it mandatory that the milk and cream supplies of cities and towns be pasteurized.<sup>7</sup> He noted that his department was setting a good example to other dairymen by pasteurizing all milk and cream handled at the large creamery at Regina. Burrell responded that it was an open question with him whether or not the provinces should deal with the matter themselves. The federal government in the past had dealt with animals diseases and there would be public sentiment in favor of action along this line, even though the eventual cost should prove to be somewhat heavy.<sup>8</sup> His department had drafted a set of regulations to deal with dairy cattle supplying milk to cities and these he was submitting to the provincial ministers for their consideration. Motherwell approved of the regulations as being a step in the right direction.<sup>9</sup>

As instituted by federal order-in-council, May 18, 1914, these regulations enabled urban municipalities to obtain federal assistance in testing herds. Cattle reacting to the test would either be slaughtered or retained in the herd subject to the requirement that their owners sell only pasteurized milk. The federal government would provide compensation for animals that were slaughtered. The first municipal test was undertaken at Saskatoon, followed by Regina, in 1915. Two years later Motherwell reported to Burrell:

...I understand that two Canadian cities have availed themselves of the offer of your department to assist them in improving the

7. Ibid., Motherwell to Burrell, Dec. 26, 1913.
8. Ibid., Burrell to Motherwell, Jan. 7, 1914.
9. Ibid., Motherwell to Burrell, Jan. 22, 1914.

quality of their milk supply. Peculiarly enough these two cities are in Saskatchewan and in view of our experience I desire to repeat some of my opinions which I expressed three years ago. ...

The advent of these regulations were regarded by us as a step in the right direction and I was gratified to find that they were issued so soon after the question was raised in our correspondence. ...I do not wish to be critical of the regulations, but I feel like saying that they succeed only in a very limited way in protecting our live stock from tuberculosis because of their limited application and because the shipment of diseased animals is not restricted and the sale prevented for breeding purposes.<sup>10</sup>

Motherwell requested Burrell to have the regulations changed to effect these ends. Burrell replied that he had amendments in hand which he hoped would go a long way towards meeting Motherwell's views. As to the matter of testing all cattle before shipment was allowed, he saw no reason why the provinces should not pass legislation to prohibit importation of tuberculous cattle into their own territories.<sup>11</sup> Motherwell observed, however, that similar provincial legislation in the past had been disallowed as an infringement of the power of the federal government to control matters of trade and commerce, except in the case of the British Columbia act of 1897 in connection with which the Department of Justice by an oversight "allowed the two years to elapse during which it is possible to disallow legislation of this kind."<sup>12</sup> No steps to prohibit the sale and transportation of tuberculous cattle were taken during Motherwell's ministry, but the amended federal regulations, promulgated on April 16, 1917, facilitated the control of tuberculosis among cattle supplying milk and cream to cities.<sup>13</sup>

10. Ibid., Motherwell to Burrell, Jan. 17, 1917.

11. Ibid., Burrell to Motherwell, Apr. 12, 1917.

12. Ibid., Motherwell to Burrell, Apr. 26, 1917.

13. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1919, pp. 259-260.

Motherwell's earliest policy to aid the livestock industry combined local co-operative ownership with government operation of dairies and poultry marketing facilities. Prior to 1905, the dairy industry had made slow progress. Local dairies had been established at Prince Albert and Moose Jaw, but the buildings were poor and unsuitable and the companies soon found themselves heavily in debt. As there was no market for dairy butter, the situation became serious for settlers who desired to produce cream. Hence the Dominion government undertook the operation of creameries in 1896. In all, fifteen creameries were operated by the Dominion during the territorial period, but only four were running in 1905, when the program was discontinued.<sup>14</sup> Motherwell's bill providing for provincial assumption of this work produced little discussion and no opposition.<sup>15</sup>

The Dairymen's Act of 1906<sup>16</sup> provided for the incorporation of local companies of five or more persons to manufacture butter and cheese. Their business was to be conducted on the co-operative plan. The shareholders would receive annually the full revenue from the sale of produce in proportion to the amount of butter fat supplied by them, after the costs of manufacture and a dividend not exceeding 5% had been paid on account of shares. The Commissioner of Agriculture was given authority to determine the limits of the territory in which a company would do business, to make general regulations for the management of all companies incorporated under the act, and to approve the site and plans for buildings. The government

14. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1905, p. 39.

15. Morning Leader, (Regina), May 24, 1906.

16. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1906, Chapter 39.

was authorized to make loans to the extent of \$1,200<sup>17</sup> to companies which had an approved territory and contracts for a minimum of 400 cows for three years. No loan was to be made to a creamery which was not distant twenty miles from any other. The Act also provided that joint stock (private) creameries would be subject to ministerial control as to site, buildings, and territory. An office of Superintendent of Dairying was created in the department to oversee the work.

Following the passage of this Act the department entered into an agreement with the existing creamery associations, and new ones as they were formed.<sup>18</sup> Under its terms the local company, which provided buildings and equipment, assumed responsibility for procuring patrons and hauling cream; the department engaged a butter maker for the season, supervised his work, secured the necessary help, marketed the butter, kept the accounts and paid the patrons. When the department began to manage creameries none of them remained open throughout the winter. The department encouraged farmers to try winter dairying. One creamery was kept open during 1907-08,<sup>19</sup> and the success of this experiment led to the extension of the policy to other creameries. In an attempt to raise standards of production, a cow testing association was formed in connection with one of the creameries in 1907,<sup>20</sup> but after an indifferent response, the policy was dropped, although the department maintained a standing offer to assist interested individuals in this regard.<sup>21</sup> In 1912 the co-operative creamery at Regina

17. This amount was later raised to \$3,000 (Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1910-11, Chapter 33).

18. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1906, p. 102.

19. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1907, p. 190.

20. Ibid., p. 192.

21. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1908, p. 159.

became "the first enterprise of its kind in Canada under government management and control" to handle city milk, sweet cream, and ice cream.<sup>22</sup> In that year, also, the department commenced a program of grading cream.<sup>23</sup> This step had the beneficial effect of "raising the standard of the goods made and had assisted in large measure in making a market for Saskatchewan butter,"<sup>24</sup> notably at the Pacific Coast where carload orders were procured. Motherwell reported, after a trip to the coast in 1915:

Although the make of our creameries has only just recently started to find its way to the Coast, it has already well established itself with the trade not only in competition with the make of other provinces but also with the well known creamery butter of New Zealand. ...we have already won a reputation that puts our export butter in the same acceptable class that our wheat has attained in the last quarter of a century.<sup>25</sup>

The steady growth of the co-operative creameries reflected the wisdom of Motherwell's policy. The advantages of the system included the economical management by expert operators, higher prices for produce due to the large volume of business, government loans at low interest, and the payment of express charges at the destination, which meant that distance was no handicap to the producer. The latter form of subsidization by the government was instituted primarily to help new creameries. "Our present intention," Motherwell noted in 1909,<sup>26</sup> "is to build up a creamery by this means for two or three years, then to gradually cut off the express, throwing this charge eventually on to the creamery with the idea that when they are built up they will then be able to stand alone."<sup>26</sup> This policy was related

22. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1912, p. 87.

23. Ibid., p. 92.

24. Motherwell in Legislative Assembly debate, Morning Leader (Regina), March 8, 1917.

25. Interview given to the Morning Leader (Regina), Nov. 2, 1915.

26. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Creameries: Motherwell to W.A. Wilson, Jan. 28, 1909.

to the general philosophy of discouraging premature organization and promoting judicious centralization. It was believed to be more advantageous to pay shipping charges to a plant where a larger turnover resulted in lower manufacturing costs per unit. Motherwell pointed out that "Government supervision does not give absolute assurance of success, because without the united support of the farmers in supplying cream to warrant a large make of butter the manufacturing cost would be excessive and the net return to the farmers correspondingly low."<sup>27</sup> He elaborated his views on another occasion:

It is quite natural for all young and ambitious districts and towns to be anxious for everything that is going in the way of development and improvement. The result is that we have been finding people anxious for a creamery who have not sufficient cream in sight to maintain a creamery satisfactorily. And further, the history of the creamery industry in Manitoba and elsewhere goes to point out the wisdom of the policy of centralization of the creamery industry, thereby decreasing the cost of manufacture. Small creameries, poorly patronized, go to the wall in a very short time. We have eight or ten of such institutions, that were organized by the Dominion government before we took the industry over, standing there as so many monuments to the undue optimism of our people with regard to this industry at that time. ...

We should be guided in a measure at least, by the mistakes of the past and one of those consisted in yielding to pressure on the part of localities for the establishment of creameries, irrespective of the amount of cream in sight.<sup>28</sup>

Associated with the growth of creameries was a program to promote the poultry industry. In 1906, at the request of several of the creamery associations, the department began to market eggs for the patrons, making cash advances and distributing the profits at the end of the year, as was done in the case of cream.<sup>29</sup> Because of the demand for good table birds and the lack of attention to poultry raising generally by farmers,

27. Ibid., Motherwell to H.C. Pierce, Apr. 15, 1910.

28. Ibid., Motherwell to J.W. McNeill, May 20, 1909.

29. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1906, p. 103.

Motherwell late in the same year announced a plan to erect poultry fattening stations in connection with the creameries under government management.<sup>30</sup> This program was put into effect in the fall of 1907 at the Tantallon and Moosomin creameries.<sup>31</sup> The department undertook to fatten, dress, and dispose of birds in suitable markets. An advance was made on the live weight, and after deducting the expenses of fattening and marketing, the balance of the revenue was returned to the patrons in proportion to the weight of poultry received from each. The patrons realized a price above that generally received by farmers who prepared their own birds.<sup>32</sup> "These results," the Dairy Commissioner noted, "seem amply to justify assistance and expenditure in developing the poultry industry."<sup>33</sup> The program was extended in subsequent years; in addition, as an educational feature, demonstration stations accommodating a limited number of birds were arranged at new creameries where the results of proper fattening could be seen by the farmers.<sup>34</sup> The operation of poultry killing stations was commenced in 1915; farmers who had done their own fattening shipped in their birds which were killed and marketed. The proceeds were distributed in the same manner as in connection with the fattening stations.<sup>35</sup>

By 1917 there were eighteen co-operative creameries in operation under government management. Having reached large commercial proportions, and in view of the fact that several creameries were operating successfully

30. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1907, p. 195.

31. Ibid., p. 196.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid., p. 198.

34. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1912, p. 95.

35. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1915, p. 207.

under private enterprise, it was felt that the co-operative creameries could now be operated independent of the Dairy Branch.<sup>36</sup> Motherwell therefore introduced a bill to establish the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries Ltd.<sup>37</sup> This company would operate creameries, cheese factories, cold storage plants, and "generally do all things incidental to the production, manufacturing, storing and marketing of dairy products and ... poultry and poultry products."<sup>38</sup> Delegates elected by locals were to control the operation of the company, on the model of the co-operative elevator company. The individual member could hold a limited number of shares, and he was to have only one vote at local meetings. Provisions for the annual distribution of surplus earnings included payment of not more than ten per cent on share capital and patronage dividends of not more than fifty per cent of the surplus. The government was authorized to loan the company up to 75% of the costs of acquisition, construction or remodelling of buildings and cold storage warehouses. The new company took over management of the existing co-operative creameries on November 1, 1917.<sup>39</sup> The Dairy Commissioner, W.A. Wilson, resigned to become general manager of the company, and his immediate successor in the department, F.M. Logan, followed him a few months later to become assistant general manager.<sup>40</sup>

In addition to the encouragement of dairying and poultry through these commercial enterprises, Motherwell instituted a policy of assisting farmers to build up herds of livestock of improved quality. In 1912 the

36. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1918, p. 23.

37. Morning Leader (Regina), Mar. 8, 1917.

38. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1917, Chapter 26, Section 2.

39. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1918, p. 23.

40. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1919, p. 276.

department conducted five sales of dairy stock which it had imported from the east.<sup>41</sup> In 1913 it offered to distribute pure bred and grade animals to farmers on a cash or cash and credit basis.<sup>42</sup> The credit plans were restricted to the supply of high grade milch cows to patrons of creameries who would give authority to the department to deduct payments from cream cheques. The policy met with a good response; 550 head of cattle, 1,200 sheep, a few swine and some poultry were distributed.<sup>43</sup> In the legislature that fall a resolution was passed calling on the government to augment this policy.<sup>44</sup> Motherwell stated that the department was considering proposals for the promotion of the livestock industry. It had first devoted its energies towards the replenishing and improving of dairy herds "because the creameries already existed as admirable centres for distribution. ... The cattle could be sold on credit, and collection made through the creamery associations. Corresponding channels were needed for the distribution of beef cattle, and other classes of livestock."<sup>45</sup> Shortly afterward he introduced a bill to provide a fund of \$500,000 for the purchase and sale of pure bred male and grade female livestock.<sup>46</sup> The conditions of sale, as set forth, were similar to those already in use by the department, with the addition that societies or associations organized for livestock improvement could approve of applicants for credit sales.<sup>47</sup> Male animals could also be sold on credit to agricultural societies or livestock improve-

41. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agriculture: Motherwell to W.H. Dodds, Dec. 2, 1912.

42. Public Service Monthly, March, 1913, pp. 21-22.

43. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1913, pp. 68-69.

44. Morning Leader (Regina), Nov. 28, 1913.

45. Ibid., Dec. 3, 1913.

46. Ibid., Dec. 6, 1913.

47. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1913, Chapter 56, Section 7.

ment associations.<sup>48</sup>

Under the stimulus of this act substantial numbers of cattle and sheep were distributed. The interest in hogs was, on the other hand, almost non-existent. Only three were purchased in 1914, and five in 1915, under the plan.<sup>49</sup> This situation apparently reflected the fact that hog prices were not high enough, at a time when grain prices were rising, to induce farmers to go into that line. As Motherwell expressed it, "If a hog is fed exclusively a commercial grain diet at normal prices from start to finish it will, with pork also at normal prices, eat both its head and tail off before it is eight months old."<sup>50</sup> In Saskatchewan, he said, hogs were fed generally on a straight commercial ration, whereas cattle and sheep were run to a large extent on non-commercial roughage. "In view of all these circumstances, it would appear advisable at this time [January, 1917] to devote our first attention to the development of the cattle and sheep industries. ...Our policy ... is to encourage every farmer to keep a few hogs rather than a few farmers keep a large number."<sup>51</sup> In the last year of his ministry, in face of the need for overseas food supplies, the department did launch a vigorous campaign to encourage hog production.

Motherwell's policy in respect to sheep raising led his department into further commercial activity. The industry had had indifferent success in the province. In 1909, Motherwell wrote:

...the sheep industry in Saskatchewan has been very much neglected in the past. The prevalence of coyotes and the general disposition to go into extensive grain growing have left such industries as sheep raising in the background.

48. Ibid., Section 13.

49. Public Service Monthly, March, 1916, pp. 146-147.

50. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Livestock: Motherwell to J. Bright, Jan. 6, 1917.

51. Ibid.

For the last two or three years, as a result of our Wolf Bounty Act, the coyotes have been considerably lessened in numbers, ... with the disposition of weeds to invade the older portions of our province, I am inclined to think that the sheep industry will become more and more a factor on the farm, if for no other purpose than weed eradication.<sup>52</sup>

While statistics showed a gradual increase in the numbers of sheep from 1901 to 1910, there was a falling off thereafter, and the number in the latter year was not exceeded again until 1914. In that year the department took steps to encourage the small sheep owners. It was proposed to show that by co-operation the small owners on grain farms could be placed on an equality with large ranchers, that they could produce wool of the highest quality and thereby obtain the highest prices.<sup>53</sup> It was known that the small owners had been less careful in preparing wool for market, and that their sales in small quantities resulted in large losses through freight charges and the commissions exacted by local buyers and dealers. Hence the department offered to act as a central marketing agency for wool producers. The wool was to be prepared under specifications and forwarded to the department, which would make a liberal advance and a final settlement when it had sold all of the wool.

The offer met with a favorable reception; satisfactory prices were realized; and the plan was operated through the remaining years of Motherwell's ministry. In 1918 the department as usual received the wool, graded it (with the assistance of federal wool graders), made an advance payment, and, as a new departure, forwarded it to Toronto for sale by the Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers, an association which had been formed that year.<sup>54</sup>

52. Ibid., Motherwell to T.O. Lyall, Sept. 23, 1909.

53. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1914, p. 201.

54. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1919, pp. 156-159.

The size of this operation had grown from 179 consignments of wool, weighing 69,404 pounds in 1914 to 916 consignments weighing 394,068 pounds in 1918.<sup>55</sup> The enhanced position of the sheep industry was undoubtedly in considerable measure due to the distribution of high grade stock and the co-operative marketing of wool, but it must be noted that rapidly rising prices occasioned by the war time demand for wool products were also a factor in stimulating the industry.

While Motherwell had been pressing his livestock distribution policy, the federal department had also inaugurated a program to improve the quality of livestock by placing pure bred sires in various parts of the province. When Motherwell learned of this plan in 1913, he wrote to the Dominion live stock commissioner to offer the co-operation of his department in such matters as suggesting suitable districts.<sup>56</sup> He recommended that so far as practicable these animals be secured from western breeders to encourage the native industry and to ensure the advantage of acclimatized stock. A year later, after the program had been instituted, he wrote to Burrell to pass on a number of complaints of "poor judgment in the placing of pure bred sires in some of the rural districts."<sup>57</sup> A major complaint was that sires had been placed in districts already adequately supplied and consequently to the detriment of the owners of pure bred sires. He recognized the difficulty in ascertaining the numbers of bulls and boars in a district, but pointed out that the provincial department had a record of stallions. In that case, he said, "there is room for a generous measure of co-operation between your live stock branch and mine."<sup>58</sup> This offer of co-operation did not provoke

55. Ibid., p. 156.

56. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Livestock: Motherwell to Bright, Apr. 1, 1913.

57. Ibid., Motherwell to Burrell, Apr. 25, 1914.

58. Ibid.

a like response. The federal minister, after consulting his livestock commissioner, maintained that his department was endeavoring to avoid interference with private enterprise and that each placement had been made after very careful consideration.<sup>59</sup>

The livestock grower labored under difficulties in many ways similar to the grain grower in respect to the shipping and marketing of his products. In presenting a Co-operative Associations bill to the house in 1913,<sup>60</sup> Motherwell said that to sell stock by the head was just as unprofitable a method of marketing as to sell wheat by the load.<sup>61</sup> His bill was intended to enable stock growers in association to ship in carloads. It would also permit farmers to purchase fencing and other materials in large quantities. A number of livestock shipping associations were formed under the provisions of this Act. In 1915 the department announced that it would send a man to aid any association making co-operative shipments of livestock.<sup>62</sup> The assistance would include receiving the stock, selling at Winnipeg, and distributing the proceeds to the farmers. During January, 1916, six associations took up shipping, and four were assisted in this manner by the department.<sup>63</sup> Some nineteen associations shipped co-operatively in 1918, but it is not apparent that many availed themselves of the department's assistance. In the annual report of the department for that year the tendency of these associations to send a different shareholder along with each car was deplored; it was pointed out that for greatest success the same party should accompany every shipment in order to become familiar with the markets

59. Ibid., Burrell to Motherwell, June 11, 1914.

60. See below, Chapter VI, for further references to Agricultural Co-operative Associations Act, 1913.

61. Morning Leader (Regina), Dec. 18, 1913.

62. Public Service Monthly, March, 1916, p. 147.

63. Ibid.

and experienced in the business.<sup>64</sup>

Complaints about lack of stock yard and abattoir facilities in the province developed over the years. Prior to the establishment of the abattoir and packing house of Gordon, Ironsides and Fares at Moose Jaw in 1911, the only private ventures of this kind had been the Armour Abattoir at Regina, 1906, and a small plant at Prince Albert. At Saskatoon livestock were handled in conjunction with the city's public market.<sup>65</sup> In an interview in 1912, Motherwell noted that local prices for cattle and hogs were too low in comparison with Winnipeg prices.<sup>66</sup> Freight charges to Winnipeg were borne both ways, on the raw material going east, and on the processed meat returning west. He expressed this view:

...the establishment of a packing plant in Saskatchewan would go far toward remedying this condition and make for the advantage both of the live stock producer and the consumer. A privately-owned plant would be of value, but there can be no question that the successful application of the principle of governmental co-operation in the establishment and operation of an abattoir and packing plant would be still more advantageous to the people of the province.<sup>67</sup>

By 1914 the mounting agitation for action in this regard was reflected in resolutions reaching the minister.<sup>68</sup> Saskatoon was the center of a vocal group which hoped to make that city the site for a government undertaking in this field. A committee of Saskatoon citizens organized a convention on March 17, 1914, at which Motherwell, Dean Rutherford, the Minister of Public Works, and others were present.<sup>69</sup> A resolution was passed asking the government to extend assistance to a packing plant along the

64. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1919, p. 155.

65. Co-operative Live Stock Marketing (Publications of the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture, Bulletin No. 41), Regina: Government Printer, 1914, pp. 21-22.

66. Morning Leader (Regina), July 4, 1912.

67. Ibid.

68. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Abattoirs.

69. Public Service Monthly, April, 1914, pp. 18-19.

lines of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company. Motherwell replied to a correspondent the next month that "the whole question of a co-operative abattoir is now under careful consideration by not only myself but other members of the Government. However, as this question is of comparatively recent origin, we have not had an opportunity of discussing it in full council. Doubtless before anything definite is done a thorough enquiry into the whole subject will be made."<sup>70</sup> Representatives of the various livestock associations, the S.G.G.A., and other interested organizations met in Regina on July 15, 1914 to discuss the matter further. This meeting impressed on the government the urgent need for abattoirs, cold storage and stock marketing facilities.<sup>71</sup> The question was raised briefly at the short "war session" of the Legislature that fall; Scott said it was possible that at a later date an inquiry might be made.<sup>72</sup> The following spring W.C. Sutherland, Liberal member for Saskatoon County, moved a resolution calling on the government to appoint a royal commission to enquire into the marketing of the livestock and livestock products of the province, and to co-operate with the other western provinces in the solution of the problem.<sup>73</sup> Scott noted that "Mr. Motherwell was unfortunately still under the doctor's orders, otherwise he would have made an important contribution to the debate."<sup>74</sup> Speaking for the government, the premier "heartily concurred" in the resolution. "The time was now ripe," he said, "for taking hold of the problem. ...It would probably be found that the meat combine encircled the whole globe. ...Government ownership and municipal

70. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Abattoirs: Motherwell to C. Jackson, Apr. 10, 1914.

71. Public Service Monthly, Aug. 1914, p. 20.

72. Morning Leader (Regina), Sept. 25, 1914.

73. Ibid., June 17, 1915.

74. Ibid.

ownership of abattoirs had both been suggested, and also a co-operative organization. It had to be determined which of those principles would be the most advantageously adopted."<sup>75</sup>

The Commission, appointed November 25, 1915, was comprised of W.C. Sutherland, M.L.A., Chairman, W.R. Motherwell, O.D. Skelton, Professor of Political Economy at Queen's University, J.G. Rutherford, the Superintendent of Agriculture and Animal Industry for the Canadian Pacific Railway, and J.D. McGregor, a prominent Brandon stock grower. The Commissioners were instructed to enquire into and investigate any or all matters pertaining to the marketing of the livestock and livestock products of the province. Upon the request of the Saskatchewan government, the Alberta government constituted the members a commission of that province to take evidence there, and the Manitoba government promised that orders would be obtained from the Court of King's Bench to subpoena witnesses at sittings in Manitoba, should that be necessary.<sup>76</sup> The Commission held sittings at ten centres in Saskatchewan, and at Brandon, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Edmonton.<sup>77</sup> Having completed a part of its investigations it submitted an interim report early in 1917.

This interim report called for the establishment of a Dominion live stock commission, similar in function to the Board of Grain Commissioners, to regulate the entire industry from producer to consumer in respect of such matters as exchanges, commission charges, insurance fees, grading, abattoirs and stock yards.<sup>78</sup> It recommended that producers improve the

75. Ibid.

76. Interim Report of the Live Stock Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan (Regina: King's Printer, 1917), pp. 14-15.

77. Ibid., p. 15.

78. Ibid., p. 60.

quality of their livestock and that an organization be effected in conjunction with the Saskatchewan department to assist farmers to market their stock co-operatively.<sup>79</sup> With reference to the railway companies it was recommended that charges for cleaning cars be eliminated, that purely livestock trains be operated, and that more adequate shelter be provided at shipping points, particularly for hogs.<sup>80</sup> It called for the adoption of a uniform contract by express companies which would make them responsible for the safe delivery of livestock accepted for shipment.<sup>81</sup> Among recommendations relating to finance, it suggested that the provincial government make provision for issuing bonds to provide funds for long term loans to agriculturalists, fifty per cent of which would be utilized in increasing and improving farm livestock, and further recommended that the Bank Act be amended to reduce the cost of and simplify the taking of security for loans on livestock.<sup>82</sup>

The Commission learned that grazing lands in the province were in many cases assessed for municipal taxes on the same basis as cultivated land.<sup>83</sup> Believing that this was inequitable and required immediate remedy, the Commission prevailed upon the government, before the report was completed, to amend the Rural Municipalities Act to limit the assessment on lands held under Dominion grazing leases to \$2.00 per acre, retroactive to 1913.<sup>84</sup> It also recommended that the herd law be revised, following a complete survey of the province to ascertain the suitability of various districts for grazing and grain growing purposes.<sup>85</sup> As a result the

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid., p. 61.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid., p. 61-62.

83. Ibid., p. 58.

84. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1917, Chapter 14, Section 225 (3). This principle was extended to assessments in Local Improvement Districts at the same time (Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1917, Chapter 34, Section 31).

85. Interim Report of the Livestock Commission, p. 62.

government amended the Stray Animals Act in 1917 to provide that after June 1, 1919, a large area to the north of a line running from Saltcoats to Turtleford should be maintained as open range.<sup>86</sup>

The Commission had been concerned about the waste of huge quantities of screenings which annually were transported from the west in the grain and which they felt could be utilized locally for fodder.<sup>87</sup> As a result thereof members of the commission met with representatives of the federal and western departments of agriculture, the railways and elevators at Winnipeg in September, 1917. The outcome of this meeting was the arrangement for sales of screenings at interior elevators, reduced freight rates on shipments of screenings, and ultimately the taking over by the federal government of the whole supply of screenings at the lake terminals for resale to Canadian feeders.<sup>88</sup>

With respect to the other recommendation of the interim report it will be remembered that livestock marketing associations had already been organized in the province, and that the department was actively engaged in promoting their extension.<sup>89</sup> The recommendation with respect to long term government loans was undertaken in the Saskatchewan Farm Loans Act of 1917.<sup>90</sup> Finally, the recommendations relating to federal government controls were, as it transpired, realized in considerable measure in the Federal Live Stock and Live Stock Products Act of 1917.<sup>91</sup>

86. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1917, (Second Session) Chapter 39, Section 3.

87. Interim Report of the Live Stock Commission, p. 62.

88. Final Report of the Live Stock Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan (Regina: King's Printer, 1918), p. 16.

89. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1919, p. 168.

90. See below, Chapter VI.

91. Final Report of the Live Stock Commission, p. 23. See Statutes of Canada, 7-8 George V, Chapter 32.

In its final report, submitted October 8, 1918, the Commission made recommendations regarding packing and allied marketing facilities. To provide the central market then lacking in the province, it recommended that the establishment of public stock yards by a co-operative company be given consideration in the near future.<sup>92</sup> It further recommended that stock raisers should undertake the operation of a packing plant on a co-operative basis in conjunction with the public stock yards.<sup>93</sup> To assist in the marketing of packing house products cold storage warehouses should be established at strategic centres.<sup>94</sup> The Commissioners believed that, rather than establish a new co-operative company, thereby adding to the multiplicity of such organizations, one of the existing associations should undertake the work.<sup>95</sup> Since it was more closely allied to the industry than the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, it was recommended that the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries Ltd. be utilized as a nucleus for the further development of livestock marketing. The first step to be taken should be extension of provincial aid to enable the Co-operative Creameries to open cold storage warehouses at some sixteen centres in the province. As it became feasible the province should make loans, up to two-thirds of the cost, to extend the system to include stock yards and a packing plant. Near the end of Motherwell's ministry the initial steps to implement these recommendations were taken. In 1918 the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries, under the powers of its act of incorporation, purchased cold storage plants at Regina and Vonda and erected new ones at

92. Ibid., p. 40.

93. Ibid., p. 41.

94. Ibid.

95. Ibid.

Saskatoon and North Battleford.<sup>96</sup> However, new companies were formed to operate stock yards. At the session of 1918-19 the government passed legislation to incorporate the Northern and Southern Saskatchewan Co-operative Stock Yards, and granted one-third of the cost of the erection of the buildings at Prince Albert and Moose Jaw.<sup>97</sup>

The affairs of the stock men in this period have received relatively little attention from students of the farmers' movement and agricultural history generally, perhaps because they were less spectacular and related to fewer numbers than the issues involved in grain growing. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the period was rich in experimentation in this area. Motherwell's policies of regulation, assistance by way of loans, organization of co-operatives, and direct governmental participation in the processing and sale of dairy products, poultry, eggs, wool, and livestock, constituted a remarkable program to promote mixed farming in the province. It must be remembered that, aside from the diminishing number of ranchers, the population so affected was at once one and the same. The separate treatment in this study of Motherwell's policies relating to stock raising and grain growing has tended to isolate the two, whereas in application to people and to farms they were designed to promote the welfare of the same group. Ranchers, mixed farmers, and grain growers shared problems relating to costs of production, prices, markets, and credit; Motherwell implemented policies designed to improve conditions in this general area.

96. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1919, p. 162.

97. Ibid., pp. 168-170.

## CHAPTER SIX

### POLICIES RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL CREDIT AND COSTS OF PRODUCTION

"I have been farming here now in Saskatchewan for 30 years and could make better profits 10 or 15 years ago when hauling wheat a distance of 25 miles and selling it at 40 cents a bushel than I am doing now,"<sup>1</sup> wrote Motherwell, early in 1913. "Expensive and incompetent labor," he continued, "coupled with the ridiculously high price of farm machinery coupled with the present low prices for grain have dwindled the profits of grain growing to the vanishing point."<sup>2</sup> His remarks were symptomatic of the strains which had begun to appear in the agricultural economy at that time. The rapid expansion of settlement and the growth of large wheat farms had been based extensively upon credit. Farmers had secured loans to buy more land, machinery, stock, buildings and equipment, provide working capital, consolidate past loans, and finance lesser projects such as trips East. There was a widespread feeling that there had been too much short term credit at too high a cost, and that needed to promote agricultural development were long term loans at low interest rates, provided by some provincially controlled agency.

Motherwell, with his practical approach, was prepared to admit that "cheaper money" was desirable in the advancement of agriculture, but that

1. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agriculture: Motherwell to M. Matthews, Feb. 26, 1913.

2. Ibid.

it was "not going to be a panacea for all our ills, by no means."<sup>3</sup> He said he was of the opinion that "any money coming through any particular channels established by the Government should be earmarked so as to insure its expenditure along lines of permanent agriculture, such as fencing, securing water supply, erection of buildings, and laying the foundations for good herds and flocks."<sup>4</sup> He believed the ideal agricultural pattern was one of small farms, fenced as soon as possible, with diversification in grain growing as well as stock raising, and "a general tendency to conduct a safer business than the present bonanza farming."<sup>5</sup> To discourage the tendency to larger holdings he pointed out that the government had, at the session of 1912-13, introduced the principle of a surtax on farms larger than three sections and on all lands held uncultivated for speculative purposes.<sup>6</sup>

The interrelated problems of agricultural credit, costs of production, and markets for grain led to the appointment of three royal commissions of inquiry in little over a year. Their findings were to be important in the general policies which Motherwell pursued in the latter years of his ministry, and he himself served as a member of the commission on the problem of farm machinery.

Early in January, 1913 the Standing Committee on Agriculture and

3. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agriculture: Motherwell to W.H. Dodds, Dec. 2, 1912.

4. Ibid.

5. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Agriculture: Motherwell to Matthews, Feb. 26, 1913.

6. Ibid. This policy was implemented by an amendment to the Rural Municipalities Act, Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1912-13, Chapter 31, Section 4. In 1917 the government removed this municipal tax, substituting therefor a provincial Wild Lands Tax, which was an annual levy of one percent of the assessed value of uncultivated lands, allowing certain exemptions where owners or occupants resided on the land or where a specified amount of cultivation had been undertaken.

Municipal Law made its report to the Legislative Assembly.<sup>7</sup> It had devoted much of its time at that session to the matter of rural credits, and had heard a report from Premier Scott of his observations of the system in operation in Germany. In accepting the Committee's recommendation that its report be printed for the information of the public, Scott indicated that the question of "cheaper money" would be investigated.<sup>8</sup> He pointed out that a number of the American states were sending delegates to the International Institute of Agriculture which was to discuss the matter at Rome in May, 1913, and announced that the government would send representatives with them.<sup>9</sup> As it turned out the government adopted the course of appointing royal commissions on January 28, 1913 to inquire into ways and means for establishing agricultural credit and of bettering the position of Saskatchewan grain on the European markets. The membership of the two commissions was duplicated in that J.H. Haslam, Regina banker and real estate man, and Charles A. Dunning, vice-president of the S.G.G.A., were appointed to both. With them were associated Edmund H. Oliver, Professor of History and Economics at the University of Saskatchewan, on the Agricultural Credit Commission, and Hon. George Langley, on the Grain Markets Commission. The Commissioners visited the eastern United States and Canada, Great Britain, and several countries on the Continent, and presented their reports within a year.

The Grain Markets Commission came to the conclusion that the cost of producing, marketing and transporting grain was of as great importance to the producer as its standing on the European market, and devoted much of

7. Morning Leader (Regina), Jan. 11, 1913.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., Jan. 13, 1913.

its attention thereto.<sup>10</sup> It found that the price of wheat had been decreasing while the cost of production was rising.<sup>11</sup> It therefore concluded that, as exclusive grain growing was not then remunerative, the practice of mixed farming should be extended. The grain farmer's costs of production, however, could be reduced by better and more efficient farming methods, by reorganizing agricultural credit facilities, bringing them within the control of the province and supplying credit at cost, by reduction or abolition of the tariff on articles the farmer must buy, by reducing freight rates, by the extension of railways to districts not adequately served, and by continued improvement of country roads. In connection with the long transportation haul for wheat, and its handling en route, it recommended the extension of co-operative grain marketing to the operation of terminal elevators and the conducting of an export business, the reduction of commissions charged at Winnipeg for selling grain, the reduction of insurance rates on ocean shipping, and the encouragement of westbound trade with Great Britain to bring more ships to Canadian ports. It suggested improvements in the St. Lawrence waterway and, while admitting its members were not engineers, believed that a system of navigable waterways from Alberta to the head of the lakes could be created, and thereby reduce shipping charges.

The position of Canadian export grain, it concluded, was deservedly high on the markets of the world. Its position could be improved by

10. Report of the Grain Markets Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan (Regina: Government Printer, 1914), p. 12.

11. Ibid., Section V, pp. 14-23. The average price received by farmers for wheat declined steadily from 81 cents per bushel in 1909 to 66 cents in 1913, while costs of production - land, building material, labor, horses, machinery, living - were calculated at 56 cents in 1911 and 62 cents in 1913.

attention to the nearest market. The removal of the duty on flour and wheat from the United States, two commodities which Canada did not import, would encourage the United States to reciprocate and admit Canadian wheat. The American standing offer of free access for oats, barley, and flax should be accepted. It recommended that Saskatchewan farmers be encouraged to withhold their grain in the fall, since farm storage was cheaper, and orderly marketing more profitable. "Invisible" farm supplies had a "bullish" effect on the market, while terminal supplies were "bearish".<sup>12</sup>

In its general conclusion the Commission stated that every effort should be made to diversify farm products and the government should seek to improve the conditions under which livestock and livestock products were marketed. Its final statement was:

The most prosperous and contented farmers in the province, speaking generally, are those on half section farms. Farmers themselves are almost unanimous that the half section farm is best under our present conditions. The tendency will be towards even smaller rather than larger farms. An important reason for this conclusion is the scarcity and cost of farm help and the inefficiency of much of the help that is obtainable.<sup>13</sup>

This view, coupled with the recommendations on diversification, could be expected to fortify Motherwell's position on what was desirable for Saskatchewan agriculture.

The recommendation for tariff removal was in keeping with Motherwell's views, which he shared with the Liberal party and the farm population generally. The provincial legislature passed resolutions from year to year on the matter. In 1916 Motherwell said it was the duty of the Legislature to keep at the question until the federal government took

12. Ibid., p. 122.

13. Ibid., p. 123.

action.<sup>14</sup> As long as the Canadian duty was maintained, the American tariff would also be kept on. Removal would not necessarily mean that wheat would be shipped south, but when American prices were higher it would move in that direction.

In a statement issued to the Canadian Countryman about the same period, he said:

If the milling and other interests of Eastern Canada would only permit us to get the alternative American market for our grain as "Uncle Sam" has already given on our cattle and hogs, we might try to forget and forgive the cruel exactions of the customs tariff which levies upon every man who tills the soil, however poor and humble, for the benefit of the rich and exalted.<sup>15</sup>

He "rejoiced as a Free-trader"<sup>16</sup> when, under the War Measures Act, the duties on wheat and flour were removed and the movement became automatically free from Canada into the United States.<sup>17</sup> Like those on tariffs, many of the recommendations of the Grain Markets Commission were largely outside the scope of provincial implementation. Those relating to agricultural credit were relevant to provincial powers and were a reflection of the conclusions of the "sister" commission.

The Agricultural Credit Commission was not able to estimate accurately the total indebtedness of Saskatchewan farmers, but it secured evidence to suggest that it amounted to at least \$150,000,000. Of this \$65,000,000 was owed to mortgage companies, \$35,000,000 to implement companies, and agreements of sale for land, pre-emptions, and horses, store credit, lumber and bank credit made up \$50,000,000.<sup>18</sup> As a result four-fifths of the patented

14. Morning Leader (Regina) Feb. 16, 1916.

15. AS, Motherwell Papers, Addresses and Articles, 1914-1918: Motherwell to Editor, Canadian Countryman (Toronto), Nov. 20, 1915.

16. Canadian Annual Review, 1917, p. 754.

17. Ibid., p. 375.

18. Official Synopsis, Report of the Agricultural Credit Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan (Regina: Government Printer, 1913), p. 6.

farms of the province were mortgaged at a rate of interest on the average in excess of eight per cent. Interest payments were usually met the year they fell due but payments on principal were seldom pressed. It concluded:

...the present system of payments seems designed to render renewal necessary and debt perpetual. With the final payment so large the borrower can seldom meet it out of current year's income.

...Under the guise of a short term mortgage there actually exists a system of long term mortgages, but with this difference, that the farmer is compelled to renew every five years or lose his farm should he fail to meet the mortgage.<sup>19</sup>

Bank credit, as distinguished from mortgage credit, was provided at rates that were unnecessarily high and had the disadvantage that it was not controlled within the province; "in a time of stress when credit facilities are most required, the banks withdraw from the western provinces."<sup>20</sup> The Commission did not allege in view of their findings that banks and loan companies had failed to provide credit facilities, nor that they had "encouraged speculation by a too indiscriminate granting of credit."<sup>21</sup> It desired "to supplement, not supplant, that which exists, for it is too easy in a time of stress for the Corinthian columns of the metropolis to shut out from view the rude shacks of the prairie farmer."<sup>22</sup> There was a great need for cheap credit, "based on sound security, spread over a considerable term of years, applied to assist mixed farming and to improve the lot of the average farmer on a half section."<sup>23</sup>

In presenting a solution to this need the Commission was much influenced by what it had seen in Europe. "The rural rebirth of Europe," it pointed out, "carrying with it better and cheaper agricultural credit, dates from

19. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

20. Ibid., p. 5.

21. Ibid., p. 15.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., p. 2.

the organization of the farmers along co-operative lines."<sup>24</sup> Hence it made two main recommendations, based on the principle of co-operation. Since the experience of older communities had been that cheaper agricultural credit was invariably associated intimately with other phases of agricultural co-operation, the first called for provincial legislation and information services to facilitate the establishment by the farmers of local and central co-operative societies for purchasing and selling farm products and supplies. The second recommendation was for the enactment of legislation to create a Saskatchewan Co-operative Farm Mortgage Association for the purpose of raising funds and granting loans to farmers on mortgage security for approved agricultural purposes. It outlined a modus operandi for the Association -- a central commission to be appointed by the government, funds required by the association for loans to its members to be raised by mortgage bonds issued by the Association and fully guaranteed by the provincial government, loans to be made at a rate of interest to cover only the cost of the money to the Association and administrative expenses, establishment of a bank by the Association to extend personal credit. As soon as the Association acquired a financial standing and could dispense with the government guarantee in marketing its securities, the selection of the commissioners would be transferred to the Association acting through its annual general meeting.

The recommendations of the Commission were acted upon almost immediately. In September, 1913, Motherwell established a Co-operative Organization Branch in his Department and assigned to it the task of gathering information in regard to all lines of agricultural co-operation and communicating it to

the farmers.<sup>25</sup> At the ensuing session of the legislature he introduced the Agricultural Co-operative Associations bill which provided for the incorporation of associations to produce, purchase or sell livestock, farm products and supplies.<sup>26</sup> As pointed out in the preceding chapter, Motherwell emphasized the significance of this type of co-operation for promoting the livestock industry.<sup>27</sup> The administration of the legislation was placed under the Co-operative Organization Branch of his department, which therefore became engaged in drawing up by-laws and articles of association for the regulation of co-operative associations and supplying advice in regard to the best methods of conducting their business.<sup>28</sup> The first co-operative association was established under the Act on Feb. 2, 1914, and by the end of the year 113 had registered.<sup>29</sup> At the end of 1918 there were 329 of these associations reporting to the department, representing 15,132 shareholders. They handled supplies valued at over \$3,600,000 and marketed livestock totalling more than \$1,500,000. Net profit made by these associations in that year was almost \$100,000.<sup>30</sup>

Associated with, and in a large measure accounting for, the growth of these co-operative associations was the extension of the activities of the S.G.G.A. into trading. For several years local members of the S.G.G.A. had joined together to purchase such supplies as binder twine, building and fencing equipment, flour and feed.<sup>31</sup> This had been done on a carload basis,

25. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1914, p. 188.

26. Morning Leader (Regina), Dec. 16, 1913.

27. Ibid., Dec. 18, 1913.

28. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1914, p. 188.

29. Ibid., p. 189.

30. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1919, p. 152.

31. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1914, p. 189.

paid for in cash, and distributed directly to the members from the railway car. The Act of 1913<sup>32</sup> gave them a vehicle through which to acquire legal status and overcome the handicap of individual liability for debts which they might incur. Hence many of the associations registering under the Act were locals of the S.G.G.A. The central executive of the S.G.G.A. embarked simultaneously on a trading program as central agency for the commercial activities of its locals. In 1913 legislation was passed to constitute it a purchasing and marketing agent for registered agricultural co-operatives,<sup>33</sup> a further amendment in 1914 elaborated that authority to include local grain growers' associations,<sup>34</sup> and in 1915 a long list of products were specified in which the S.G.G.A. central executive could act as wholesale purchaser, shipper or dealer.<sup>35</sup>

Motherwell was in principle opposed to the S.G.G.A. getting involved in commercial activities. At its annual convention in Prince Albert, 1910, he had been quite blunt in advising the S.G.G.A. that its work should be solely of an educational character. "Their objects," he said, "were purely in connection with grain, and they should ... deal with no other matter."<sup>36</sup> When the extended trading program was mooted in 1914, Mantle wrote to Motherwell, expressing the opinion that the S.G.G.A. should assign such functions to a separate and independent company. The 1914 amendment, which he said had been "slipped in" by Langley, made it difficult to keep their trading functions separate from their educational activities.<sup>37</sup> Motherwell replied:

I quite agree with you that the G. G. will lose their present

32. The Agricultural Co-operative Associations Act, Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1913, Chapter 62.

33. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1913, Chapter 67, Section 34.

34. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1914, Chapter 20, Section 16.

35. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1915, Chapter 38.

36. Morning Leader (Regina), Feb. 11, 1910.

37. AS, Motherwell Papers, Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture File (1), 1906-1917: Mantle to Motherwell, Dec. 2, 1914.

distinctively educative character if they drift into a purely trading body. Possibly the change at first won't be noticeable or so long as the present sympathetic Sask. Gov. has to deal with them, but with the advent of years both the old agricultural & political leaders will pass from the scene and then succeeding governments will gradually look upon the G.G. as any other trading body making representations on behalf of their own particular interests.

For the 5 years I was privileged to be president, I fought against both politics as well as commerce being allowed to pervade our movement, & that was how the trading portion of our association found their desire in the G.G.G. Co. & later in the Sask. Co-op & later still through their own locals & Co-operative Assn's. ... We certainly should do what we can in an advisory way to steer this splendid body aright, but it wd have to be done with great care to have the desired effect. Have you talked this matter over with Dunning? I think he will understand probably better than any of the present leaders just what our fears in the matter are.<sup>38</sup>

There is no record of what advice may have been given; the extended trading functions of the S.G.G.A. were confirmed at the spring session (1915), from which, as noted earlier, Motherwell was absent because of illness. The subsequent history of the Trading Department of the S.G.G.A.,<sup>39</sup> although its decline did not set in until after the end of Motherwell's ministry, provided a commentary on the wisdom of the course he had laid down for the organization.

It was not surprising that the policy of encouraging co-operative trading associations should evoke opposition from private business. The Retail Merchants Association and representatives of the Co-operative Associations and the S.G.G.A. appeared before a committee of the Legislature<sup>40</sup> which worked out a compromise whereby after December 31, 1915, Agricultural Co-operative Associations were restricted to selling farm supplies to shareholders and members of the S.G.G.A.<sup>41</sup> Motherwell noted in 1917 that there had been very few complaints about this arrangement, and it continued

38. Ibid., Motherwell to Mantle, Dec. 23, 1914.

39. See J.F.C. Wright, Prairie Progress (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1950), pp. 60-64.

40. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Co-operative Societies: Motherwell to A.G. McQuarrie, July 6, 1917.

41. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1915, Chapter 37, Section 2.

in force during his ministry.<sup>42</sup>

While a large number of thriving rural co-operatives emerged as a result of the first recommendation of the Agricultural Credit Commission, its second plan was given statutory expression but never put into force. At the same time that Motherwell was shepherding the Agricultural Co-operative Associations bill through the Assembly in 1913, Scott introduced a bill to incorporate the Saskatchewan Co-operative Farm Mortgage Association. He was enthusiastic about its provisions which would transplant the German Landschaften system to Saskatchewan. He had seen the system at first hand the year before; the Commission had been equally impressed, and the bill followed their suggested adaptation of that plan.<sup>43</sup> While the bill was passed, the authority empowering the Lieutenant Governor in Council to proclaim the coming into force of the Act was never employed.<sup>44</sup> Motherwell noted in April, 1914:

So far as I am aware no date has yet been decided upon for the coming into force of this Act, the general feeling being that the money market is too dead at the present time to place these new money bonds on with the hope of getting reasonable prices therefor, and if an issue of bonds were unfavorably received at the outset, it would give the whole movement a black eye for succeeding issues.<sup>45</sup>

The Commission had believed a market for bonds could be found in Europe; the world war virtually cut off hope of raising funds anywhere. Pressures from various quarters, including the Interim Report of the Livestock Commission,<sup>46</sup> of which Motherwell was a member, led Premier Martin in 1917 to bring down a bill to establish a Farm Loans Board, modelled after the

42. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Co-operative Societies: Motherwell to McQuarrie, Nov. 26, 1917.

43. Morning Leader (Regina), Dec. 16, 1913.

44. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1913, Chapter 61, Section 34.

45. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Co-operative Societies: Motherwell to G.H. Watson, M.L.A., Apr. 10, 1914.

46. See above, Chapter V.

system in Australia and New Zealand.<sup>47</sup> The new Act created a provincial Board to make long term, low interest loans to farmers for the purpose of improvement and development of farms, or consolidation of liabilities previously incurred.<sup>48</sup> The Provincial Treasurer was authorized to advance the Board sums up to \$5,000,000 which would be raised by sale of bonds or from the general revenue of the province. To ensure that the Board's independence from political control would be recognized, the government decreed that no loans would be made until after the forthcoming provincial election.<sup>49</sup>

The third commission of inquiry associated with the problem of prices and credit arose in part from the investigations of the Agricultural Credit Commission. The latter had asked Motherwell's department to supply information about the cost of farm implements during the preceding ten years.<sup>50</sup> The Statistics Branch, which conducted the investigation, found that there was a marked variation in the prices of implements throughout the province, stringent credit terms involving high rates of interest, lack of uniform agreements, misrepresentation by agents, delay and difficulty in obtaining repairs, and some tendency to load farmers with expensive machinery that they could neither operate properly nor profitably. There was general agreement that "all farmers are charged exorbitant prices considering the cost of production of the articles, and there are far too many middlemen to allow a lowering of prices."<sup>51</sup>

Following the report of the Commission, the Committee on Agriculture

47. Morning Leader (Regina), Feb. 20, 1917.

48. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1917, Chapter 25.

49. Cheaper Money for Saskatchewan Farmers (Publications of the Department of Agriculture, Bulletin No. 47), Regina: King's Printer, 1917, p. 4.

50. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1913, p. 101.

51. Ibid., p. 103.

and Municipal Law of the Assembly recommended that a thorough inquiry be made into the conditions surrounding the sale of farm machinery.<sup>52</sup> The government appointed a Farm Machinery Commission on April 24, 1914, comprised of two justices of the Saskatchewan Supreme Court, the Attorney-General, J.A. Maharg, president of the S.G.G.A., and Motherwell. The Commissioners were instructed to inquire into questions surrounding the sale in Saskatchewan of farm machinery and other requisites of the farm and the collection of payments thereon. The procedure of the Commission was to visit nineteen centres in the province, to send "interrogatories" to the implement companies, and to obtain returns from local registrars to indicate the indebtedness of farmers to implement companies.<sup>53</sup> The latter were represented by counsel who took an active part in cross-examining witnesses at the hearings, but company officials refused to appear before the Commission. They did, however, answer the questions submitted to them except where they "touched upon what they called their private business."<sup>54</sup>

The Commission reported:

We have, therefore, addressed ourselves to the farmers' grievances, and the recommendations which we are making in this report are to remedy such grievances. We are of the opinion that the remedies suggested will not affect the companies' interests beyond what is necessary to insure a fair deal to the farmers.<sup>55</sup>

The Commission found that credit had been readily obtained in the period 1908-12," a lure which numerous farmers were incapable of withstanding,<sup>56</sup> but the grant of legitimate credit was of great advantage

52. Morning Leader (Regina), Dec. 20, 1913.

53. Report of the Farm Machinery Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan (Regina: Government Printer, 1915), p. 11.

54. Ibid., p. 12.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid., p. 13.

and absolutely necessary for the increased productivity of the farms and the development of the country. Farm implement companies charged about twenty per cent more for their machines than in the neighboring states; the interest rates, usually eight per cent before due and ten per cent afterwards, were considerably higher than in Ontario. Most of the notes fell due on October 1, when the farmer did not have his crop sold, and therefore had to pay the overdue rate of interest, or else had to rush his grain to market, thus creating a "glut" and a consequent drop in prices. The commissioners suggested that companies should make their notes fall due later in the season, or divide them into instalments. It made no recommendations on the rate of interest as this was a matter exclusively within the jurisdiction of the federal government, nor could it suggest a remedy for the price of repairs, which was altogether too high. (It did note that the purchase of machinery and repairs <sup>iv</sup> ~~A~~ co-operately could materially reduce the price.)

As regards the sale of small implements -- ploughs, harrows, mowers, binders, cream separators -- the commission found that the farmers had no complaints serious enough to warrant legislative remedy. On the other hand, complaints with respect to large, expensive power machinery -- engines, threshing separators, engine ploughs and discs -- were of such nature as could and should be remedied. Buyers of this class of machinery suffered losses due to several reasons: misrepresentations by agents whose companies refused to take responsibility therefor; unreasonable contracts which required payment for machines which had proved unfit for the intended purpose; inability to get necessary repairs promptly, and the fact that companies sold to homesteaders who were not possessed of the experience or business ability necessary to make a success of the operation of the

machines. The companies took security "on all the purchaser possessed and when he failed to pay they sold him out, leaving him in most cases financially ruined."<sup>57</sup>

The Commission made several recommendations for legislation to prevent the losses it had enumerated. It recommended the adoption of a statutory contract to contain detailed warranties as to the construction, operation and durability of the machine being sold, coupled with the assurance that the farmer could upon application obtain necessary repairs at a specified place in Saskatchewan. It also called for the application of ordinary rules governing the liability of principals for their agents to be applied to sales of farm machinery. It recommended that the Land Titles Act be amended to prevent taking security on land until six months after the delivery of the machine to the purchaser. Further it recommended that all dealings with the homestead, the 160 acres on which the farmer and his family resided, be invalid unless with the consent of the owner's wife. The Commission had intended this to give the farmer an opportunity to think over a proposed purchase, and to give his wife, who was equally interested with him in having a home, a chance to express her opinion. On reflection it concluded that the principle should have application to any matter affecting the homestead whether or not machinery was involved; hence the recommendation that no dealings be valid without her consent. All of these recommendations were given effect by legislation at the 1915 session.<sup>58</sup> The Farm Implement Act, 1915, also required all implement companies to file annually with the department lists of both large and small machinery for sale, showing prices and terms of credit. Lists of

57. Ibid., p. 39.

58. See Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1915, Chapters 28, 29, 30.

repairs were also to be filed, and any person selling a repair at a higher cash price than that stated was to be subject to a fine.<sup>59</sup>

While the Farm Machinery Commission was sitting, the department had taken steps to investigate alternatives to the large threshing separators which had occasioned much of the dissatisfaction of the farmers.<sup>60</sup> A member of the staff was sent out to investigate the use of small threshing machines; he visited some fifteen districts and saw twenty-seven machines in action. These were, in the main, smaller models of the well-known larger machines, while two were manufactured locally, by A. Stanley Jones of North Battleford and O. Chalifoux of Saskatoon. These machines were found to be very successful; they threshed as efficiently as larger machines, although obviously not so fast; they could be used by the smaller farmer when needed most; and they required fewer men and were simpler to operate. The owner, since he was threshing his own crop, took more care with it. Since they were not employed on long "runs", they did not contribute to the spread of weed seeds. Finally, they were much cheaper in price. The department decided to publicize this information in order to encourage greater use of such machines, and thus contribute one solution to the farm machinery question.

The legislation of 1915 served to remove the farmer's complaints about contracts, but machinery prices and interest rates remained high, repairs were not always available, and before the end of Motherwell's ministry the Legislature was hearing suggestions for another commission.<sup>61</sup>

59. Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1915, Chapter 28, Sections 4-7.

60. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1914, Appendix B, pp. 316-319.

61. Morning Leader, Dec. 7, 1917.

The "time of troubles" which had come with the end of the boom, just prior to the war, was not prolonged since wartime demands sky-rocketed prices for agricultural products, including wheat. Nonetheless, the basic weakness of the vast amount of credit in the farm economy was not resolved and was to be a recurring problem in later years.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### POLICIES AND PROBLEMS RELATING TO THE WAR EFFORT

The last four years of Motherwell's ministry coincided with the period of international armed conflict. As the war progressed, Canadian agriculture was called upon to play an ever-increasing rôle in the allied effort. Motherwell was confronted with the problem of how best to promote the Saskatchewan contribution, without sacrificing his permanent policies of conservation and diversification. His patriotism was unquestioned, but his conception of the proper means to attain the desired production frequently clashed with national policy.

The outbreak of the war in 1914 evoked a patriotic outburst across Canada. The various provincial governments at once determined to make gifts to the British government as an expression of their loyalty and support. The Saskatchewan contribution took the form of a shipment of almost 1,300 horses suitable for cavalry and artillery purposes. Dean Rutherford was placed in charge of purchasing the horses on behalf of the government;<sup>1</sup> departmental officials assisted in assembling them and accompanied the shipments overseas.<sup>2</sup>

The national slogan adopted for 1915 was "Patriotism and Production". Motherwell wrote from Chicago that winter to caution Mantle as to the attitude

1. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1914, p. 74.  
2. Ibid., p. 76.

his department should adopt.<sup>3</sup> With wheat already at \$1.60 a bushel, and other grains almost proportionate in price, he thought it superfluous to urge people to grow more grain. To the extent that greater production could be achieved by better farming he approved of the campaign, but, he submitted, "if it means more acreage at the expense of the land to be fallowed this summer to any appreciable extent, then such teaching will prove false & eventually lead to less production."<sup>4</sup> He suggested a number of ways in which additional acreage might be employed without intruding on the fallow area. Farmers might break up raw prairie that they already possessed or they might clear up odd corners, drain sloughs, or scrub off scattered bluffs. While they might buy more raw land adjoining their present farms, he was not prepared to advance this as a desirable policy. "This," he said, "has already been so overdone that there is not much chance to add to it without adding to equipment and tearing into more big farm enterprises that we should rather steer away from."<sup>5</sup>

Apparently many farmers did not share Motherwell's reservations. The incentives of patriotism and prospective high prices led them to increase the total acreage in grain by over thirty per cent.<sup>6</sup> Nature smiled upon their efforts, and the Saskatchewan harvest of 1915 was the greatest on record. The slogan coined for 1916 was "Production and Thrift". The federal Departments of Agriculture and Finance carried out the campaign. Posters and advertisements called on the farmer to seed stubble land and provided

3. AS, Motherwell Papers, Sask. Dept. of Agriculture files (1): Motherwell to Mantle, Feb. 12, 1915.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Dominion Bureau of Statistics figures. Cited by R.W. Murchie, Agricultural Progress on the Prairie Frontier (Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada, 1936), p. 24.

instructions for burning and cultivating it. Motherwell was "thunderstruck" at this advice. In making a press statement in April, 1916 he said:

My first hope was that no-one would heed it anyhow. On further reflection, however, when it occurred to me that some of us in the West are all too prone to careless farming when left to our own inclinations, and that possibly this tendency would become worse if advised in that direction by so naturally accepted an authority as the Dominion Department of Agriculture, I felt it was someone's duty to dissent.<sup>7</sup>

He reviewed the experience of the preceding year. The call had been to seed every possible acre to provide bread for hungry Europe. Yet the total Canadian production had been only a small factor in comparison with the immense output of Russia and the United States. The world would not have gone hungry without the Canadian supply. The proper reason for Canadian production was, he argued, financial, to keep the wheels of commerce rolling, maintaining credit and ability to finance the war.

Now, for 1916, he said, under the plea of patriotic food necessities, the farmer was advised to sow his land three years in succession. This was little short of madness:

The best informed Saskatchewan farmers will put into wheat this spring what can be put in properly and in time. ... Nor will they sow to wheat or anything else third crop stubble or even much second crop stubble after coaxing it to burn with a top dressing of gasoline as advised in the first advertisement of the "Thrift and Production" campaign.<sup>8</sup>

He warned that farmers who followed the federal advice would run the chance of reaping "mighty scantily". After putting all their land in crop they would have nothing left to summerfallow for the next year's crop, "and next year with its requirements will likely come around." His conviction rang out in his final words:

Our fallow system must under no consideration be departed from, even though the advice comes from the wise men of the east, as

7. Morning Leader (Regina), Apr. 22, 1916.  
8. Ibid.

this is the only known and well-proven method whereby the fullest production can be secured and maintained.<sup>9</sup>

His advice appears to have been heeded as there was no appreciable increase in seeded acreage during 1916 and 1917.<sup>10</sup>

While he was thus vigorously defending what he knew was best for the dry lands of his province, another "heresy", as he had just termed this federal policy, began to threaten his system. There was an agitation afoot to have the handling of oleomargarine permitted in Canada. The manufacture and sale of this substitute for butter had been prohibited by Dominion statute in 1886.<sup>11</sup> Motherwell and his Dairy Commissioner took up the fight to maintain the status quo.<sup>12</sup> They had been building up the dairy industry in the province; now their program would be threatened by the competition of this cheaper article. The creameries could compete with butter from other countries but, wrote Motherwell to Burrell, "in the case of oleo-margarine, which is an artificial product, cheaply manufactured in the United States, it is unfair to have it enter into competition with genuine butter..."<sup>13</sup> Motherwell fought a losing battle, for the next year margarine was allowed into the country,<sup>14</sup> although he still protested the move.<sup>15</sup>

As the war dragged on and the very great need of foodstuffs became apparent, Motherwell embarked on a vigorous campaign for increased production,

9. Ibid.

10. Murchie, loc. cit.

11. H.A. Innis, (ed.), The Dairy Industry in Canada (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1937), p. 80.

12. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1916, pp. 40-43.

13. Ibid., p. 43.

14. The prohibition of importation, manufacture or sale of oleo-margarine in Canada was suspended on Dec. 1, 1917. See Innis, op. cit., p. 81.

15. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, European War--Food Question: Motherwell to Crerar, Apr. 17, 1918.

particularly of bacon. In the fall of 1917 he announced to the Legislature that the department would conduct meetings in every part of the province to solicit the co-operation of the people.<sup>16</sup> The department would encourage hog raising by bringing in young grade sows from stock yards and selling them at cost. It would arrange for the breeding of sows, and would raise litters itself and sell the weaned piglets to householders in urban centres. The latter would be asked to amend their by-laws to permit pigs to be raised.<sup>17</sup>

Despite this campaign, Motherwell was doubtful of the public reaction. Asked to comment on it by the Nor'West Farmer, he wrote:

The ingrained fear is entertained by many that the whole scheme is just one more way of draining grist to the packers' mill and that the latter will continue to revel in the huge profits of the past three years in spite of the restrictions that are attempted to be put on them.<sup>18</sup>

Hence he advocated the nationalization of the packing and cold storage industries, and the guaranteeing of a minimum price for live hogs. The latter step was necessary because:

a great many who are scarce of labour and feed cannot see their way and feel they cannot afford to grow hogs with the prospect of sustaining a loss, or at least with the prospect of engaging less actively in some more profitable enterprise. They reason that it is not fair that wealthy packers should be permitted to make their full peace-time profits while they, the producers, are expected to provide the raw material whether there is a profit in it or not.<sup>19</sup>

In addition he would have the retail sale of bacon and hams in either cured or green state prohibited so long as they were needed in allied countries.

There were forty thousand farmers in Saskatchewan who did not own a pig;

16. Morning Leader (Regina), Nov. 28, 1917.

17. See leaflet, "Memorandum Regarding the Saskatchewan Government's Plan for Assisting Greater Hog Production", issued by the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture, Nov. 28, 1917.

18. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Livestock: Motherwell to Editor, Nor'West Farmer, Dec. 28, 1917.

19. Ibid.

yet most of them used hog products. Prohibition, he believed, would increase the amount available for export, and would oblige these people, if they wished to eat bacon, to grow hogs and thus stimulate production. Now that he was convinced of the need Motherwell was indeed prepared to take drastic steps! He concluded his message:

I am of the opinion that the Food Controller of Canada, while doing good work of an educational nature, is entirely too timorous for his job. Gentle persuasion may get results in individual cases but the food situation must be grappled with in a more aggressive way.<sup>20</sup>

Inasmuch as T.A. Crerar, a western farm leader and a Liberal, had been appointed Minister of Agriculture in the Union Government formed in October, 1917, Motherwell now had at Ottawa a sympathetic counterpart to whom he could express his views more freely. He wrote to Crerar at the beginning of March, 1918:

The Provincial Department of Agriculture here, so far as our present labour and production campaign is concerned, is now practically under the auspices of the Canada Food Board, which brings myself pretty close up to the Chairman of this Board in whom I have absolutely no confidence.<sup>21</sup>

He protested that he had learned that the Dominion Millers' Association had hired an agent to look after their interests before the Board. As a result, he wrote, "We get a slight inkling of what is happening and why we are not making much progress in digging up a real war bread."<sup>22</sup> While Crerar replied that the Food Controller, who had just been placed under his department, was endeavouring to fill a difficult position to the best of his ability,<sup>23</sup> Motherwell was publicly making known his great dissatisfaction

20. Ibid.

21. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, European War--Food Question: Motherwell to Crerar, March 9, 1918.

22. Ibid. A "war bread" was one which would contain a large percentage of bran.

23. Ibid., Crerar to Motherwell, Mar. 16, 1918.

with the Board, the Controller, and the whole production campaign.

In speeches to the Regina Labour Forum in February<sup>24</sup> and to a local Grain Growers' meeting in March,<sup>25</sup> he had harsh things to say. When the Food Controller wired Motherwell to demand a retraction of his reported remarks at Regina to the effect that "special interests are entrenched beside the Food Controller to prevent drastic action",<sup>26</sup> Motherwell maintained that he had nothing to retract but regretted the necessity of saying it.

He gathered that the Controller was angry at his criticisms. To this he said:

I am very angry also and highly indignant at the shamefully slow progress Canada is making in the conservation of wheat flour as compared with either Great Britain or the United States. Besides I find the public take the whole food conservation campaign more or less as a great joke and find it very difficult to believe that we are on the verge of a terrible food crisis. ...For your information I am enclosing copy of my recent address at the Municipal Convention at Moose Jaw. If you have time to peruse it you will note I am doing some fairly plain talking and I think the time has come when it is up to someone to talk plainly. I had rather the lot had fallen to someone else but apparently few desire to incur the chance of being called a knocker during war times.<sup>27</sup>

In the address at Moose Jaw to which he referred Motherwell chose as his topic, "Obstacles to Greater Production", and outlined the actions he thought necessary to remove them.<sup>28</sup> Invocation and exhortation would not bring about greater production. There was a scarcity of farm labor, but the federal government took the view that it was impractical to compel one man to work for another (i.e. to conscript labor). The local military tribunals could be used to direct labor into essential industries, leaving

24. AS, Motherwell Papers, Articles and Addresses, 1914-18:  
Address delivered at the Forum, Feb. 3, 1918.

25. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, European War--Food Question:  
Motherwell to H.B. Thomson, Mar. 25, 1918.

26. Ibid., Thomson to Motherwell, Mar. 19 and Mar. 20, 1918.

27. Ibid., Motherwell to Thomson, Mar. 25, 1918.

28. AS, Motherwell Papers, Articles and Addresses, 1914-18:  
Address at R.M. Convention, Moose Jaw, March 7, 1918.

every man free to choose his own employer. It was time "someone should have authority to say unto any such 'Go' and he goeth if we are to get the best results."<sup>29</sup> The uncertainty about the future price of wheat, he contended, should be remedied by a fixed minimum for at least two years. The tariff on farm implements should be removed or greatly modified. Absence of railways was still a handicap in certain sections of the province; if steel could not be secured anywhere else, why not use the 350 miles now laid on the Hudson's Bay Railway for branch lines, since the Bay route should not be proceeded with during the war? If people would bottle their race prejudice, coolie labor could be imported to do the work. Federal government loans might be made to farmers who needed money to finance new breaking. The federal and provincial governments should set an example in promoting use of idle lands by putting up for sale or lease as many parcels of school lands as practicable; it was, he stated, a good time to sell these lands not only for production but in the interests of the School Endowment Fund. After this had been done, he proposed that the state should take steps to arrange for prospective buyers or tenants to make use of idle land which its holders had failed to make productive. He continued:

Doubtless, some will think that such a suggested programme for greater production applied to this Province would be arbitrary, autocratic, and a serious invasion of the generally recognized sacredness of private and property rights. And so it would under normal conditions, but under present prospects of an empty world's larder if every effective means of replenishing it is not invoked all things are lawful and all things are expedient. ...While we all long for peace, there is no peace in sight nor will the present allied military situation permit of its discussion. ...

...there is room for an honest difference of opinion on the advisability of carrying out such a drastic programme. However, when I think of what is being done in Great Britain to direct, control, and speed up agriculture, I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that the foregoing suggestions, and more,

29. Ibid.

are abundantly justified at this time.<sup>30</sup>

It must be noted that Motherwell had attended a Dominion-Provincial Conference at Ottawa in February of this year (1918) at which the grave need for food in Europe had been emphasized;<sup>31</sup> to fill this need he at once was prepared to devote all energies. In addition, he had been active in urging military exemptions for farm labourers so that production goals might be met.<sup>32</sup> The onslaught of the German campaign in the spring resulted in the immediate decision of the Canadian government to call up the men in the age group twenty to twenty-three. Motherwell contacted Crerar to ask that farmers' only sons engaged actively in agriculture be exempted.<sup>33</sup> He suggested at least the postponement of call-ups until October; the men could not be trained in time for the 1918 campaign, and a fall draft would be equally effective. Crerar replied that such exemptions were not contemplated. He realized this would hit farmers very hard but the need for men was insistent; the Germans were seeking to break through to the Channel ports and must be held off. "It was", he said, "horrible to contemplate, but it really gets down to the question of whose man-power can hold out the longest."<sup>34</sup>

Motherwell further sought to support his representations by pointing out that Canada was expected to increase her exportable wheat by 180 million bushels. At the same time the United States was credited with having nearly two millions of partially trained men awaiting transport. The drafting of so many farmers' sons in the middle of seeding would lessen the chances of

30. Ibid.

31. Canadian Annual Review, 1918, p. 489. See also AS, Motherwell Papers, 105-18, European War: Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture Canada to the Conference of the Dominion and Provincial Governments, February, 1914.

32. Canadian Annual Review, 1918, p. 464.

33. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, European War--Farm Labour Exemptions: Motherwell to Crerar, Apr. 25, 1918.

34. Ibid., Crerar to Motherwell, Apr. 29, 1918.

meeting the Allies' expectations of Canadian wheat production, and would correspondingly lessen the number of American troops which could be forwarded since they relied on the same transport services. He then dealt with those "who didn't want to see Canada in the performance of her military duties hide behind the coat tails of the Yankees".<sup>35</sup> It was high time, he declared, that this kind of "bunk" was stored away and Canada and the United States respond to the appeal of Lloyd George to get into "team pace stride". Motherwell did not, however, wish to "register too much of a kick" as "we are all anxious to promote the cause of the war if we are only shown the best way."<sup>36</sup> He did advise Crerar, however, to press the fight for the farmers' position as much as he could, consistent with loyalty to his colleagues. "I have known," Motherwell said, "how difficult it is for one farmer in a cabinet to get much of his own way at times among a lot of others who may not know any more about farming questions than a ten year old child."<sup>37</sup> Crerar agreed with Motherwell that it was poor business to have only one farmer in a government, but the matter had been weighed; the changes made in the Military Service Act to secure more men even at <sup>the</sup> expense of production were passed and approved by Parliament. He knew Motherwell could imagine his feelings when the whole production edifice they had built up had been "shot to pieces" with the passing of the order.<sup>38</sup>

Motherwell does not appear to have publicly expressed his opposition to the new draft regulations, but he wrote a letter to the Regina Leader criticizing it for its editorial advising the "farming community as to how they should accept the recent draft of young men regardless of its effect

35. Ibid., Motherwell to Crerar, Apr. 25, 1918.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., Motherwell to Crerar, May 3, 1918.

38. Ibid., Crerar to Motherwell, May 28, 1918.

upon production or agriculture.<sup>39</sup> While he had adopted a pen-name, he said that he would have authorized the use of his signature had Martin not been away. However, he gave the editor permission to inform anyone, who might ask, that he was the writer.<sup>40</sup> In May the military authorities arranged short furloughs to permit men to help with the seeding, and Commanding Officers were given authority to grant leaves of absence to men in cases of extreme hardship among their dependents. Motherwell was unable, nevertheless, to reconcile the call for more food production with the drafting of 7,000 young men from Saskatchewan shortly afterward.<sup>41</sup>

During the year Motherwell became even more critical of the actions of the Food Control Board. In answer to a request from Crerar, he made specific recommendations that it might carry out.<sup>42</sup> He suggested grinding entire wheat into flour, prohibition of the slaughter of calves and lambs, if not in all of Canada, at least in the West, the banishment of veal and lamb from menu cards in hotels and restaurants, the abolition of retail trade of bacon and exportable hog products in Canada, two wheatless days a week, the construction of dehydrating plants for potatoes and other vegetables, cutting out "pink teas" and midnight feasting, and finally that Crerar should "Fire the Food Controller higher than a kite."<sup>43</sup> During the autumn he registered complaints about an order requiring threshing crews to be fed in conformity with the regulations which were laid down for restaurant

39. Morning Leader (Regina), June 13, 1918.

40. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Politics--Canada: Motherwell to Laurier, July 30, 1918.

41. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, European War--Farm Labour Exemptions: Motherwell to R. McKenzie, Secretary, Canadian Council of Agriculture, June 5<sup>?</sup>, 1918.

42. AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, European War--Food Question: Motherwell to Crerar, April 17, 1918.

43. Ibid.

meals.<sup>44</sup> He objected to regulations which he thought might force small gristling mills out of business,<sup>45</sup> and he protested against the terms under which all supplies of creamery butter produced in a five week period had been commandeered.<sup>46</sup>

While he had been critical of these policies, Motherwell had at the same time been extremely active during the year in making speeches advocating greater agricultural production as a war duty.<sup>47</sup> Farmers responded by increasing the acreage seeded to wheat by nearly a million acres, but a combination of drought in the western part of the province and frost damage in the north resulted in the lowest total yield since 1914.<sup>48</sup> The number of swine produced actually declined as well, but increases were realized in beef cattle and sheep. The result of the campaign was therefore less than satisfactory, but the termination of the war in November removed what might have been the necessity to employ some of Motherwell's more drastic suggestions to increase production.

Within a month of the end of the war Motherwell resigned as Minister of Agriculture. His action arose out of a provincial issue relating to the language question in schools. A clause in a new school bill which Martin proposed to bring in had the effect of removing certain privileges enjoyed by the French population in respect to primary education in their own language. Motherwell could not support the proposed action and wished to be free to oppose it.<sup>49</sup> At the same time his resignation very clearly

44. Ibid., Motherwell to Crerar, Sept. 12, 1918.

45. Ibid., Motherwell to Crerar, Sept. 12 and Oct. 8, 1918.

46. Ibid., Motherwell to Crerar, Oct. 3, 1918.

47. Canadian Annual Review, p. 691.

48. Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1919, p. 10.

49. See AS, Motherwell Papers, 1905-18, Education: Motherwell to Laurier, Dec. 18 and Dec. 20, 1918 for his stand on this issue.

reflected his dissatisfaction with the principle of Union Government and the way in which the latter had conducted the war effort. Indeed, in his letters relating to his resignation<sup>50</sup> he devoted most of his attention to federal issues. He recapitulated his criticisms of the conduct of the greater production campaign and other policies relating to labour, registration of manpower, natural resources, and the rehabilitation of war veterans. Motherwell had remained aloof from the Unionist movement in 1917, but Martin had supported it. Now Motherwell believed that Martin should make a statement on the merits or demerits of the Union government and the probability of it being a means of securing prompt, efficient administration in the post-war period. Unless Martin did so quickly, Motherwell said he could no longer remain a member of the government. Thus it was that a combination of circumstances led Motherwell to terminate his career in provincial office. He said that he had no intention of "ploughing any lonely furrow",<sup>51</sup> and he remained on the government side of the Assembly. However, his subsequent service to Saskatchewan agriculture was embraced in the wider scope of the ministry at Ottawa.

50. The letters submitted to Martin include a preliminary notice (Dec. 9) of his intention to resign, the official letter of resignation (Dec. 10), and a supplementary letter (Dec. 12) in reply to Martin's acceptance of the resignation (Dec. 11). The original letters are in the Martin Papers in the Archives of Saskatchewan; the full text was published in the Morning Leader (Regina), Dec. 13, 1918.

51. Morning Leader (Regina), Dec. 13, 1918.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSION

In this study of Motherwell's career in relation to agricultural development in Saskatchewan from 1905 to 1918 his background in the territorial period has been set forth, the scope of his activities defined, and the institution and development of his various policies relating to education, grain growing, livestock, credit, and war production traced. It is proposed in this concluding chapter to assess the extent and value of his contribution.

In order to determine the extent of Motherwell's rôle, one must take into account underlying forces and various influences which determined or in some measure limited his activities. To recapitulate some of these, it is self-evident that geography is a determinant in agricultural policy. The nature of the soil and climate are basic to the type of agriculture to be carried on. For Saskatchewan, geography not only determines the type of farming, it imposes the land and ocean barriers across which the products it permits to be raised must be transported to reach markets in areas of more concentrated population. Motherwell recognized both; he made adjustments to the former, but about the latter he could do little for it meant that costs of transportation and the ultimate prices paid for the products

of the province were determined externally. The alternative was to lower other costs of production, but there he was faced with further external factors, such as the concentration of business and financial interests in eastern Canada and the national tariff policies. He was confined, too, by the concurrent jurisdiction of dominion-provincial authority and the federal control of lands and settlement policy. However, he did not hesitate to intercede with federal officials on behalf of settlers who experienced difficulty in regard to the homestead regulations. He made arrangements with the railways and the Board of Grain Commissioners to relieve congestions in the shipment of grain. He was of influence in having Dominion regulations imposed to control the spread of bovine tuberculosis. He associated himself with resolutions of the Legislative Assembly calling for the federal operation of terminal elevators and removal of the tariff on grains to facilitate entry of Canadian wheat into the United States.

It must also be remembered that Motherwell's official capacity was that of a member of a provincial government. To what extent was he able to pursue his own policies? Did he influence other members of the government, or did he express only the collective wisdom of the cabinet and the party caucus? Motherwell pointed out that he had known how difficult it was at times to get his own way in a cabinet in which he was for seven years the only farmer. If thwarted initially, he appears to have persisted until he achieved his objective. In some notes he prepared in 1955, Dr. F.H. Auld cites the example of Motherwell's failure to get provincial cabinet approval for a recommended increase in salary for a member of his staff. Motherwell paid the difference in salary himself until he gained acceptance of his original proposal. Dr. Auld states: "No important scheme was ever dropped --

only deferred until a more propitious occasion."<sup>1</sup> At the same time other cabinet ministers were vitally concerned in agricultural policies. Scott himself brought over the idea of adapting the German system of rural credits to Saskatchewan and piloted the bill through the house. Did the entry of two other prominent farm leaders into the government, Langley in 1912 and Dunning in 1916, lessen Motherwell's rôle to any extent? For example, Langley took over responsibility for hail insurance while Martin and Dunning were most prominent in the establishment of the Farm Loans Board, but both of these might be explained by virtue of the fact that Langley was Minister of Municipal Affairs and Dunning the Provincial Treasurer. Their entry into the cabinet undoubtedly reinforced Motherwell's position; moreover, it may have been of significant influence in the agricultural policies adopted in the later years of his ministry.

Another factor in assessing Motherwell's leadership was his relationship to the Department of Agriculture. The cabinet minister assumes responsibility and takes credit for the work of his department. It is fair to ask, however, how much he may be influenced by able administrators and how far his policies may be only the reflection of what they urge upon him. It was suggested in an earlier chapter that there was an interaction of influence between Motherwell and his staff. His guiding hand and positive instructions were illustrated in his correspondence from Chicago during the winter of 1914-1915.

It may also be asked how far was he only expressing the popular will and reacting to the agitations and movements of the period within the province and throughout the prairie region. To begin with, Motherwell had been president of the Grain Growers' Association and he remained in sympathy with

1. Personal files of Dr. F.H. Auld: Notes prepared re Motherwell, 1955.

it. The insurance and elevator questions are prominent examples in which the demands of that organization were impressed upon Motherwell and the government; and in the final solution the draft bills in both cases were presented to it. But again the influence was mutual, in that Motherwell took up a position opposed to government operation and, although not solely because he held out for some other solution, the approach which he favored was adopted.

Equally influential, and relevant to all of the above aspects, were the character, training, experience, and qualities of leadership which Motherwell brought to the position and which permeated his actions throughout his ministry. His scientific training was expressed in his emphasis on the improvement of methods of cultivation and quality of livestock, the fostering of demonstrations and experiments, and the promotion of agricultural instruction for adults and young people. Coupled therewith was his practical experience as a pioneer farmer and the continued operation of Lanark Place during his term of office. He drew upon his own experience as he sought to deal with the problems of new settlers, advocated such things as summer-fallowing, the planting of trees, and the growing of fall rye, and protested (1912) the price of wheat, the cost of labor and machinery, and the load of mortgage debt.<sup>2</sup> His protestations reflected also his consanguinity with the agrarian attitude to the economic system. He had become a leader in the grain growers' movement; he expressed the agrarian viewpoint repeatedly in his references to the railroad companies, the line elevators, the loan companies and banks, the millers and packers, indeed to all eastern big business, the eastern officials of the federal Department of Agriculture,

2. Motherwell had mortgaged his farm to meet obligations in connection with the Temperance Hotel at Abernethy. See Workman, op. cit., Leader-Post (Regina), July 23, 1940.

and the tariff.

Intermingled with this agrarian attitude were his critical faculty and his characteristic bluntness. Perhaps the latter reflected the "Irish" in him. The story is told that, during one of his election campaigns in the 1890's, he drew up a platform in which he listed all of the contemporary issues to which he was opposed. He showed it to a neighbor, who exclaimed, "Gar, Motherwell, you're against a lot of things! What are you for?"<sup>3</sup> When he was convinced that his position was right he expressed his views in forthright terms no matter what the opposition. He had regarded it as his duty to do so in the territorial elections in North Qu'Appelle, and he did so again, even if it meant standing up in the "farmers' parliament" at Prince Albert to oppose government elevators and to advise the grain growers to attend to their farming. His independence was equally apparent in the war period when he termed the production campaign of 1916 agricultural heresy, when he expressed his opposition to the policies of the Food Control Board, and when he took the final step of resignation from the Martin government. Such a man was not content to follow; he must take his stand; he must lead.

Motherwell's critical faculty occasionally led him into positions which were not wholly defensible. His view of the military requirements in the later stages of World War I may have been too insular; his attacks on the Food Control Board failed to take into account the many effective measures which were instituted by that organization.<sup>4</sup> He was not often misled. An element of caution led him to eschew "radicalism" and to examine carefully the alternatives in a given situation. In calling for the organization

3. F.H. Auld, loc. cit.

4. See Canadian Annual Review, 1918, pp. 510-514.

of the grain growers he had been concerned to avoid the drastic measures proposed by some of the local farmers. As minister, he employed experts, notably through engaging able staff for his department. He sent Rutherford off to reassess the American state agricultural colleges even after the University committee had been over the same ground. He shared the Scott government's policy of resorting to commissions of enquiry. This procedure, he pointed out, might be slow but it meant "looking before we leap and becoming thoroughly acquainted with the actual facts before laying the foundation of a permanent policy."<sup>5</sup> The ~~representation~~<sup>appointment to</sup> these commissions of one or more grain growers had the desirable result of ensuring that their viewpoint would be recognized and that whatever recommendations were made would likely be acceptable to their organization.

It must not be forgotten that Motherwell had a background in the Liberal party. That is not to suggest, however, that he was a liberal in the traditional economic and political sense. Liberalism is dynamic, and the version propounded by the Liberal party of Canada at the beginning of the twentieth century envisaged positive governmental action to regulate the conditions of society and to undertake vast projects to open up and develop the resources of the nation. Thus it was a natural outcome of his political affiliation, combined with his agrarianism, that Motherwell as leader of the Grain Growers should call for governmental action to regulate the grain trade, and that he should assume that the provincial government would participate actively in the development of agriculture. The resolution which he moved in the first provincial Liberal convention (1905) stated that the government should assist agriculture in "every possible way."

5. AS, Motherwell Papers, Miscellaneous: Motherwell to G.A. Scott, M.L.A., Jan. 31, 1913.

Precisely how and to what purpose did he think that agriculture should be assisted? He wrote no books and he does not appear to have elaborated a complete philosophy in any one instance, although, as noted, the "Ten Dry Farming Commandments" was an expression of it. His concept of agricultural development and the rôle of government therein must be derived from his addresses, his letters, and, most significantly, the policies which he implemented. These have been examined extensively. To summarize, all of his policies may be said to be based upon the principles of conservation, diversification, and co-operation. Through these could be achieved a sound agricultural economy, the unit of which would be a half-section farm on which were practised the best methods of cultivating and propagating a diversity of high quality grains and livestock. By co-operation of the farmers themselves, and the government with them, they could achieve this end; moreover, they could control some of the costs of production and thereby enhance their position in a price system determined largely outside their borders.

Of first importance in achieving this, Motherwell demonstrated, was educational work. In this field the government took the lead both directly and indirectly. Its direct impact was in the form of lectures, institutes, bulletins, demonstrations, and was brought closer to the farmers through a district representative system. At the same time the farmers could help to educate themselves; this the government encouraged through establishing agricultural societies, co-operating with provincial and regional livestock and grain growing associations, and promoting a municipal secretary program. After 1910 the College of Agriculture at his instance became an important agency through which such educational work could be carried on.

Beyond education Motherwell employed government regulation, financial assistance, and participation in co-operative enterprises. Government regulation embraced such matters as weed control, brand registration, stallion registration, herd law, and machinery contracts. It also involved the employment of the taxing power to force land into production and control the size of farms. Financial assistance included grants to various educational associations, the sale of livestock on credit terms, the financing of seed grain and other forms of relief, and aid in the establishment and operation of agricultural co-operative societies.

Co-operation, as Motherwell used the term, provided a means whereby the government and the farmers might unite to promote the growth of a specific branch of the industry or to solve some commercial problem. Hence it involved elements of government enterprise as well as producer and consumer co-operation. Motherwell drew no hard and fast line between the two. His basic criterion appeared to be that what was good for agriculture was good for society, and once that premise was granted, the next step was to devise a system that would achieve the desired end. If the latter could be achieved by regulation and control, as in the case of terminal elevators, there was no need to embark on public ownership. In a letter to W.C. Paynter of Tantallon, he wrote:

I cannot claim to be, on the whole, a very advanced advocate of public ownership and operation of such utilities that can, in my estimation, be better performed by private enterprise; but there are certain utilities that appear to be in the list of those that require Government control, if not operation; and as time goes on, possibly others will be added to the list.<sup>6</sup>

He, of course, changed his mind on terminal elevators, a matter of federal concern, and, in the extremity of the war emergency, advocated drastic

6. Ibid., Motherwell to Paynter, Feb. 8, 1907.

federal action, including the nationalization of the meat packing industry. At the provincial level he was strongly opposed to the principle of government ownership of elevators but he accepted the Farm Loans Board and, in non-agricultural fields, was associated in the government's decision to operate telephones (1908) and liquor outlets (1915). The policy he preferred was to employ the alliance of government and farmers in co-operative enterprises, in effect a form of government support for infant industries until they could stand on their own feet.

The co-operatives of Motherwell's period varied in the degree of government participation in their organization and functioning. In the case of the co-operative creameries and poultry fattening stations, the local members owned the buildings and equipment and contracted to supply cream. The department operated the plants, marketed the products, and distributed the returns. In the case of poultry killing and wool marketing, the department handled the products directly for the patrons without any local organization; a system which might be described as a government-operated pool. In the case of the societies organized under the Agricultural Co-operative Associations Act, the department provided by-laws and advice, and required annual returns, but for livestock marketing associations, when requested, the department marketed the product and distributed the proceeds to the members. In the case of hail insurance, Motherwell moved away from the policy of government operation and monopoly, inherited from the territorial government, and embarked on a municipal co-operative scheme in which the government appointed the chairman of the three-member managing commission. By the end of his ministry, the creameries, associated poultry enterprises, and the hail insurance scheme had been divorced from govern-

ment participation. Following the example of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, the North and South Saskatchewan Co-operative Live Stock Yards were established as independent co-operatives. When all of these co-operatives were established along independent lines, the government still accorded financial assistance for one or more of the purposes of organization, capital equipment, and operating expenses.

While the co-operative associations were designed to cut out the costs and malpractices attributed to "middle men", whether represented by line elevator companies, wool buyers, cattle drovers, hail insurance agents, or other commissioned dealers, Motherwell tried to avoid conflicting with private enterprise in the case of the consumer co-operatives. In addition to the prohibition of sales to other than members, the membership itself was restricted largely to agriculturalists, not less than seventy-five per cent being required in the case of the agricultural co-operative associations. No such requirement was stipulated for the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries Ltd. However, in all of these enterprises, the total number of shares which could be possessed by one person was limited, and the shareholder had only one vote in any event. Democratic control of the organization was ensured by the annual meeting of shareholder delegates who elected the board of directors. The Trading Department of the S.G.G.A., the institution of which Motherwell viewed with misgivings and which was in no way controlled by the government beyond the legislation providing for its establishment, presented an anomaly in the matter of membership control. The S.G.G.A. was given statutory power to act as wholesale agent for its member locals and for Agricultural Co-operative Associations, but the latter, unless they were also locals of the S.G.G.A., had no control over the central agency

since it was responsible to the Board of Directors and the annual meeting of the membership. The arrangements made for distribution of profits in these co-operative societies was a departure from the Rochdale principle of patronage dividends. While the details varied from one co-operative to another, all embodied the principle of dividend payments on paid-up share capital, establishment of a reserve fund, and a percentage limitation on the amount of the annual surplus which could be distributed in patronage dividends. W.A. Mackintosh made this comment (1924) on the latter feature:

The absence of the patronage dividend does not vitiate the co-operative basis of the companies, but as the field of expansion narrows the payment of the co-operative dividend will become more essential from the standpoint of co-operation. ...Any tendency to dismiss summarily these companies because they fail to measure up to the yard-stick of the Rochdale system is to ignore the most distinctive, useful and solid feature of the whole system.<sup>7</sup>

How far were Motherwell's policies of education, regulation, assistance and co-operation successful in achieving desirable ends? The educational program must be viewed as a formidable attempt to instruct new settlers and old alike in the best possible farming methods. There would seem to be no statistical means of determining its impact in view of all the factors to be taken into account. However, generally speaking, the dry-farming methods were widely adopted in the area most affected. If the educational program was not enough to persuade the farmer, nature soon demonstrated the necessity for him to attune himself with the methods which were advocated. It is to Motherwell's great credit that he saw and warned against the dangers inherent in the semi-arid region, and that he took such extensive steps to disseminate information on the best means to cope with them.

7. W.A. Mackintosh, Agricultural Co-operation in Western Canada (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1924), p. 104.

During the war the increased prices for wheat coupled with the call for patriotic production threatened to destroy at least temporarily his good work. He seems to have been largely justified in his opposition to the federal campaign; surely his opinion that good farming methods would result in greater production in the long run was valid. Indeed there was a partial crop failure in 1917, followed by severe losses in the western part of the province in 1918 and 1919. To what extent may this have been aggravated by the abandonment of summerfallowing by careless or profit-seeking farmers? It may of course have had little significance since, no matter what type of cultivation is instituted, severe drought in even one year, and certainly drought in successive years, inevitably results in crop failures, followed as inevitably by rehabilitation measures in the form of seed grain and other relief. The applicability for this region of Lord Durham's comment on a situation in Lower Canada is apparent:

The Assembly met the evil by relieving the distress in such a way as to stave off its immediate results, and ensure its recurrence. It gave food for the season of scarcity, and seed to sow a crop of wheat... which was of course to fail in its turn; for it had thus relieved the same kind of distress in precisely the same places, for several successive years, and its policy seemed to pension a portion of the people to sow wheat where it would not grow.<sup>8</sup>

The successive failures occurred only at the end of Motherwell's period. Motherwell does not appear to have suggested that a halt be called to settlement in the area; he can scarcely be criticized for failing to protest what apparently no one else foresaw in the wheat boom period before the war, or even during it. The matter of land and settlement was of course a federal responsibility; its system of land classification was a very general one. In the province the only attempt at a land utilization policy resulted from

8. Report and Despatches of the Earl of Durham (London: Ridgways, 1839), p. 68.

the Live Stock Commission's report, but the survey relating to the herd law took place after the great bulk of the lands in the southern part of the province had been occupied.<sup>9</sup>

The emphasis on diversification in grains and livestock to ensure a more stable economy was wise. Motherwell recognized that certain areas were more suited for one type of agriculture than another, and that diversification in livestock in the drier areas was dependent on water supply. The numbers of livestock increased steadily over the period, and the trend was accelerated during the war years, although hog production dropped off slightly in 1918. The distribution of high grade stock under the Live Stock Distribution and Sale Act undoubtedly stimulated the increase to some extent, and certainly improved the general quality, but wheat remained the staple commodity of the agricultural economy.

The concept of the farmer on a half-section of land using horse-powered machinery and raising a diversity of crops and livestock was a reasonable objective for the period. In this way use of the cumbersome and costly steam engines and equipment which they powered would be avoided. The "plunging" in real estate and the "bigness" which quite properly alarmed Motherwell would be terminated. Motherwell's voice, however, seemed hardly to be heard in the tendency of farmers to enlarge their farms and to concentrate on wheat, a trend which wartime prices also encouraged. The resort to taxation to control the size of farms appears not to have been of much significance, and was more likely to have been effective in bringing "wild lands" under cultivation, an outcome which could be viewed with misgivings

9. Following the drought of 1917-1919, a Better Farming Conference was held at Swift Current in 1920 which resulted in the appointment of a royal commission on farming conditions. Arising out of the recommendations of the latter was the commencement of soil survey work by the Soils Department, University of Saskatchewan.

as it applied to the western part of the province. In any event the rapid mechanization of agriculture after Motherwell's period, the perfecting of efficient gas-powered machines both small and large, did away with the need for horses almost entirely, made it possible for one man to farm a large acreage, and initiated the trend to a larger unit as the more economic in prairie agriculture. New machines and new techniques were evolved which were more effective than the harrow and the plow in the semi-arid areas. These developments did not, however, nullify the validity of Motherwell's principle of diversification.

The hybrid co-operatives which Motherwell instituted were undoubtedly of marked significance in stimulating the production of butter, eggs, poultry and wool. Indeed the creameries would likely have "gone under" for a time had Motherwell not taken hold of them in 1906. Note the view expressed by J.A. Ruddick:

About 1905 the average farmer in Saskatchewan developed a contempt for dairying and it looked as though the creamery industry would disappear, but the Minister of Agriculture, Hon. W.R. Motherwell, gave it support, and after some hesitation it began to grow, slowly at first, but with acceleration under the stimulus of war prices.<sup>10</sup>

Motherwell's policy of centralization of creameries was judicious; after his period the competition into which the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries Ltd. and private companies entered had almost disastrous results.<sup>11</sup> The institution of co-operative marketing associations removed many of the complaints farmers had had about the handling and shipment of grain and livestock. Their later history was one of mixed success, but there can be

10. J.A. Ruddick, "The Development of the Dairy Industry in Canada", in H.A. Innis (ed.), The Dairy Industry in Canada (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1937), p. 41.

11. Cf. W.M. Drummond, "Problems of the Canadian Dairy Industry", in H.A. Innis, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

no doubt that they produced results which had not been forthcoming through private agency and that they would not likely have succeeded as quickly and on so large a scale had the advice, management, and financial assistance of the government not been extended to them. They must be viewed as projects of important benefit to the development of agriculture in the period under review, and basic to the subsequent growth of the co-operative movement in the province.

To what extent were similar projects undertaken in the other prairie provinces? The government operation of creameries was an accepted practice, stemming from the federal policy in this regard. When the Dominion withdrew from the field in 1905, Alberta also took over management of creameries. The situation there was much healthier than in Saskatchewan, the number of creameries having increased from five in 1898 to twelve in 1905. The Alberta government handed their management back to the local associations in April, 1911.<sup>12</sup> The Saskatchewan procedure of establishing a co-operative elevator company represented a departure from the Manitoba precedent of government operation, an experiment which had failed due to a combination of circumstances not necessarily inherent in government ownership.<sup>13</sup> Alberta patterned a system on the Saskatchewan plan (1911).<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, co-operative marketing of livestock was initiated in Alberta as early as 1909,<sup>15</sup> but Motherwell's policy of assisting local associations by marketing their livestock appears to have been unique in the prairie region, as was also his wool marketing plan.<sup>16</sup> His program of selling quality livestock on credit terms (1913) preceded similar action in Alberta (1917) and

12. Ruddick, op. cit., p. 115.

13. Cf. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 44.

14. Patton, op. cit., pp. 121-122.

15. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 59.

16. Ibid., p. 49.

Manitoba (1919), where environmental conditions had stimulated ranching in the former, and mixed farming in the latter.<sup>17</sup> The provision of long-term mortgage credit was undertaken almost simultaneously in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (1917), but whereas Saskatchewan did not in this period attempt a system of short-term credits for general purposes, rural credit societies were instituted in Manitoba (1917) and Alberta (1921).<sup>18</sup> The foregoing examples suggest that Motherwell was by no means only a follower of what was being done elsewhere, and that some of his policies were adopted by the neighboring provinces. A complete analysis of his stature as a provincial Minister of Agriculture would call for further comparative study of this nature not only with developments in other provinces but also with his successors in office.

On the basis of this study of Motherwell in Saskatchewan in the period 1905-1918, it has been determined that he was in a position in which, despite geographical and constitutional limits, he could take positive action to promote agricultural development. On the basis of his character and background it was to be expected that he would do so; they provided him with qualities of leadership which he continued to display in office. Much of the governmental assistance to agricultural development in the period was due to his initiative, and where his policies were inherited from the territorial government or stemmed from his contemporaries, he displayed equally strong leadership in pursuing them. His educational policies were particularly helpful in assimilating the countless new settlers; combined therewith his policies of regulation, assistance, and co-operative enterprise were designed to promote the growth of a stable agricultural economy.

17. W.T. Easterbrook, Farm Credit in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1938), pp. 95, 110.

18. Ibid., p. 97.

They were on the whole wise policies; they achieved a considerable measure of success; wherein they fell short of expectations it was largely due to the intervention of a world war and the underlying forces of environment and technological change. It is scarcely to be expected that one man in a thirteen-year period could profoundly influence the course of agricultural development; still Lotherwell did much to direct it along sound lines; many of his specific policies are still being pursued today; and the general principles which he espoused so strongly--conservation, diversification, co-operation--are of significance for all time.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The principal sources used in this thesis have been the published and manuscript records of the federal, territorial, and provincial governments, as well as private papers and contemporary newspapers and periodicals.

##### I. Government Records

1. Federal. The published federal government records consulted were the Statutes of Canada, Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture (published in the Sessional Papers of Canada), and a few special publications, including the following:

Agricultural Instruction in Canada. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1917.

Descriptions of the Townships of the North-West Territories. Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1886.

Fifty Years of Progress on Dominion Experimental Farms, 1886-1936. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1939.

The only federal manuscript material examined was Motherwell's homestead file (AS, Department of the Interior, Homestead File No. 215741).

2. Territorial. The Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture, North-West Territories, 1898-1904, were examined in detail. Frequent reference was made to the Ordinances of the North-West Territories, while the North-West Territories Gazette was used to confirm Motherwell's appointment to a number of public offices.

3. Provincial. The Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, 1905-1919, were the most important published source for this

study. The expenditures of the Department of Agriculture were traced in the Saskatchewan Public Accounts. A careful examination was made of the Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1906 to 1918-1919, in order to establish the extent and nature of legislation relating to agriculture. The Journals of the Legislative Assembly were used in tracing the course of major bills and resolutions through the house. The published reports of the following royal commissions were basic to various phases of the study:

Report of the Elevator Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan. 1910.

Official Synopsis of the Report of the Agricultural Credit Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan. 1913.

Report of the Grain Markets Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan. 1914.

Report of the Farm Machinery Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan. 1915.

Report of the Saskatchewan Educational Commission. 1915.

Interim Report of the Livestock Commission of the Province of Saskatchewan. 1917.

Final Report of the Livestock Commission. 1918.

A great many publications of the Department of Agriculture were examined. A complete list of these appears in C. MacDonald, Publications of the Governments of the North-West Territories, 1876-1905, and of the Province of Saskatchewan, 1905-1952. Regina: Legislative Library, 1952. The following were helpful in augmenting information obtained from the Annual Reports:

a) Bulletin series:

Bulletin No. 19. General Information Relating to Agricultural Matters in the Province of Saskatchewan, 1909. 1910.

Bulletin No. 22. Report of the First Annual Convention of Delegates representing the dairymen of Saskatchewan held at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. May 19 and 20, 1910.

Bulletin No. 33. The Livestock Industry in Saskatchewan. 1913.

Bulletin No. 34. Pioneer Problems. 1913.

Bulletin No. 40. Care, Handling and Marketing of Wool. 1914.

Bulletin No. 41. Co-operative Live Stock Marketing. 1914.

Bulletin No. 42. Suggested Lines of Co-operative Production. 1914.

Bulletin No. 44. Explanation of the Noxious Weeds Act and Suggestions for Agricultural Secretaries. 1916.

Bulletin No. 47. Cheaper Money for Saskatchewan Farmers. 1917.

b) Special Publications:

How Debtors and Creditors May Co-operate. 1915.

Winter Rye. [1915].

c) Leaflets:

Ten Dry Farming Commandments. [1915].

Memorandum Regarding the Saskatchewan Government's Plan for Assisting Greater Hog Production. Nov. 28, 1917.

d) Public Service Monthly, August, 1912 - December, 1918.

The following provincial government manuscript records were consulted:

AS, Department of Agriculture, Deputy Minister's Office, Agricultural Education.

AS, Department of Agriculture, Deputy Minister's Office, uncatalogued files relating to agricultural instruction grants, co-operative associations, marketing and transportation of grain, elevator companies, hail insurance, wartime food production.

AS, Farm Machinery Commission, 1915, Evidence, Interrogatories, Documents.

AS, Live Stock Commission, Summary of Sittings, 1916.

AS, Office Files: Correspondence and Clippings re Motherwell.

Department of Education, School District Files, Abernethy S.D. No. 300.

## II. University of Saskatchewan Records

The University of Saskatchewan Archives, when they become accessible for research purposes, may yield further details on Motherwell's relation-

ship with this institution. For this thesis consultation of University records was confined to the President's Reports, 1908-1918.

### III. Private Papers

The most valuable single source for this study were the Motherwell Papers in the Archives of Saskatchewan. This collection occupies twenty-five document boxes, of which seventeen relate to the period under review. These files embrace correspondence, on nearly every phase of agriculture in the province, with departmental officials, private individuals, organizations, members of Parliament and of the Legislative Assembly, and federal authorities. The collection contains almost no correspondence with cabinet colleagues. The Scott Papers and the Martin Papers, also in the Archives of Saskatchewan, were consulted for correspondence with Motherwell and on agricultural matters. They were of limited value, however; in the Scott Papers correspondence with Motherwell was confined largely to the territorial period; in the Martin Papers the significant material related to Motherwell's resignation.

Dr. F.H. Auld made available two personal files of correspondence and notes relating to Motherwell. He was also most helpful in making suggestions, and in drawing attention to items which he encountered in his research on agricultural history in Saskatchewan.

### IV. Newspapers and Periodicals

In the absence of an official report of the debates in the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, it was necessary to rely on newspaper accounts. The procedure was to read the "Debates Clipping", 1906-1918, a series of volumes compiled by the Legislative Library. These contain the news coverage of the debates in the principal daily papers, with those supporting the

government and the opposition both represented.

No attempt was made to read through any one paper for the period, but, throughout, the Regina Leader, to 1905, and the Morning Leader (Regina), 1905-18, was consulted as various agricultural issues arose. Less frequent reference was made to the Regina Journal, Standard (Regina), and Province (Regina). The Qu'Appelle Vidette, 1891-96, continued as the Vidette (Fort Qu'Appelle) in 1896, was used as source on Motherwell's political activities in the territorial period.

The Nor'West Farmer (Winnipeg), which was examined for the period 1900-1908, proved a valuable source on Motherwell's career in the T.G.C.A.; thereafter the Grain Growers' Guide, 1908-1918, provided full reports of the annual conventions of the S.G.G.A.

The publication of the International Dry Farming Congress (Dry Farming Congress Bulletin, 1908-10; Dry Farming, 1911; Dry Farming and Rural Homes, 1912-15; Agricultural Review, 1916-18) was borrowed through the courtesy of the California State Library. It provided historical information on that organization and assisted in documenting Motherwell's rôle therein.

The Canadian Annual Review, 1906-1918, was used as a general reference on the contemporary scene in Saskatchewan and on agricultural aspects of the Canadian war effort.

#### V. Secondary Sources

The number of published studies relating to agricultural development in Saskatchewan in this period is not large and very little has been written about Motherwell himself. The bibliography below includes the secondary sources which were consulted to a significant extent. Limited reference to a few specialized articles is confirmed in the footnotes.

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