

APR 18 1924

Voice of Labor new gift - 108

NEW YORK
PIERRE, SO. DAK.
ARTHUR LENOZ AND
FOUNDATIONS

FARMER LABOR = VOICE

Vol. I. No. 8.

CHICAGO, ILL. JANUARY 15, 1924.

V-13 Jan 15 - Aug 1 - 1924
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“\$50,000,000 to Help (fool) the Farmers”

Conspiracy to “Stop” Farmer-Labor Unity!

By JOSEPH MANLEY.

The bill sponsored by Senator Peter Norbeck, of South Dakota, and Representative Burtness, of North Dakota, to lend farmers of the Northwest fifty million dollars at 6 per cent from the U. S. Treasury, to be placed with “worthy” farmers, through the agricultural colleges and on the advice of the county agents, is but another scheme to delay bankruptcy proceedings and side-track the demand for a moratorium on farm mortgage debts. This idea has taken root in So. Dakota since the State convention of the Farmer-Labor Party, which adopted the Land Program of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party. And that program contains a demand for “a moratorium for all working farmers on their farm-mortgage debts, for a period of five years.”

Washington heard of the moratorium declaration very shortly after the Farmer-Labor convention. To make the plank of their platform more emphatic, Tom Ayres, senatorial candidate of the Farmer-Labor Party, immediately announced that he proposed to take the stump in every county in the state and circulate petitions to Congress for the passage of a moratorium law. “I shall have a hundred thousand signatures to this petition,” he said. “For there are that number of people in this state and on its borders who need that sort of relief, or they will perish financially within the next year.” Washington heard that, and agile, as usual, in the service of the special interests, Norbeck and Burtness, the latter one of the ranked adherents of the Independent Voters' Association in North Dakota, began their plans to side-track the moratorium. All the big daily papers of the Northwest have taken up the cry, led by Murphy, of the Minneapolis Tribune, who is circulating a propaganda bill. The usual Chamber of Commerce editors of the Northwest before them to help to pass the bill. The usual Chamber of Commerce propaganda is being used: “Progressive,” “hold meetings,” “circulate,” etc.—the customary capitalist methods of reactionary agitation. By the middle of January the campaign to head off the moratorium will be in full swing. (Continued on page 2.)

South Dakota F-L P. For United Front

to do is... exactions... resolution on United Front has garchy... Farmer-Labor Party convention, cal group, S. Dak., on Dec. 4, 1923; in the PREAS, the existing economic condition this revolt the industrial and agricultural... The May... are producing a common supporter... manifests itself in the increasing... of the farmers, and recurring... wage-cutting, and use gather in... against the industrial... AS, this condition has for some... developing a tendency for farm... workers to come together locally, political... on a state-wide basis, for... political action; and... PREAS, this movement found... expression in the Farmer-Labor... that formed the Federated... Farmer-Labor Party, in July, 1923; therefore, be it... “RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Farmer-Labor Party, in regular convention assembled, endorse the effort now being made to bring about a united front, on a national scale, of all the Farmer-Labor groups, by the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, which is making a militant national campaign to that end, so that there shall be presented in the coming Presidential campaign one united front of the farmers and workers.”

The Farmer-Labor Convention on May 30th

By EMIL LYON.

The movement for independent political action by industrial workers and farmers made its first great advance on a national scale in the convention last year at which the Federated Farmer-Labor Party was formed. The next step forward will be made in the farmer-labor convention, to be held in the Twin Cities on May 30th.

There were represented in the July 3rd convention in Chicago more than six hundred thousand organized industrial workers and farmers. The May 30th convention will unquestionably bring to the Twin Cities delegates from industrial workers' and farmers' organizations with a membership of from one and a half to two million.

Forces Behind the Movement.

Movements for the organization of a political party on a national scale, which would fight the battles of the industrial workers and farmers, have arisen on a number of occasions in the history of this country, only to reach a certain strength and then to dissolve into the old parties. In considering the present movement for a political party of farmers and industrial workers, one may well ask at the outset what chance there is of this movement crystallizing into a permanent class party, representing the interests of the workers in the cities and on the land.

The answer to this question is to be found in the development of the industrial system of this country. Since the days of the Populist movement tremendous changes have taken place in the industrial system. The great trusts and monopolies have come into existence, the railroad systems have been consolidated, and the domination of the whole of industry has been centralized in the hands of a financial oligarchy, consisting of the big banking institutions of Wall Street. The financial and industrial oligarchy which dominates the industrial system of this country, also dominates the government and uses the power of the government to promote its schemes of exploitation of the farmers and wage-workers, and also to defend from attack its system of profit-making.

Political parties are the expression of economic group interests. The development of the capitalist system above described, sharpens the economic conflict between contending economic groups. It is this sharpening of the conflict between the industrial workers and the employers, and the farmers and their exploiters, which has produced the movement for independent political action by these groups. Since this economic conflict is certain to grow more and more bitter in the future, the forces making for a great farmer-labor political party will increase in power rather than decrease. A class farmer-labor party on a national scale is therefore one of the imminent certainties of American political life.

The Development of the Movement.

It has been in the period since the end of the war that the new movement for independent political action has had its greatest development. It is during this same period that both the industrial worker and farmer have had their most bitter experiences (Continued on page 3.)

(Special to Farmer-Labor Voice.)
PIERRE, SO. DAK.—The attempt now being made in Minnesota—by Chairman F. A. Pike, Thos VanLear and others—to forestall the activities of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, is part of a conspiracy that has already had manifestations elsewhere in the Northwest.

The first drive of this sort was made in South Dakota, early in the fall, by the Democrats, working through Warren L. Beck of the State Federation of Labor, in co-operation with one Dowdell, who made the bogus claim that he was chairman of the State Farmer-Labor Party by virtue of an appointment in the 1920 Farmer-Labor convention at Chicago. Bitter attacks were launched upon Tom Ayres and Miss Daly, who were leading the movement for a straight Farmer-Labor Party. All of which can be traced to the Democrats, backed by special interests in the East, in an effort to strangle the Farmer-Labor Party at its birth!

Fusion Camouflage.

The minority (fusion) ticket of the Farmer-Labor Party—concocted in the councils of the Democratic Party—is merely a stool-pigeon for the “regular” Democrats. It is well understood—and was known at the time of the state meeting in Pierre, on December 4th—that the nominees of the “fusion” ticket would not run on the ticket in the fall if they succeeded in getting the Farmer-Labor nominations in the spring primaries; that they would resign, secretly, and after it was too late to put up another Farmer-Labor ticket. This would leave no Farmer-Labor ticket on the ballot, and would give the Democrats a clear field against the Republicans.

The plan, as outlined by one who has inside knowledge of the deal, provides for the “regular” Democrats to register in the Farmer-Labor Party and vote for the minority (fusion) Farmer-Labor ticket, in the primaries. It is hoped to in that way capture the Farmer-Labor primaries, so as to nominate Democrats and near-Democrats in the Farmer-Labor Party. Following this, the “regular” Democrats will “take care” of these fusionists, with promises of appointment to office, if they will resign and leave the field to the regular Democratic ticket. In this way, the Farmer-Labor Party is hoped to be destroyed, through its friends having no ticket to vote for at the fall election.

Conspirators Lack Confidence.

The South Dakota primaries occur on March 25th—two months before the national convention of the Farmer-Labor forces, in the Twin Cities. It is believed by the conspirators, that if they can bring about the defeat of the militant Farmer-Laborites in the South Dakota primaries, this will discourage the militants in other states and thus render the May 30th convention a small gathering of disappointed people, who could make no headway anywhere during the 1924 contest.

It is not generally believed that this treason to the farmers can accomplish its purpose in the March primaries. But a desperate effort will be made by the agents of the capitalists, to bring about such result. They will concentrate their efforts upon South Dakota. If they fail to succeed in this state, their hopes for “stopping” the formation of a class-conscious Farmer-Labor Party... be realized.

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in farm and labor

To Fool the Farmers

(Continued from page 1.)

The bankers are advocating the Norbeck-Burtness bill. The funds to be appropriated will be deposited in their banks, by special arrangement. And the banks need the money. They are all on the point of going broke. Something has to be done for the banks, in the name of the mortgaged farmers. The Rural Credits Fund of South Dakota has been loaned to the banks, and cannot now be made other use of. There are nearly four hundred thousand dollars in Rural Credits money, borrowed on state bonds for the farmers, which are in the liabilities of failed banks and cannot be recovered. Norbeck was the foster-father of this money-lending scheme. It is falling down. The passage by Congress of the bill to appropriate \$50,000,000 "to help the farmers," would tend to hold up Norbeck's pet Rural Credits deal at a time when there is about to be a show-down and a crash. This enters into Norbeck's calculations. He comes up for re-election in 1926. The I. V. A. crowd in North Dakota is hard pushed. People are not satisfied with such open service to the capitalistic interests of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Banks in Minnesota are going broke every day. There is a real panic among the bankers and the politicians. The "system" is being exhibited in all its ugly nakedness. It is falling of its own weight. Hence, the desperate campaign to tide over the issue until after next election. There is a Senator to be elected in Minnesota, and another one in South Dakota this year. Also several members of the House of Representatives. There is real need for worry among the politicians and their Wall Street masters.

Moratorium Demanded.

The "worthy" farmers who will get the money, if this bogus bill passes Congress, will be the ones considered worthy by the political machine in North Dakota, of which Burtness is a valet—the Jake Preus machine in Minnesota—and the Norbeck machine in South Dakota. The county agents, who are the farm spies of the system, will say who is worthy; and nobody will be worthy who is not going to vote to perpetuate the reign of these corrupt machines. It is a gigantic attempt to bribe the debt-ridden farmers of the Northwest into again voting to perpetuate their own slavery.

Whether the farmers will fall for this scheme remains to be seen. There is evidence that they are already too wise to be fooled by it, although they may "take the money." They know that no scheme to lend them more money will save them. They know what is the matter with them. They understand that the marketing monopolies would not be touched by this bill, and that they will continue to be robbed, no matter how much money may be loaned to them. They know, without further proof, that unless they could get this money direct from the government without interest or other charges, they could not afford to take it. Their shabby shacks and delinquent taxes bear eloquent testimony to the fact that no matter how hard they work, or however much they may try to save, they will have everything taken from them but a meagre existence. Hence, their revolutionary spirit is growing and they are demanding not more money, or any new scheme of co-operative marketing, but a five-year rest from the payment of principal and interest on their already ever-mortgaged possessions.

Petitions Circulating.

The spirit of this new demand for temporarily forgetting debts is shown in the heading to the petitions that are now in circulation. These are going out every day, to anxious farmers and workers who are ready and more than willing to circulate them. It reads like this:

"Your petitioners, working farmers of the United States, realizing fully that we cannot pay our debts and our taxes, and properly support our families under present conditions; and knowing that any further credit extensions by banks or the Government will create more debts on which we have no interest, no matter how

low the rate or how easy the terms may be, so long as the present system of monopolized marketing continues, which leaves us but 20 cents out of every farm dollar; and knowing that we cannot hope to organize co-operatively in time to save our homes from mortgage foreclosure and our families from destitution; therefore, we demand the passage of a federal law for a five-year moratorium on our farm mortgage debts, as a means of immediate relief from our present desperate distress."

Drive to Defeat Measure.

The Federated Farmer-Labor Party plans to start a drive in every Northwestern state immediately on this measure. Ayres is confident that the farmers will support it, and that the passage of the Norbeck-Burtness bill is a fraud of the rankest kind and will offer no relief. It proposes the loan of \$50,000,000 for the pretended purpose of relieving the bankrupt wheat growers, by enabling them to raise live stock instead—thereby reducing the wheat acreage. The impossibility of this scheme can best be judged by a further statement of Ayres: "I had my experience in the cattle business," he said. "I went into it in 1916, bought the cattle right, had the finest free range and the best water in western South Dakota. I had no losses. We did most of our own work, and got the advantage of 7 per cent money. But we learned that no farmer can succeed in making ends meet even with all the controllable circumstances in his favor. The cattle men in South Dakota are all broke. And this includes most of the richest, oldest and most experienced among the crowd. The war-time prices helped some. But that was only a 'jag.' We made no money. We just thought we did, because we were handling a lot of checks. I kept my books as carefully as does any bank. We always showed a loss, although we managed well. You cannot beat the packers; nor can you beat the railroads, or the manufacturers of fence wire. I tried it and got beat." That is the language of this militant western cattleman, chairman of the South Dakota Farmer-Labor Party.

Capitalist Alliances Against Farmer-Labor

(By Federated Press.)

CHICAGO—In an attempt to counteract the rising farmer-labor movement by forming a closer "permanent" alliance for mutual benefit between the big absentee farm owners and industrial capitalists, the Illinois Manufacturers' Assn. has called a farmer-manufacturer convention now in session here. "The farmer and manufacturer have everything in common," John M. Glenn, secretary of the association, on the opening day told the large landowners, stock breeders, grain bankers, and factory owners gathered here from all parts of the country. "Neither has anything in common with labor," he continued, "both farmer and manufacturer are employers, both are capitalists."

The election of the farmer-laborites and progressives who now form the farm bloc in Washington was part of a Communist plot, the delegates were told by Fred E. Marvin, an editor of the New York Commercial and representative of the American Defense society. The growing demand among the farmers and the congressmen of the northwest who studied conditions in Russia last summer, for trade agreements and diplomatic recognition of Russia, was submitted by Marvin as further "evidence" of a red plot. The Conference for Progressive Political Action was named by the speaker as the most menacing agency "operating under the Communist International . . . first, because of the clever deception found in the name; second, because it was this organization that did the most to advance the 'demand' found in the documents used in the last election." The conference, he said, consisted of a number of affiliated unions and two farmer organizations—the Nonpartisan league and the Farmers' National council. The membership of these organizations was estimated at 2,000,000.

The climax of the first day's proceedings came when the delegates, who have "nothing in common with labor," lined up with Wall Street and Secretary Mellon on the tax issue. "Utter abandonment of the fallacious theory, that excessive and discriminatory taxes against great wealth and industry will relieve others," was demanded by Banker George F. Heindel of Iowa, who concluded, "high taxes stagnate business."

President Coolidge sent his greetings to the convention and regretted his inability to attend.

Lake County Milk Strike

By T. J. O'FLAHERTY.

The milk-producing farmers of Lake County, Indiana—which is the principal source of the milk supply for the city of Chicago—had their first actual experience with a real strike when the milk trust recently announced that, beginning on January 1st, the price of milk to the producers would be cut from \$2.75 to \$2.60 per hundred pounds.

Until then, the milk producers had listened with quite a bored expression to those who sought to impress upon them the fact that the growing rapacity of the gentlemen of high finance would result in the farmer's condition becoming worse than that of the industrial worker, unless they organized to resist the encroachments of the milk profiteers, and united with the city workers, for their own protection.

But they have done a lot of thinking, since January 1st. On that day, and from then on, they found all the agencies of capitalism in a united front against them. And they had to turn to their only friends, the labor unions of Chicago and vicinity, and the other working-class organizations that were in a position to assist them.

Workers Give Support.

In spite of statistics proving that the production of milk costs more than the distributors were willing to pay for it, the capitalist press raised a cry, not to "give the farmers a square deal," but to "save the public." But the public—which in the cities means the workers—gave the milk-farmers their support, from the very start, and were willing to suffer deprivation, in order that their brother-workers on the farms might win their just demands.

As a representative of the Daily Worker—the only labor daily in Chicago—I had occasion to meet Mr. Frank T. Fowler, official spokesman for the Milk-Producers Association, which had charge of the strike operations. I was impressed with the deep determination displayed by him and his lieutenants, in conducting the fight; and with the broad vision which enabled him to appreciate the identity of interests between city workers and farmers. Mr. Fowler said:

"This is the first time in their lives that the members of our organization have had an opportunity to experience the joy that comes of receiving a friendly hand from our city brothers, in time of stress, and I dare say that it will prove beneficial to them. Until now they had no realization of the organization."

Strong Alliance in Pro.

This growing consciousness that they must join hands with labor, is the most hopeful sign on the horizon at present. Such an alliance will prove invincible, and would hasten the day when the producers of this country will taste the fruits of real liberty, now denied them by the exploiters, who are living on the products of the workers' toil.

The Farmer-Labor forces in Chicago, through an elected Provisional C. C. are planning formation of a National organization. A convention will be April, with this objective in view.

To Our South Dakota

This first issue of "Farmer-Labor" is sent to you because you are one who have helped to create in our present stronger farmer-labor.

It is now clearly proven that the movement cannot progress on a state-by-state basis. It must be linked up with the trial workers' and farmers' organization, neighboring states, and throughout the country.

Farmer-Labor Voice is a NATIONAL farmer-labor newspaper, and will carry the latest news from ALL the agricultural sections of the United States. It will thus serve as a forum that will bring together the workers on farms and in cities, for a united national movement.

We should like to have your name enrolled on our list, and to be the first upon our subscription list.

Farmer-Labor Convention May 30

(Continued from page 1.)

with the centralized financial and industrial oligarchy and the government which expresses the political power of this oligarchy.

The result has been the broad movement for independent political action. This movement has expressed itself in waves of increasing strength. The first national culmination of the movement was in the Farmer-Labor Party, led by John Fitzpatrick. This movement reached its heights in 1920—a presidential year. But the leaders of the movement did not show the necessary political leadership qualification and organization ability to create out of the sentiment for the Farmer-Labor Party a strong political organization. The two conferences for Progressive Political Action, in February and December of 1922, were expressions of the same movement, distorted by the conservative leaders of that organization.

The coming together of representatives of six hundred thousand workers and farmers, in Chicago, July, 1923, for the farmer-labor conference, and who by a vote of 90 per cent of the delegates insisted on the organization of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, was the second wave showing the increasing strength of the movement.

Since the July 3rd convention the Federated Farmer-Labor Party has, while building up its own strength as a political party, consistently worked for a still greater crystallization of the farmer-labor class movement. It established contact with the state farmer-labor parties existing in South Dakota, Washington, Montana, and various local organizations, for the purpose of securing joint action in support of a national convention in 1924.

The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party initiated a movement along the same line, and at a conference, held in St. Paul on November 15th, at which were present representatives of the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, South Dakota, Montana and Washington; the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, the old Farmer-Labor Party, and the Committee of 48, the call for the May 30th convention was agreed upon.

The May 30th convention will unquestionably have the support of every group in the United States standing for the formation of a mass farmer-labor party. Coming in a presidential year, when political interest runs high, the possibilities of making of this centralized final crystallization of the movement into an independent political action in a federated farmer-labor party are greater than before. The promise of the May 30th convention is the starting point of a new American labor history.

Class Party or Third Party?

What kind of party will be organized May 30th?

At the present time there is not only a movement for independent political action by the exploited farmers and industrial workers. The middle class, consisting of small merchants, the professional groups and the well-to-do farmers, are also in revolt against the exactions of the centralized capitalist oligarchy which rules this country. The radical group, which holds the balance of power in the present congress, is an expression of this revolt of the middle class.

The May 30th convention has among its supporters representatives of this middle class third party movement. There will gather in the Twin Cities not only the representatives of the exploited farmers and industrial workers, but also of the middle class groups, which are in revolt against the old political parties. Whether out of the convention there will come a farmer-labor movement, representing the class interests of the exploited farmers and industrial workers, or a third party, fighting the political struggles of the middle class, will be determined by the relative strength of the two groups.

The Federated Farmer-Labor Party was organized by representatives of the exploited farmers and industrial workers. Its program is an expression of the class interests of these two groups.

The Federated Farmer-Labor Party, in supporting the May 30th convention, will carry on a campaign to make of it a mass movement of the money lords seized the money and made loans to them, at

farmer-labor party. It believes that the organization formed in the Twin Cities must be dominated by the exploited farmers and industrial workers, and not by the middle class elements.

Forward to a Great Class Farmer-Labor Party.

Although the call for the May 30th convention has not yet been issued, it is not too early to begin work in support of this convention. The issue of independent political action should be raised in every political or economic organization of industrial workers and farmers, and support of the May 30th convention should be voted. The industrial workers and farmers of this country have now before them the opportunity to create a fighting political organization, which will really represent their interests in the struggle against the old capitalist parties. All the farmer-labor forces in the country must be mobilized to achieve this goal.

Meat Trust in New Move

(By Federated Press.)

WASHINGTON.—Chas. J. Brand, former protégé of Joe Cannon and Herbert Hoover in the days when Heney and the federal trade commission were on the trail of the Chicago meat packers' lawbreaking, has bobbed up again as a special pleader for the packing trust.

In a press release from the office of Secretary Wallace, dated at Omaha, Jan. 15, where the American National Livestock Association is in session, Brand is quoted as arguing that the big packers ought to be permitted to operate chain stores for retailing meats. This is now prohibited by the "consent decree" under which the Big Five evaded the prosecution which the federal administration was forced to institute against them in 1919.

"Retailing meat through large organizations operating chain stores would tend to cut down food costs at the greatest single point of expense," says Brand, "and would benefit both purchasers and consumers."

Secretary Wallace describes Brand as "consulting specialist in marketing for the U. S. Department of Agriculture." When the packers' secret correspondence files were captured by the trade commission some years ago, it was found that Brand was considered one of the safest friends whom a packer lobbyist could consult when in Washington.

The story of packer control of chain stores, told in the investigation, was one of deliberate strangling of competition, followed by raising prices to the consumer and cutting of prices paid to the farmer, and accompanied by wasteful overhead expenses in the beef trust itself. The combine was not efficient except in oppression and robbery.

SEND IN YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS!

To All Our Members:—

Farmer-Labor Voice will be the medium through which the Federated Farmer-Labor Party is to gain strength for its fight in the interests of the producing class. A wide circulation is the first necessity, for the accomplishment of its purpose.

Farmer-Labor Voice will express the needs of the rank and file. It will "go to the masses"—and to them will carry the truth.

Every member of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party should be not only a subscriber but a circulation booster as well. And a bundle order for this paper should be sent in immediately, by every union or group among our affiliated organizations.

The subscription price is \$1.00 per year, or 50 cents for six months; and the cost of the newspaper, in bundles, is 2 cents per copy.

TO "UNITED FARMER" SUBSCRIBERS:

"United Farmer" subscribers are hereby notified that "Farmer-Labor Voice" has been made the official organ of the United Farmers' Educational League, and that they now will receive the latter publication in place of the former.

With the wider field for usefulness and service which is open to "Farmer-Labor Voice," we feel sure that all readers of "United Farmer" will appreciate this change that has been made.

THE UNITED FARMERS' EDUCATIONAL LEAGUE, funds Alfred Knutson Sec'y, ing with industrial improvement efforts. Labor's representatives, divided against each

A Conference—and A Cattle Show!

The dying F.-L. P. (formerly People's Progressive Party) of Colorado, has called for a conference in Denver, January 26 and 27. Having no program of sufficient interest to draw any number of farmers' and workers' organizations to a conference, this outfit is offering a cattle-show as added attraction. And with forlorn hope, it seeks to thus contract in advance the results which it foresees must follow the Farmer-Labor convention in St. Paul on May 30th.

This swan-song call is sent forth in most all directions—except that of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, the existence of which is either ignored or unknown to the signers of the call. But among the states which are not forgotten, are Washington, Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Idaho. And in all of these states, the Farmer-Labor Party organizations have recorded their intention to participate in the Minnesota convention.

The united convention and cattle-show call, is signed by W. M. Piggott, Jay G. Brown and Bert Martin, National Chairman, Secretary and Committeeman, respectively, of the now pretty well defunct "Farmer-Labor Party of the United States, of America."

And it is significant that among those invited to address this mixed-pickles gathering of the clans, is "HONORABLE ROY M. HARROP, President of the National Ford-for-President Club"—one of the most active boosters of the now busted Ford Boom-erang. Having drawn forth from its closet this political skeleton, Mr. Harrop now seeks to decorate with it his Farmer-Labor Party aspirations.

It is officially announced that in this combined funeral and fat-stock show, there will be no place for "REDS"—or those who reverse the emblem of international brotherhood. A red flag is, of course, not an appropriate decoration for a prize bull show. And equally of course, the idea of internationalism, typified by that emblem, is not included in the program of these political adventurers. In its entirety, this "strictly limited" call to action is quite a curiosity. And Farmer-Labor Voice presents it herewith, for inspection—with capitalization and all complete as in the original document.

Denver, Colorado, Jan. 1st, 1924:
"Under and by virtue of the AUTHORITY OF THE STATES OF AMERICA, We hereby call a conference of the FARMER-LABOR PARTY of the Western and Southwestern states, to be held at Denver, Colo., Saturday, Jan. 26th and Sunday, Jan. 27th, and a conference of the FARMER-LABOR PARTY OF COLORADO, to be held Monday, Jan. 28th, conference to be called to order at 10 A. M.

W. M. PIGGOTT, National Chairman
JAY G. BROWN, National Secretary
BERT MARTIN, National Committeeman
G. F. STEVENS, State Chairman
NEIL MAC ARTHUR, State Secretary
"Railroad Tickets to Stock Show may be obtained Jan. 18th to 23rd: Fare one and one-half west and southwest of Missouri River return limit Jan. 29th. See your local agent all railroads.

See the Animals.
"SEE THE NATIONAL WESTERN LIVESTOCK SHOW AT DENVER, COLO., Jan. 19th to 26th. BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER, and at the same time attend the Western and Southwestern conference of the FARMER-LABOR PARTY. Good accommodations at all hotels. Speaker of national importance will be in attendance at the conference.

"HONORABLE PARLEY PARKER CHRISTENSEN, candidate for president in 1920, will address the conference on Sunday, Jan. 27th, at 2 P. M., on "WHY A THIRD PARTY?"

"HONORABLE ROY M. HARROP, President, National Ford for President Clubs, will address the conference on the Economic question, Sunday, Jan. 27th, at 3:30 P. M.

"All forward thinking people are invited to attend this conference. NO PLACE FOR COMMUNISTS OR RED FLAG WAVERS. THE STARS AND STRIPES ARE GOOD ENOUGH FOR US."

Subscription Blank

Federated Farmer-Labor Party,
800 N. Clark St.,
Chicago, Ill.

JOSEPH MANLEY, National Secretary:

Enclosed find \$ _____ for which you will send to below address, Farmer-Labor Voice, for a period of _____ months.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____

There is no charge for the paper in farm and labor

FARMER LABOR VOICE

Published twice a month, by the Federated Farmer-Labor Party of America. Joseph Manley, National Secretary, 809 N. Clark St., Chicago, Ill.
Subscriptions: \$1.00 a Year; 50c for 6 Months. Bundle Orders: At 2c per Copy.

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ALFRED KNUTSON, North Dakota
JOHN C. KENNEDY, Washington
W. H. GREEN, Nebraska

Entered as Second Class Matter, under the name of "Voice of Labor," July 8, 1923, at the Post Office of Chicago, Ill. Entry under the title of Farmer-Labor Voice applied for.

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A "Voice" in the Wilderness

The Farmer-Labor Voice, official organ of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, is published in Chicago, home of the Packing Trust, of the Harvester Trust, and of that great national wheat-gamblers' association, the Chicago Board of Trade.

As its name implies, this paper will be the voice of the Farmer-Labor movement that is now rapidly and surely enveloping the agricultural and the industrial sections of the United States. It is a response to this fast-growing consciousness of the need for solidarity and unity of action between the farmers and the industrial workers.

The principal purpose of the paper will be to clearly define and explain issues which link together the interests of these two fundamental political and economic forces. Its policy will be non-sectarian in character and it will valiantly serve these two worker groups, because it will deal, in a militant way, with the various economic and political features which are the basis of the Farmer-Labor movement.

In this year of 1924—which will witness a national Presidential election—the farmers in ever-increasing numbers are becoming bankrupt and in desperation are migrating to the cities; while the industrial workers, principally within the cities, are face to face with an economic situation that is equally critical.

Thus the Farmer-Labor Voice is starting out with a real basis for a nation-wide circulation, as the only national Farmer-Labor newspaper in the country. And upon the crest of this tidal wave of adversity will be borne in triumphant progress the great mass political party which the irresistible forces of economic necessity are bringing forth.

Passing the Buck

One of the greatest American indoor sports is called "passing the buck." Politicians are especially skilled in this not too strenuous exercise of the mental faculties.

Today, with the wheat market in a state of collapse and the farmers in the wheat-growing area headed for bankruptcy and going strong—on the down grade—we are told that "the operation of the natural law of supply and demand is chiefly responsible for the condition of the farmer." And, secondly, that his failure is in most cases the result of undue "extravagance." We are also informed that the same "invincible laws" apply to the labor situation generally.

But when this law adversely affects the railroads for instance, we find the governmental powers brought to their aid, post haste. As in the case of the Esch-Cummins law, which has enabled the railroads to defy the "natural law," and has given Wall Street a weapon with which to "stick up" the farmer and the wage worker alike.

When "natural law" was operating in the war period, for the benefit of the wheat farmer, the government stepped in "to prevent profiteering," set an arbitrary price on wheat and thus defied this "natural law," with the consequence that financial bankruptcy is rampant amongst these near-profiteers.

This truth is admitted by Secretary of Agriculture Wallace, who now "passes the buck" to the government, in his speech before the Farm Economic Association at Washington, D. C.

He says in part:

"It will be conceded that the unrestricted operation of economic laws, in course of time will be

from the farms, and will continue to go so. . . They are transferring the land from those who farm it to those who do not, thus increasing the number of non-resident land owners and the attendant evils. . . They are reducing the standard of living in the farm home, compelling hand-labor by the farm mother, depriving the farm children of their rightful educational and social opportunities and creating in them a hatred of farm life, which will lead them to leave the farm at the first opportunity.

"The free operation of economic laws is working all these evils, and more. If there had been no interference by the government, with economic laws as they might affect the farmer during the war period; if there had been no arrest by the government, of economic laws, as they affect other groups—the industrial group, the transportation group, the labor group; then the case for the farmer could not be presented with such assurance. But there was such interference. The farmer was deprived of many of the benefits which would have accrued to him from the free operation of economic laws during the war. Other groups have been protected by the government, from the full sweep of these economic laws.

"Once such a policy is adopted for the benefit of one group, it must be applied fairly to all, or we enter a period of economic and political disturbance, the result of which we cannot foresee."

Secretary Wallace thus admits the deplorable condition of the farmers and plainly realizes that something must be done to help them. No doubt the "political disturbance" that he speaks of, is the growing Farmer-Labor movement. And the plank proposed in the Federated Farmer-Labor Party platform for the relief of the bankrupt wheat-growers, is A Five Year Moratorium On Farm Mortgage Debts.

"Pop Goes the Weasel!"

One of our Northwestern farmer correspondents sizes up the financial situation in that section, like this:

"The banks are popping here, every day. It's a regular Fourth of July in the banking game. And of course this is a direct reflection of the farmers' financial condition."

In support of this rather sketchy but wholly graphic summary of the situation in which the farmers now find themselves, the records of R. G. Dun & Co. (who are certainly not particularly interested in the farmers' behalf) show a total of 575 bank failures in 1923, with aggregate liabilities of over two hundred million dollars—or an average of \$350,000.

And these failures are found to have occurred mostly in the rural districts, among the small, state banks. The general underlying cause is stated to be the depression in certain agricultural sections, particularly in the wheat belt, and the consequent inability of many farmer borrowers to meet their note obligations.

The figures recorded by the Dun Agency show that in point of number the increase of bank failures in 1923 over the total for 1922, exceeds 108 per cent; that the increase in the indebtedness is more than 160 per cent, the returns for the earlier year having shown 277 bank suspensions, with liabilities of nearly eighty million dollars. Even in 1921—a year of especially unfavorable crop reports—there were 174 fewer bank failures than occurred in 1923, and the liabilities were smaller by \$50,000,000.

The Dun Agency reports show that the marked increase in bank suspensions during 1923 was confined mainly to two sections of the country—the central western and the western states. The number for the central western group rose to 291, from 85 in the preceding year; and the indebtedness increased to more than \$83,000,000, from less than \$24,000,000 in 1922. This adverse showing resulted chiefly from the unusual number of failures in North Dakota, where 130 banks suspended, with liabilities in excess of \$32,000,000.

In the western states, 175 banks are reported as having failed last year, for fully \$56,000,000; whereas in 1922 the number was 58, and the indebtedness was about \$16,600,000. Last year, Montana alone had 76 bank suspensions with liabilities of more than \$33,000,000. And Nevada was the only state in the western section, for which no bank failures were recorded.

The number of state and private banks that got into difficulties is reported as 471, with a combined indebtedness of over \$154,000,000. The number of suspensions among national

The Grim Specter

In the financial columns of the great daily newspapers, there is now to be found a varied array of industrial forecasts and outlooks for the coming year. In these, the note of optimism is strongly predominant; but here and there is to be detected an undertone of caution. And a careful analysis of official authentic reports upon the economic conditions now existent throughout the country, will not bear out the optimistic note.

All governmental findings point to a steady and rapid increase in the army of unemployed. If the present rate of increase is maintained for a few months, then before this winter is passed, there will be millions of American workers suffering the miseries which result from unemployment.

According to the latest findings of the Federal Reserve Board, "the production of basic commodities and factory employment decreased in November"; as did also the production of pig iron, sheet steel, automobiles, pneumatic tires, coal, lumber, brick, etc.

Right along with this decrease in production, unemployment is increasing, of course. The shop crafts workers are being dismissed by thousands. And so are the factory workers, the miners, the mill hands, and common laborers of all sorts.

Meanwhile, Congress is preparing to spend \$500,000,000 on "pork." In a single day, 118 such bills were introduced. But not one of these bills dealt with the problem of unemployment. Yet this is a problem which, within a very short time, will be of utmost importance. And no solution is even suggested, in the columns of the daily newspapers—nor in the halls of Congress.

As the grim specter of Starvation stalks abroad, the workers see it—night and day. The master class tries to hide it from their own eyes and from the eyes of their slaves. And thus the struggle between the "Haves" and the "Have Nots" proceeds toward its inevitable climax.

SOME OF OUR CONTRIBUTORS

- TOM AYRES, is an old-time Populist cattleman. For years a leader of the Non-Partisan League, he is now Chairman of the South Dakota Farmer-Labor Party, and is also its candidate for United States Senator.
- WILLIAM BOCK, is President of the Western Progressive Farmers, and National Chairman of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party.
- MARY D. BRITE, is Secretary for Cincinnati Branch of the American Liberties Union. For years she has been actively engaged in the progressive movement.
- ALFRED KNUTSON, is a farmer. For years he was the Non-Partisan League manager in Washington, Idaho and other states. He is Secretary for the United Farmers' Educational League, and is now traveling through the West for that organization.
- EMIL LYON, prominent writer on the farmer-labor political and economic situation, will be a regular contributor to our columns.
- THOS. J. O'FLAHERTY, is the former editor of "Voice of Labor," which has been transformed into "Farmer-Labor Voice." He is now a member of "The Daily Worker" editorial staff.
- J. E. SNYDER, former editor of the Oak and (Cal.) World, was long a resident of Oklahoma, and has returned there to watch development of that state's present chaotic political situation.
- HAROLD M. WARE, a typical young American farmer, has traveled extensively through the farming areas of the West and Southwest and studied the conditions existing there. As a practical farmer, he was in charge of the first unit of American farmers and tractors sent to Russia.

SEND US THE NEWS—FROM EVERYWHERE!

Farmer-Labor Voice needs local correspondents in all sections of the country. Whether on the farm or in the town or city, YOU can afford us news items of value to the farmer-labor unity movement. And by doing this, you can help to make OUR paper a strong, influential organ.—EDITOR.

Sterling's 'Honesty'—The Situation in Versus Mc Master's the State of Ohio

(Special to Farmer-Labor Voice.)

PIERRE, S. DAK.—That there is to be a political battle of no small consequence, between Senator Sterling, of Sedition Law fame, and McMaster, the fake gasoline "progressive," seems clear at this writing. Sterling will have the backing of the entire administration force, because he is well-known to be a dependable servant of the capitalists. Going to Washington nearly twelve years ago as a "progressive"—an original supporter of LaFollette, in 1912, when the Wisconsin senator made his race for the presidential nomination—Sterling had no more than warmed his own senatorial chair, than he displayed his real color, as a thorough-going arch-reactionary.

Ever since then, Sterling has been very faithful to the capitalistic interests. In this respect, he has probably gone beyond any senator in his class—excepting perhaps, Miles Poin Dexter, who also went to the senate as a "progressive."

A "Progressive" Reactionary.

Sterling's action in supporting Newberry, against expulsion, has been the cause of his losing a great many votes among the more liberal-minded Republicans. But his "red"-hunting activities against free speech, have stamped him as the most dangerous reactionary in the United States senate. This is clearly shown by his introduction of a bill purporting to designate as a crime, "to advocate overthrow of the government by force and violence," the bill being so cunningly worded that even the mildest sort of protest against governmental abuses may be brought within the provisions of that statute.

His nomination for return to office is quite probable, as the reactionary elements are lined up solid for his support. His election, however, is not so probable, even if he does succeed in obtaining the Republican nomination.

A Reactionary "Progressive."

Governor McMaster, who will be Sterling's opponent for the Republican senatorial nomination, is a former banker—like Cummins, of Iowa. He is a direct product of the bankers' dictatorship, which has functioned in the Republican politics of South Dakota ever since the railroad interests placed that part of their business in the strong hands of the Bankers' Association. Consistently reactionary at all times, McMaster has stood with the banking and other capitalistic interests, against every sort of progressive measure presented. But within the past four months he has sought to change his position, seemingly, by a vociferous attack upon the gasoline profiteers. He is thus seeking to meet the rising tide of farmer discontent. But if he were elected, he would be found lined up with the "switch-burners and heavy-burners" of the type with whom Sterling has been hunting. That his social vision is the same as Sterling's, is clearly proven by McMaster's speech delivered in the Republican proposal meeting, where central workers who were murdered, and trodden upon condemned to prison, as result of footlocke Day riot in Centralia, Wash.

And a Political "Come-on."

The unfruitful regular Democratic candidate for senator, is an insurance corporation lawyer, and quite of the Sterling type. He was a member of the State Council of Defense, during the war, when the war-time rowdies were busily engaged in breaking up meetings of the Non-Partisan League, beating up its organizers and deporting its speakers. In those days Cherry was a most sublime "patriot," and his attitude toward the Non-Partisan League was entirely antagonistic. He is now attempting the role of a McAdoo-type "progressive." But he must be classified along with the Sterlings, the Poin Dexters and those other fake "progressives" now on dress parade, looking for the votes of the farmer-labor element. Each will prove equally servicable to the plunderbund, in the coming struggle between the robber class and the exploited farmers and industrial workers.

FINANCIERS AND FARMERS.

Former Governor Hanna, of North Dakota, high financier and active opponent of the Farmer-Labor movement, has recently said that in North Dakota, since July 1st, 29 state and several national banks have permanently closed their doors. He gives as explanation that farmers are not making expenses and, therefore, are not meeting their loans.

On one farm of 480 acres the farmer had \$2.00 left after the threshing bill was paid. And on a farm owned by Mr. Hanna himself, his share of the returns from 640 acres was \$180.00, while the taxes on the farm were \$300.00. So it could seem that Mr. Hanna might have even more "ex-lavaganti" than the

Money Lords set of most of the and made loans to them, at f

When I received a letter from the national secretary of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, requesting for publication in first issue of The Farmer-Labor Voice a short article on "The Farmer-Labor Movement in Ohio," I felt that I could dispose of the matter in one sentence by simply writing, "There ain't no such animal." But some explanation may not be amiss, as to why this thing is lacking in that "greatest state of the Union."

In September, 1921, when I took over the office of Ohio State Secretary for the Farmer-Labor Party, I was furnished with some stationery, some account books, and a list of names of people throughout the state. That was all.

Some Efforts Made.

At that time there was a fairly active organization of the party in Cincinnati. At various times thereafter the matter of endeavoring to persuade some state action was discussed, but without tangible results. Several efforts were made to call a state convention, to be held at Columbus or Cincinnati—to which there was practically no response from the elements concerned. Those people who had taken an interest in the Labor Party—and there were many such—seemed to lose that interest when it became the Farmer-Labor Party. This lack of interest might have developed just the same if there had been no 1920 convention. I do not mean to maintain that if the old organization had continued to function as a Labor Party, pure and simple, it would have flourished and grown. But the fact remains, that interest in the Farmer-Labor Party of Ohio was then at a low ebb. And never, during the several years that I served as state secretary, was it in any other condition.

Diversified Failures.

Ohio is essentially an agricultural state. But it is quite unlike the extensive fruit and grain growing country that some of the Western and Northwestern states are. It is made up of fairly prosperous and comparatively large farms, interspersed with smaller farms, and a goodly number of truck farms, large and small.

This is the country of diversified farming. And the products of these farms are of many sorts. Upon them one crop may prove to be a failure—but all will not. As one farmer has aptly expressed it, "We do not put all our eggs in one basket." So they feel that their resources entitle them to a considerable degree of independence. There is no class of people who are more hard to convince than the Ohio farmer. He does not seem to recognize the fact that he is in opposition to the same economic forces with which the Western and Northwestern farmers are contending—and losing out. Yet he is rapidly losing his equity in the land which he tills. And this imposes upon him the strictest economies, on the farm and in the home. While his standard of living is lowered, just as in the other agricultural sections this is the case, he must likewise exploit to the limit his own wife and children as farm help. As a consequence, and just like the farmers elsewhere, he sees his children and his neighbors' children leaving the farms and going to the cities. With the result that he finds it more and more difficult to obtain farm labor. In resenting this fact, his resentment extends to labor generally. But he sees no connection between his own problems and those of the industrial worker. In his opinion, their interests are as far apart as are the polar extremities—they have nothing in common, he thinks.

Tenant Farmers Awake.

This is the difficult situation confronting the organizer of a political party which hopes to interest, and is created for the purpose of helping the exploited farmer and the equally exploited industrial worker, in the state of Ohio. But these farmers generally do not consider themselves as being in the "exploited" class. Many of the more fortunately situated even imagine themselves to be within the capitalist class. But with the tenant farmers—who have the usual laboring sustaining funds of state institutions and interfering with industrial improvement efforts. Labor's representatives, divided against each other,

degree. In Ohio this sort is beginning to realize that what is now happening to the Western and Northwestern farmers is soon likely to happen to themselves. And their native American intelligence is leading them to seek more light upon the possibilities of the future, for their own protection.

Workers' Organization Weak.

Also the industrial workers in Ohio are now having their lessons burned into them with the iron of capitalistic oppression. While thus becoming more and more conscious of his precarious situation, the industrial worker is not saying much but is doing a pile of thinking. And great will be the upheaval when there is an outward manifestation of that thinking.

The state of organization among these workers is one of great weakness. In the basic industries of Ohio, such as the tremendous steel plants, and the rubber and automobile factories, there is practically no labor organization. This condition is little better among the building trades workers, upon the railroads, in the great clothing industry, and in other lines. Right now the industrial worker in Ohio is fertile soil for organizational efforts.

There should be a militant Farmer-Labor Party in Ohio.

"At Last—A Newspaper For All Workers!"

By WILLIAM BOUCK.

SEDRO-WOOLEY, WASH., Jan. 13, 1924.—Brother Manley now informs me that we are to have a national official organ for all the workers. Previously we have had only papers representing farmer-workers and industrial workers separately. But now, for the first time, we shall have a paper for all of them, together. And this is indeed good news.

The greatest obstacle to overcome in our movement is the prejudice of worker against worker—a prejudice ever increased by clever propaganda from the parasite press of capitalism.

Among farmers it has been the hardest matter to think of themselves as of the working class. They were capitalists—for did they not own land?

Diversity and Destruction.

In this state of Washington we have mostly specialized farming—very little of what is known in the East as general farming. Wheat-raising in one section; apples in another; alfalfa in another; stock-raising in another; cows in another; berries in another; prunes in another. And these varied branches of the farming industry grew up separately. Each believed that co-operative enterprises would be the solution of their problems. Each tried it—and after years of every possible effort, all are broke.

It was capitalism, at its best—or worst—that did it. Taxes for the producer, immunity for the speculator; interest for the producer, rags for the worker; inflation for the banker, deflation for the farmer. And so, many now see, through this maze of graft, the hangament of a capitalist society, and its structure.

Growth of Enlightenment.

We welcome a paper which will cover the truth with the truth as to producer versus parasite. Such a paper will stabilize the ever-changing and growing mind of the worker. It will help him over the first "enthusiasm of service" for a new social order. It will keep him from going away on false trails. And it will help mightily in building a solid and permanent anti-capitalist political party, which shall seek to construct, where capitalism has destroyed; seek to help, where capitalism has robbed; and seek to build for honesty, where capitalist monopoly has incited dishonesty.

Yes, the Farmer-Labor movement is growing—and growing fast—in our state of Washington. In many countries, where we formerly had little support, we now have many members. And there are many reasons for this growth of progressive sentiment. But the chief reason is the pauperizing of the farmer, by a capitalist society, which stands helpless before the task of reconstruction.

Farmers are becoming radical—over night; many are going clear beyond the idea of political action as remedy. All these need education, and constructive organization. Many are on the verge of starvation! Having raised immense crops, yet they are going hungry.

"Here's To Our Paper!"

So, there is a great opportunity for a national state newspaper, that will come regularly—and very homes of all workers, be they farmers or laborers. Ignorance or this writer to remedy the situation. Ignorance, prejudice and superstition—now rampant—must be wiped out by the propagation of science. The industry's farming, in farm and labor

Pandemonium Reigns

(By TOM AYRES.)

Financial pandemonium reigns in South Dakota. The prediction made to me last September, by a former member of Congress and one of the heaviest bankers in this state, that half of our banking institutions would close their doors within the year, seems about to be verified. He declared that if the banking law were enforced, more than half of our eight hundred banks would be forced to liquidate at once. One bank right after another is failing. More than sixty have failed within the year. Among these are the First National and First Trust banks of Mitchell, with liabilities of over a million dollars. This occurred about two months ago. Now comes the Sioux Falls National Bank, with deposits of two and a half millions, and the Sioux Falls Trust and Savings Bank, with deposits of five millions. The Sioux Falls National Bank, the James River Valley Bank at Huron, the Sioux Falls Trust & Savings Bank, and one of the largest banks at Parker (the latter through evident high finance), are the toll within one week. The failure of small banks no longer attracts attention. These failures are no longer "news." In the case of the Sioux Falls National Bank, managed by John W. Wadden, of Madison, formerly president of the State Bankers' Association, the Sioux Falls papers covered the story in less than five inches of space.

The panic among depositors has naturally become acute. Many are quietly withdrawing their funds and purchasing U. S. Certificates of Indebtedness; others are purchasing postal money orders, express money orders, and travellers cheques. They have completely lost faith in the banking institutions. Auctioneers report that purchasers at sales are paying with cash.

No Funds, and No Credit

The bank failures are a reflection of the condition of the mortgaged farmers. People cannot pay obligations due the banks, if they get nothing for their labor. The paper held by the great majority of the banks—all of that which hung over from war times—and this constitutes the bulk—has little equity in it.

The efforts of the War Finance Corporation have failed. The establishment of the Intermediate Credit Banks, in connection with the Government Land Bank, a machine deliberately framed to take up the frozen credits of the local banks and unload their bad paper on the government, cannot save the day. The paper held by the banks is just as valuable as are the farm assets—but no more. So it is practically worthless. In one instance—that of the failure of the First National at Westington Springs, which was one of the rottenest of the long line of recent failures—overtures are being made to depositors to take ten cents on the dollar for their claims.

Bankruptcy Courts Booming.

While the banks are thus popping everywhere, a steady stream of broken farmers are crowding the bankruptcy courts. And this, in spite of the agreement of most of the lawyers, made with the banks over a year ago, not to take bankruptcy cases of the farmers. This closed shop agreement of the lawyers and bankers does not work. There are enough honest lawyers who are scabbing on the system, so that the farmers are having that much relief, in the cases where they can raise enough money to pay the court costs.

All of this is making a profound impression on the minds of the farmers and industrial workers. And it is taking the starch out of the retired farmers and town-people of small means. All their conventional ideas about the soundness and stability of the capitalist system are being rudely shaken. They are becoming ready to listen to talk of a change of the system. And the fellow who shouts warning against the red flag, the Third International and Communism, will get the same kind of a laugh which that sort got, just after the Russian revolution, when they thought they would scare the farmers out of the Non-Partisan League by calling them, Bolsheviks. The farmers promptly called themselves Bolsheviks. And if the Communist cry is raised, the farmers will probably admit and adopt that designation. Our farmers are not afraid of names. They know there are no farm mortgages being foreclosed in Russia.

The State Bank Bill.

Two years ago the South Dakota Non-Partisan League initiated a bill providing for a State Bank, with branches in every county, and giving authority to the Commission created by the law, to establish other banks where the people petitioned for them. All the state and other public funds were to be deposited in these public banks. There are something like sixty million dollars of these funds, of which the banks have been paying less than 2 per cent interest. Under the terms of the bill, credit could be extended only for productive purposes, all speculative loans being expressly prohibited. The business was to be conducted at cost.

The bankers fought the bill, spending not less than five thousand dollars to defeat it. The Republican and Democratic parties each fought it. Both were liberally financed for the purpose. The bill was defeated by the Farmers Union, John W. Batchelder, and the bankers and politicians in opposition to it.

their folly. They would vote for a State Bank now, because they have discovered that the state banks, which were said to have their deposits guaranteed by the state, are not so protected. The guarantee is simply that of the associated banks. They assess themselves 25 cents on every hundred dollars, to pay the depositors in failed banks. Every bank keeps its proportion of this fund in ITS OWN VAULTS, so as to make sure that it will have the money to pay its depositors when it fails. It is a great joke, in this time of crisis. There is about \$400,000 in this fund, and the banks that are open have the fund. There is more than five million dollars tied up in failed banks, and the number of failures is increasing every day. A fine prospect for depositors.

The state and its counties have millions of dollars deposited in the banks. Nobody knows just how much loss has been sustained already, or where the end will be. The state authorities give out no word. The counties, in some instances, are trying to protect themselves with the bonds of old line eastern guarantee companies.

"Back-door" State Banking.

The irony of the situation is shown by the fact that the state, against its will, has been forced into the banking business. The failure of the Sioux Falls Trust & Savings Bank compelled the state officials to go into the banking business—through the back door.

The state has much money tied up in that bank, and the Guarantee Commission took over the institution, under the charge of the State Banking Commissioner. Patrons of the bank are permitted to deposit money and check against their own deposits, but cannot draw any money they had on deposit before the state took hold.

The Sioux Falls Trust & Savings Bank is therefore closed, but the state of South Dakota is running the bank. This approximates an experiment in communism which would have been considered as rank treason, less than a year ago, when the bill for a state bank was being fought by the Republican machine, the Republican politicians, the Democratic politicians, the capitalist press and the president of the Farmers' Union.

All Illusions Vanishing.

Meantime the illusions of the farmers and workers are rapidly passing away. They take kindly to the program of the Farmer-Labor Party, favoring a five-year extension on the payment of farm debts, and land for the users—which they regard as their only hope for the future. I have a letter from one farmer who has already started the slogan, "If we cannot get a stay, then, by heck, we'll never pay."

Reverting to the loss of their land through foreclosure, it is common to hear the expression that if the United States had never sold an acre of land or allowed an acre to be homesteaded, there would be no mortgaged farms, and no tenants—except tenants of the government, who could remain through their lives, and be certain that their children would have land to use when they passed on, and be unmolested by any money lender.

The Lesson Learned.

These conditions are making rapid changes in the minds of the farmers and industrial workers. The hardships of the past year, and the certainty of greater hardships during the coming year, have opened their eyes to the necessity for a fundamental change in the economic system. Fifty years of agitation could not have accomplished such progress. Now they listen—and accept. Without the conditions, they would not have welcomed anything that proposed a needed change. Now realizing that any change must be futile, which would leave the Wall Street crowd in control—they are about ready for a farmers' and workers' government.

MORE TEAPOT DOME MUCK.

(By Federated Press.)

WASHINGTON.—Albert B. Fall, Harding's secretary of the interior, testified, before the Teapot Dome inquiry committee that he borrowed \$100,000 from E. B. McLean, of the Washington Post, just at the time the Fall ranch blossomed into prosperity and the Dome was leased to Harry Sinclair. McLean departed to Palm Beach. Fall became "ill." Now the committee has sent Senator Walsh, of Montana, to Palm Beach, and McLean has admitted under oath that Fall never cashed the check he gave him.

Fall, unabashed, confesses that this is true. He now says he got the mysterious \$100,000 from a source he will not disclose, but denies that it came from Sinclair or had anything to do with the oil concession from which Sinclair made so many millions.

In his letter of Dec. 27 to the committee, Fall described in detail how he got the \$100,000 from McLean and carried it, in cash in a suitcase, all the way from Washington to El Paso.

William Mahoney, editor Minnesota Union Advocate, attended the recent Farmer-Labor conference at Wilmar (Minn.) and enlightened that gathering with reference to prospective Farmer-Labor federation. The

The Farm Crisis

(Note.—Below is published the first installment of a study of the present agricultural situation. The other sections will be published in following issues and, when completed, this will be printed as a pamphlet.)

The author is Harold M. Ware, a practical farmer and graduate of several agricultural colleges. He has made an intensive study of the present conditions among the farmers. At present he is engaged in putting over a tremendous wheat-growing project on an enormous tract of land in Russia.)

By HAROLD M. WARE.

Early Development of the Crisis:

Early American history is a story of the farmers. It tells how they followed the explorers and got a foothold along the Atlantic seaboard. From the Indians they learned to grow corn, potatoes and tobacco. And they exchanged with these the gentle arts of drinking rum and scalping. Later the pioneer farmer led the march of conquest westward. He fought the Indians, and cleared a little land, but lived mainly by hunting and fishing.

After the pioneer, then came the more cautious and settled type of farmer. They stayed longer and left behind a broader trail of civilization. But many pushed on to exploit the fertility of the vast areas of virgin soil to the west. Their "prairie schooners," loaded with plow, spinning wheel, axe and gun, carrying the family and the furniture and herding a few head of cattle, typified the agriculturist of the day. It was an isolated self-supporting family unit.

Commerce at Farmers' Heels.

Behind the farmers, villages, towns and cities sprang up. But the farmers pushed on, or were swept on, to the Pacific coast in the gold rushes. With the increase in urban population, the higher development of industry and the exhausting of the free land, the farmers found a growing demand for their products. The turned back and re-surveyed the way they had come. The found that land companies, railroads, lumber companies, banks, manufacturing capitalists and middlemen had insinuated themselves into power and held title to the vast empire the farmers had conquered. In meeting the growing demand of the cities for farm produce, the farm lost its complete self-supporting character, and became a commercial enterprise, growing specialized crops for a general market. The type of agriculture and the crops grown were determined by climate, topography and conditions. For instance, general wheat farming and cotton farming, demands in different areas. How farm still remained an isolated unit, and could keep pace with the increasing demand for special products, until the invention of modern agricultural machinery enabled the farmer to increase production.

"Scientific" Farming and Exploitation.

After a period of slowly falling behind, scientific methods were highly developed and extended to the farm. This stimulated another spurt in agricultural production. But not for long. In spite of the drudgery of the entire farm family, in spite of the use of the most modern farm machinery and the most highly developed agricultural science, the farmer found himself in 1910 figuratively with his back to the wall. Production in industry had taken on a highly developed social character, while production on the farm remained individualistic. This condition enabled industrial and financial magnates to control the farm products.

From 1910 to 1920 the farm problem has become more and more acute. In that period the farmer was forced, by the processes of exploitation, to increase his mortgage debt over 400 per cent. His other liabilities brought his total indebtedness to the stupendous figure of 15 billion dollars. And he has no other resource in sight. It is utterly impossible for the farmer to now pay his debts. The present farm crisis means something more than the individual ruin of hundreds of thousands of farmers; it means the failure of the whole system of farm tenure and distribution of farm products. The farmer has a new deal. This is the CRISIS that has been laid upon the farmer, with a

(Continued in next issue.)

In North Dakota

By Alfred Knutson.

Until two years ago, North Dakota was considered one of the most progressive states in the union. It is the home of the Non-Partisan League, the organization through which the farmers of this great wheat and flax state expected to eventually be able to rid themselves from the tyranny and oppression of the banks and the grain gamblers in Minneapolis, Duluth and Chicago.

It was a long, bitter struggle, mingled with high hopes, and with fears that the plan might not succeed. The Republican Party capitalist machinery in the state was captured by the militant farmers, and for a time there was a general feeling of optimism amongst them that their ambition would be realized—that of establishing their own marketing system for farm products, through the passage of a set of laws.

However, little and big capitalists and politicians, both within and outside the state, combined against them, to defeat their aims, and today there is hardly a farmer in North Dakota who really believes that he is going to get justice in that way. New needs and demands have arisen, and these require new movements and new organizations for their satisfaction.

Political Fallacies.

Today the Non-Partisan League organization in North Dakota is not working in the interest of the bankrupt and exploited farmers of the state. For one thing, the foolish policy of still sticking—despite past experience—to the capitalist Republican Party, is operating against the working farmer. Secondly, the movement is merely state-wide, at a time when it is quite evident that no state by itself can solve the problems of the farmers. Third, the organization is infested with hundreds of pussyfooters and politicians, who are scrambling to get back into office, manouvering in every possible way to get hold of some state or federal job, or patronage. Fourth, and most important, the League has no program that will in any sense approximate a solution of the pressing needs of the tens of thousands of farmers who are being driven off the land through bankruptcy and foreclosure.

The pussyfooters and the politicians constitute the most important element in the League. They control and run the organization. The rank and file of the farmers and industrial workers are disillusioned, indifferent and discouraged at the turn of affairs, and are beginning to look for relief from other sources.

The incident of the endorsement of President Coolidge, the arch-reactionary, by the Republican central committee of North Dakota (a League-controlled body), strikingly illustrates how the pussyfooters and politicians operate. The only committee member who had the vision and the guts to present the infamous Coolidge resolution was R. H. Johnson, county clerk of County, one of the principal members of the League, and in for the interests of the exploited farmers of the United States.

And the question arises, why was the Coolidge

resolution brought up at all? Of course, the statement was made by R. W. Frazier, chairman of the Republican state central committee (a Leaguer), that it was done "in the interest of harmony." Blessed harmony, what evils are committed in this name!

The outstanding reasons why the Coolidge resolution was passed are two-fold: (1) Bill Lemke wants to become Ambassador from the U. S. to Mexico, and in order to get the ear of our strike-breaking President on this matter, desired to do him a favor. (2) R. W. Frazier is looking for federal patronage for himself and his friends; and the League pussyfooters and politicians; and so, quite naturally, he too, sought the good will of the Coolidge administration. We can well imagine the feelings of "Roy," when he was bailing down the Potomac river, on the President's yacht, the Mayflower!

What Is the Remedy?

But what about the bankrupt farmers, and where do they come in? While politicians are manouvering to get jobs and patronage for themselves, the tiller of the soil, who performs the important task of food production, is sinking deeper and deeper into distress. That there is real need of doing something—and very soon—for the working farmer, is evident to all who are not entirely blind to the situation.

Now, what is the solution of this problem? We have the Norbeck-Burness bill—which will mostly help the banks and the meat trust. Oh, yes, it says something about "worthy" farmers—that they are going to get aid from this measure. But who are these "worthy" farmers, and who is to decide as to whether a farmer is "worthy" or not? Is a bankrupt farmer a worthy farmer? Watch for the jokers in this bill.

The capitalists have handed us bunk like this before. We must strike deeper than that if we are going to remedy the situation. In the first place, an immediate moratorium for five years, on all farm debts, must be declared by Congress; and secondly, the land should be given to those who live upon it and actually do the work of raising the crops. This is the least that should be done. Absentee landlordism by banks and investment companies, through the operation of the mortgage system, must cease, if farmers are to continue farming and food production go on.

Further, it is necessary for the farmers and industrial workers of the entire country to form a national Farmer-Labor class party, and by means of such a party secure control of the government and the industries, to administer in the interest of those who do the productive work.

It is insanity to believe that the Republican and Democratic capitalist parties will do this for us. Only a nation-wide Farmer-Labor class party can do the job. There is no other salvation for the bankrupt farmer, whether in North Dakota or in any other state of the union.

The Farmer-Labor "Reconstruction" League started in to reconstruct the State government without first properly constructing itself politically. With a reform platform of promise to the farmer and labor elements, this League gathered unto itself a group of political and industrial organizations that were "hell bent" for reform and public-office control but had little idea of a united front and less care as to who might be running for the offices. All its steam-power was put behind the election of Jack Walton, their now fallen hero—the most hated and most loved man" ever proclaimed on the political bill-boards of Oklahoma. It is necessary for everyone to take sides, for or against that paradoxical personage, or be considered not sane, in this much disturbed state.

Movement for Power.

And out of all the chaos, an industrial get-together movement is now on. Farm labor, farmer leagues, trades unions, co-operatives and the rest, all are milling around the political arena. And their ideas and slogans are as many and diverse as their designations: "Independent political action" vies with "Capture the Democratic and Republican primaries once more"; "Reward our friends and punish our enemies," is met with "Stay aloof from political action." But all seem to more or less agree that the Federated Farmer-Labor Party is so near fight that it is not safe to be caught without its company. The buzzing of all these ideas is heard everywhere—in the hotel lobbies of the capital city, in the district school-houses, and in the halls of union labor and farmer organizations, throughout the State of Oklahoma.

On the industrial field, the trades unions are not so strong as might be expected, considering the amount of "labor political activity" that has been going on here for years, in one campaign after another—to reward our friends and punish our enemies.

Divisional Weakness.

The farm union forces are divided in "The Farm Labor Union," "The Farmers' Union," "The Cotton-Growers' Association," "The Wheat-Growers' Association," and a number of lesser organizations. Most of these have national affiliations within the bounds of their respective groups. But there are few officials who don't concede that the time is fast approaching when all associations of farm and factory, transportation and exchange, must form a united front upon the world market. Yet although leaders and editors agree upon the need for a United Front, the fear of "radicalism" is strongly prevalent. And most any reactionary newspaper can get an "interview," these days, with some scared official, in which he will zealously disclaim all thought or intention of "affiliating with reds"—to be rewarded for his "honesty" by having the newspaper, on that day or the next, brand him as a "red." Truly, the term "red" is much abused, in these days.

As to the rank and file of the various memberships, they have reached the point of mild protest—sometimes even respond to the idea of "Labor Councils" (similar to the Bankers' Council and the Chamber of Commerce Council). But there seems to be little headway toward expression of the idea in deed, rather than in theory. This is due to fault of the Farm and Labor newspapers, as well as the present speakers and organizers. And it is regrettable that those who are more capable students, speakers and writers, to give out better information on the theory of government through a combination of these two great industrial and political forces.

Put in order to present the lesson so as to bring forth an active expression of such power, it is necessary to offer for consideration a concrete example. As the Russian sovjets are the one single example, then it becomes necessary to break down the barriers of false propaganda which have been erected between the workers of that nation and of this. Only thus may be brought to the Oklahoma farmer- and labor forces the truth with regard to their own necessary movement—that truth which is so carefully hidden from them by the "kept press" of capitalism.

Of course, the capitalist press will screech "Bolshevism," at the top of its leather-lined lungs. Organizers, writers and speakers will be branded as "Russian envoys" sent to Oklahoma for the purpose of capturing the State government and planting a red flag on the Capitol. This writer has himself been so branded—yet he has never been to Russia, and his Ancestry dates back two hundred and fifty years. Much the same fearsome cry has arisen, from Tory press and King's henchmen, in previous revolutionary days. "Beware the Republicans!" was then the cry. And now it is "Beware the Bolsheviks!" But the political republican idea went marching on, despite the crying out against it. And thus will march on the industrial republican idea—until all the seas are crossed and all Farmer-Labor forces are united in one solid front, the world around.

In Oklahoma, men and women are thinking—and men and women are disgusted, in Oklahoma. There, they are ready to "Stop, Look and Listen!" The capitalist press proclaims that tons upon tons of "soviet literature" is being distributed in that state. Of course there is nothing of the sort—and very little of any kind dealing with Farmer-Labor conditions and problems of the time and place. It is the desire of this writer to remedy that situation. Ignorance, prejudice and superstition—now rampant—must be wiped out by the propagation of science:—the science of industrial farming, in farm and labor

Oklahoma's Industrial Pioneers

By J. E. Snyder.

Thirty-four years ago the state of Oklahoma began to open up for farmer settlement on the former Indian Reservation lands. Thereafter, from time to time, new sections of these lands were offered to the public. Until finally, after a period of about sixteen years, the homesteads were practically all taken—and the struggle with Nature and with the market gamblers was in full swing.

Covered wagons lined the roads to Oklahoma, in the early days of this new farm-settlement movement—and "Oklahoma or Bust!" was the defiant slogan of the "boozers," as they came into this "Land of the Fair God." They were filled with hope, and the promise of better days to come. The teeming East having crowded out these thousands from its industries and farms, this surplus population moved Westward, in due accord with the economic law.

Labor Unrest.

Industrial strikes, and the black-listing of railroads, miners, factory-workers and others, added their heave to the social loaf. While these oppressed of the earth, escaped from the land of their bondage, mingled now with the Western pioneers and thus added to the cosmopolitan nature of the "Sooner State."

The deceptive mirage of "Free Homes" was the bait that brought this multitude seeking out the new land. But along with the settlers, came also the predatory institutions of capitalism. Financial speculation at low ebb on the part of most of the farmers, the Money Lords seized upon this opportunity and made loans to them, at f

four per cent a month, for the use of their credit. Like a great sponge, these capitalist institutions absorbed the early surplus of the new land and soon brought the Oklahoma farmer on a par with those of the heavily mortgaged Eastern states.

The market gambler came along also and cotton had its "bale weevil" long before the boll weevil made its appearance. Wheat, corn and sugar-cane, as well as hogs, cattle, etc., had their human ticks and chinch-bugs, who absorbed the credit balance which should have gone into fertilizer for the soil, houses instead of shacks to live in, paint for the houses, and other improvements that make for social welfare of the farmer.

Political Revolt.

Oklahoma has long been in a chronic state of political revolt. The Populist Party, the fusion Democrats, the Socialist Party, the Farmer-Labor Reconstruction League, have all played their little parts in the effort to slough off the parasites from the body politic.

At the beginning of this year of 1924, the political situation there is a chaotic MESS. The State Legislature is little more than an official Board of Inquisition, seeking the scalps of all who possess liberal or progressive ideas. It busies itself in repealing the laws made by its predecessors, in passing laws against the process of evolution and the theory of specific gravity, in reducing or abolishing the sustaining funds of state institutions and interfering with industrial improvement efforts. Labor's representatives divide against each other, and



Robert M. ...

The American Peasant

Diversified Hardships

The wealthy bankers and big manufacturers have been vieing with each other in the lavishness of their generosity towards the poor farmers. One of their best bets for getting the farmer out of the hole in which they have put him is "diversified" farming.

Gallons of ink have been spilled advising the farmer to milk cows when he loses on his wheat. Acres of newspaper paper have been stuffed with propaganda to encourage the farmer to engage in diversified production.

A dirt farmer, writing in the Nebraska Daily Press, has blasted this propaganda in the most effective manner that has yet come to our attention. Every farmer and worker should clip his answer, which we reproduce, paste this item in his hat and throw it into the teeth of the first advocate of the panacea of diversified farming that meets him.

Everybody's advising the farmer to raise dairy cows—to engage in diversified farming. Evidently the Town Farmers, as the press sometimes calls them, think a cow manicures and massages herself, milks herself and delivers the product to the creamery without profane urging. I wonder if any of these Town Farmers who are trying to tell us how to conduct a cow hotel have ever arisen at four a.m., groped their way through a littered farm yard to a cow stable, played the reveille to a flock of bovines and milked ten or twelve of them when the thermometer stood at 15 below zero.

Perhaps Messrs. Coolidge and Hoover and their agents in the Farm Bureau Federation would do well to get a glimpse, in practice, of this great waddy of theirs—diversified farming.

Jail for Striking Farmers

In 1921 the West Virginia miners, 11,000 strong marched on the barricades of the steel trust gun men in Logan county, in a desperate effort to free themselves from the political and industrial tyranny enforced upon them by six-shooters, rifles and machine-guns, in the hands of a mercenary army maintained by the mining corporations.

In 1924 the dairy farmers of Illinois and Wisconsin, 3,000 strong, marched on the bottling plant of the Bowman Dairy Company, the head and front of the opposition to the farmers' strike for a decent price for their products. Miners, according to the capitalist press, are known to be violent persons and there is, therefore, only anger and not surprise on the part of the press when they resent brutal oppression.

But farmers!

Worse than that, dairy farmers—the most peaceable of all human beings!

bovines, they tend, they are supposed to have acquired much of the bovine temperament; so much so that they are as easy prey for the dairy and-commission-houses as their worn-out milk cows for the packing-houses.

The appearance of 3,000 farmer pickets upon the scene during the recent strike of the milk producers, forces a revision of this traditional view of the American farmer, and the capitalist press is screaming itself hoarse, editorially, in denunciation of this unsuspected bucolic pugnacious trait.

The Chicago Journal of Commerce publishes an editorial so bitter and venomous that one can easily visualize the writer occasionally pausing to wipe the foam from his lips as he pounds his typewriter. The farmers are accused of attempted murder and the demand is made that they be tried and convicted.

We quote verbatim:

In an agricultural county, striking farmers believe they have a divine right to keep other farmers from selling their milk to whosoever they please and under any terms they see fit. The striking farmers commit violence. It is absurd to hope that law officers will make serious efforts to arrest them.

But they ought to be arrested, and they ought to be tried and convicted. Now that the strike is over, there is no danger of murder being committed, but until the peace was signed, murder was on the horizon.

We have an idea that the Journal of Commerce feels toward these farmers as did an aristocratic lady in Spokane, Wash., who, while several members of the Industrial Workers of the World were being tried for criminal syndicalism, said she guessed she would run down to the courthouse "to see the Wobblies being convicted."

All of which goes to prove that whether it be farmer or wage-earner in a challenge to the profit-mongers of America, a record of previous docility counts for nothing. Praised to the skies by the pundits of capitalism, when they accepted it as the Alpha and Omega of social systems, the farmers are discovering very rapidly that independent thinking—independent of capitalist conventions—is the next to the last thing that the Chamber of Commerce friends of the independent farmer want him to do.

The last thing is action with his exploited fellow-farmers and the industrial workers against the growing tyranny of the American capitalist class. Expressed either by a class party of the farmers and wage-earners or by the march of striking farmer-pickets, it will meet with the same relentless hostility from the plunderbund and their governmental tools.

Advance of Workers' Russia

Russia is again among the leaders in the world's grain market. In November her exportation of wheat reached 500,000 tons. Germany is at present her principal customer, with France second.

In the Russia of the first workers' and farmers' government, with a farmer—President Kalinin—at its head, there was recently held the first international congress of farmers of the world.

The purpose of that congress was to map out an economic program that would result in benefiting the exploited farmers of all countries, as well as the industrial workers. Such a program was formulated and adopted by the congress. Its international bulletins, now being issued regularly, show the wonderful progress that is being made realization of that program.

A full account of that historic gathering which brought together in Moscow the real working farmers from fourteen countries, speaking seventeen different languages, will be carried in the forthcoming columns of this paper. The program adopted by the convention, will also be published herein. And from the bulletins, which are issued at intervals, will be gleaned and printed all the most important news with reference to the agricultural situation in that government controlled by the farmers and industrial workers.

In the congress were present two delegates from the Federated Farmer-Labor Party: William H. Green, vice-chairman of the F. F.-L. Party, and Harold M. Ware, at present one of the writers for this newspaper.

ANOTHER "FARMERS' FRIEND" EXPOSED.

It is admitted by the McAdoo boosters at Washington, D. C., that the reactionary forces in the Democratic convention will dictate a cut and dried reactionary platform. And his supporters also admit that McAdoo, if nominated, will have to run on a platform that would equally fit such candidates as Underwood or Ralston.

Thus has been discarded—like the political bath-robe which it was—McAdoo's professed faith in government ownership of railroads, expressed in his 1920 signed statement to the National Board of Farm Organizations.

And a painful political pause ensues when McAdoo seeks new "progressive"



Photo: [unclear]

The American Peasant