

# FARMER-LABOR VOICE

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## The National Farmer-Labor Conference

(By JOSEPH MANLEY.)

The series of National and State farmer-labor conferences which have just been held in Minnesota, running through almost an entire week—from March 10th to 14th, inclusive—mark a fitting climax to the ever-rising demand for a great National Farmer-Labor Convention that will bring to fruition the many past efforts to form a class political party of the farmers and city workers, and the recent Washington exposures of political rottenness, deceit and graft, have greatly increased this sentiment.

From now on until June 17th—the date which has been set for that National Convention—the eyes of farmers and industrial workers alike will be directed in hope to the North Star State. And in order to fully ap-

preciate the intricate problems which are looming in the near future, it is necessary to look thoroughly into just what occurred in these various conferences and conventions now past.

This National Conference called by William Mahoney, of the Minnesota Working People's Non-Partisan League, assembled in the Labor Temple of St. Paul on Monday, March 10th, at 2 P. M. And immediately apparent was the fact that an overwhelming majority of its delegates came from the Northwestern States, where the farmers' situation is right now most critical and the farmer-labor unity sentiment so strong that it has assumed the distinct character of a great mass movement of the working class.

The delegates representing that section of the country were all strong for the original

date of May 30th—as set by the November 15th conference—for a National Farmer-Labor nominating convention. While the most active opponents of the May 30th date were headed by William V. Mahoney, a real estate dealer of Washington, D. C.—who claims to represent a "Unity" Committee of that city. This individual, of similar name, must not be confused with William Mahoney of St. Paul, who is a well-known labor representative and a sincere former-laborite (popularly known as "Bill" Mahoney).

The purpose of William V. Mahoney was to capture the St. Paul conference for the C. P. P. A. Convention, which will be held at Cleveland on July 4th and will be dominated by the General Presidents of the railroad unions—most of whom have already en-

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## Call Issued For National Convention on June 17th!

(Editorial Note: This call for a National Farmer-Labor Convention was adopted by the St. Paul Conference of March 10th and 11th, and is issued by the National Committee of Arrangements therein elected. The call was unanimously endorsed by the subsequent conventions, of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Federation, in Minneapolis, March 12th-13th, and of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, in St. Cloud, on March 14th.)

### Call for National Farmer-Labor Convention. June 17th, 1924, in the Twin Cities, Minn.

The Declaration of Independence, a document underlying the political institutions of this country, states that every human being is endowed with certain inalienable rights, and among these are "the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." These rights are today denied the great mass of the people of this country, by a privileged class which through its economic and political power dominates the life of this country.

This privileged class has, through the organization of "trusts," through interlocking directorates, and through the great banking institutions of Wall Street, concentrated the control of the economic life of the country in the hands of a financial oligarchy with its headquarters in Wall Street. It uses its power to amass great wealth for itself at the expense of the happiness and well-being of the farmers and industrial workers, who are the producers of the wealth of this country.

In order to maintain its privilege and to aid in its exploitation of the farmers and industrial workers, this privileged class has fastened its grip upon the government. It uses the legislative, executive and judicial branches of the government alike as instruments in its service, to secure greater and greater profits and to amass greater and greater wealth. The recent exposure of corruption in connection with the Teapot Dome oil scandal is but one outstanding incident showing how the governmental power is used to loot the natural resources of the nation.

During the past few years millions of farmers have been driven from the farms, because unable to secure even the means for a livelihood through their labor, as a result of this exploitation by the privileged class. The Each-Cummins law, passed in the interest of the railroad owners, has been one principal factor in producing this situation.

The industrial workers, struggling to maintain their organizations and a decent stand-

ard of living, have found that this privileged class has at its command the powers of the government, whenever the struggle over the right to organize, for better wages and working conditions have resulted in a strike. The use of injunctions against the workers on strike is an every-day occurrence. The infamous Daugherty injunction against the railroad shopmen still stands—an injunction which at one stroke robbed the workers of every right supposedly guaranteed by the constitution of the United States.

The Republican and Democratic Parties have proven themselves to be equally the instruments of the privileged class in using the governmental power against the farmers and industrial workers.

These conditions have developed a wide spread movement by the farmers and industrial workers to organize a political party which will fight their battles and challenge the continued rule of that privileged class in this country.

The political organizations of farmers and industrial workers, scattered over the country, must be united for the 1924 Presidential campaign, so that they will present a united front against the parties of the privileged class and join in a common struggle against that class.

To achieve that end, this call is issued for a National Farmer-Labor Convention in the Twin Cities, on June 17, 1924, for the purpose of nominating a candidate for President and Vice-president and for adopting a national platform.

We, the Committee of Arrangements extend an invitation that delegates be sent to this convention by all farmer organizations, local trade unions, central labor bodies, state federations of labor, international unions, co-operative organizations, labor fraternal organizations and all farmer and labor political organizations, the Non-Partisan League and the Committee of 48, provided that they endorse the following tentative program:

- A. Public Ownership.
- B. Governmental Banking.
- C. Public Control of All Natural Resources.
- D. Restoration of civil liberties guaranteed by the constitution.
- E. Abolition of the use of the injunction in labor disputes.

The basis of representation in the convention shall be as follows:

1. Each state shall be allowed votes equal to its electoral vote, plus one vote for each

five thousand votes, or fraction thereof, cast for the progressive candidate receiving the highest number of votes in the 1922 general election. Any state delegation failing to agree the total vote of such state shall be apportioned equally among the delegates from that state.

2. Each national political organization shall be entitled to five votes; each national economic organization shall be entitled to five votes; provided such organizations shall have subscribed to the fundamental principles upon which the call for the convention is based.

### Apportionment of Delegates to the Convention.

1. Each state federation, central body, and local organization of labor, farmers, business or professional men, shall be entitled to one delegate. Also any group of twenty-five or more farmers, not representative through another organization from the same territory, affixing their signatures and addresses to a credential indicating their agreement with the political demands enumerated in the Convention Call, shall be entitled to one delegate.

2. Each state political organization having legal standing shall be entitled to five delegates; where no legal standing exists, a state political organization shall have but one delegate.

This CALL for a CONVENTION is issued by the Committee of Arrangements in the name of the following organizations:

- Washington Farmer-Labor Party.  
John C. Kennedy, Secretary
- Western Progressive Farmers.  
William Bouck, President
- South Dakota Farmer-Labor Party.  
Tom Ayres, Chairman  
Alice Lorraine Daly, Secretary
- North Dakota Farmer-Labor Party.  
R. H. Walker, Chairman  
H. R. Martinson, Secretary
- Montana Farmer-Labor Party.  
Patrick Budden, Secretary.  
Charles E. Taylor,
- Nebraska Progressive Party.  
J. L. Beebe, Chairman  
W. H. Green, Secretary
- Federated Farmer-Labor Party.  
Joseph Manley, Secretary
- Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party.  
William Mahoney  
R. D. Cramer
- Buffalo Labor Party,  
James Campbell

## The National Farmer-Labor Conference

(Continued from page 1.)

dorsed as a Presidential candidate, William G. McAdoo.

And the situation was complicated by the fact that "Bill" Mahoney of St. Paul, in the November 15th conference favorable to the May 30th date, had afterward yielded to pressure from the LaFollette forces and announced himself in favor of a date subsequent to the Republican but before the Democratic National Convention.

The organizations composing this St. Paul convention were represented as follows:

Washington Farmer-Labor Party: John C. Kennedy and William Bouck (the latter also representing the Western Progressive Farmers.

Montana Farmer-Labor Party: C. E. Taylor and Patrick Budden.

South Dakota Farmer-Labor Party: Alice Lorraine Daly and Tom Ayres.

North Dakota Farmer-Labor Party: R. H. Walker and H. R. Martinson.

Nebraska Progressive Party: W. H. Green and J. L. Beebe.

Federated Farmer-Labor Party: Joseph Manley.

"United States" Farmer-Labor Party: J. G. Brown and Robt. M. Buck.

Illinois (seceding) Farmer-Labor Party: William Rodriguez and Gifford Ernest.

Washington (D. C.) Unity Committee: William V. Mahoney.

The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party had many representatives in the convention, but were allotted only two votes, along with the other State organizations, in accordance with the rules adopted.

"Bill" Mahoney, of St. Paul, was elected chairman of the conference, with C. A. Hathaway, also of Minnesota, as secretary. And the first afternoon session was devoted principally to speeches by the delegates. Also two committees were elected, one to function on the question of date for the coming National nominating convention, and the other to decide upon the call and system of representation.

These two committees were made up, respectively, of the following delegates:

Committee on date: Chas. E. Taylor, H. G. Teigan, W. H. Green, John C. Kennedy, Tom Ayres, Gifford Ernest.

Committee on call: Alice Lorraine Daly, R. H. Walker, Joseph Manley, R. D. Cramer, J. L. Beebe, J. G. Brown, Wm. Rodriguez.

And the conference adjourned its first session at 7 P. M., to give an opportunity for these committees to work out their respective problems, for report to next session.

Tuesday morning an air of tense expectancy pervaded the conference, due largely to the wild-eyed "red menace" stories which had been assiduously circulated by William V. Mahoney and his handful of "unity" supporters.

Delegate C. E. Taylor reported for the Committee on Date for National Nominating Convention, showing four votes in favor of May 30th and three favoring a change of date to June 20th. Whereupon, Delegate Manley stated that in view of the necessity for complete unity among the real farmer-labor forces, he would offer motion: "That this conference recess for 30 minutes, to permit opportunity for unanimous agreement in the Committee on Date."

This motion did not meet with the approval of Delegate Rodriguez, of the Illinois (seceding) Farmer-Labor Party "red menace" shouters, and he attempted to impugn the motives of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party (represented by Manley) in thus striving for complete unity. But the motion easily carried. And that was the first of a long series of defeats suffered by these and other self-proclaimed "red"-baiters and heresy-hunters, during the course of this memorable conference.

Following recess, the committee brought in a report unanimously in favor of June 17th as date for the coming National Convention, to be held in the Twin Cities of Minnesota.

Delegate Alice Lorraine Daly then reported for the Committee on Call and Representa-

tion, by reading the proposed call and plan for representation (printed elsewhere in this paper). Motion to adopt this call and plan proved to be the signal for an evidently pre-arranged attack—led by Delegates Rodriguez and William V. Mahoney—against the Federated Farmer-Labor Party and the Workers' Party. Rodriguez, a lawyer, "presented his case" in true legal oratorical style, by reading from various issues of the Daily Worker some extracts from articles by C. E. Ruthenberg, John Pepper and Joseph Manley.

But this attempt at purely destructive tactics brought forth an avalanche of protest from the State Farmer-Labor Party delegates. The old Non-Partisan Leaguer delegates, who had in the past suffered similar attacks as alleged "reds," were especially effective in their response to this attack by "Attorney" Rodriguez. He soon learned that the present militant spirit of the farmers and industrial workers is not amenable to the same line of dope which his legal clients doubtless easily fall for.

An opposition much more subtle and dangerous afterward came from Jay G. Brown and Robt. M. Buck, delegates of the "old original" Farmer-Labor Party. Their line of attack was based upon readings from a letter issued by the National Secretary of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, pointing out the apparent limitations of LaFollette and other potential leaders who are still within the old political parties. The Secretary for the Federated Farmer-Labor Party in reply stated the difference between such a Third Party as seems to be centering around the C. P. P. A. and a real national class Farmer-Labor Party such as is now rapidly developing in the Northwest. He explained also the right of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party to fight for this latter conception, so that the class political party may retain organizational independence, although having an al-

liance with the Third Party but not to be swallowed up and disintegrated by it.

Both Brown and Buck reiterated the old "argument," that "The big labor organizations would not take part in a convention to which was invited the Workers' Party and the Federated Farmer-Labor Party. But in spite of their vociferous "liberality" protestations, these two gathered as little support as had Rodriguez and his "red menace" bogey.

The general protest against both these attacks was best summed up in a speech by R. D. Cramer, editor of the Minneapolis "Labor Review," who said, in part:

"Since the Teapot Dome investigation has stopped the "red"-baiting activities of Daugherty and Burns, it is surprising to find their former occupation now taken up by men in the labor movement itself—who ought to know better what they are talking about."

The call for a National Farmer-Labor Nominating Convention, on June 17th, was approved by an overwhelming majority of the delegates—the only ones voting against it being Brown, Buck, Ernest, Rodriguez and William V. Mahoney (of the Washington "Unity" bunch).

A National Committee of Arrangements was then selected, composed of the following delegates: William Mahoney, H. G. Teigan and W. A. Schaper, of Minnesota; Joseph Manley, Tom Ayres, R. H. Walker, W. H. Green and C. A. Hathaway as Secretary-Treasurer.

To provide for immediate issuance of this call and to start the National Convention campaign, the Federated Farmer-Labor Party pledged \$500; and \$100 each was pledged by the Progressive Party of Nebraska and the Farmer-Labor Parties of Montana, South Dakota and Washington.

This National Conference then adjourned, amidst a general burst of enthusiasm for real farmer-labor unity of action.

## Farmers' Non-Partisan League Convention Meets

The action taken in this convention held in Minneapolis, on March 12th, marks a historic step in the struggle of the farmers toward unity with their brother workers in the cities. From start to finish, the convention was the scene of a bitter struggle between opposing forces—those of the exploited farmers, who would achieve such unity; and those of such mis-leaders as Thomason, Welch, and their sort, who would prevent it. Van Lear and Townley were not present in this gathering—but their spirit was strongly in evidence. And the fight which they had made, in the convention of last September, against unity of the farmers and the city workers, was repeated here.

### Attempt to Bar Delegates.

In the beginning, the struggle in the convention centered around a motion to ratify and affiliate with the Farmer-Labor Federation. As in the September convention, State Chairman Welch of the Non-Partisan League, assumed chairmanship for this convention and then appointed a "hand-picked" Credentials Committee. When this Committee made a partial report, its purpose did not become clear until after the first roll-call had been taken. Then it was discovered that ten of the delegates had not been seated by that committee—and all of these ten delegates were known to be in favor of such affiliation.

Immediately after the noon recess, the fight began with the introduction of motion for affiliation with the Farmer-Labor Federation. Because of the high-handed manner in which Chairman Welch then attempted to handle the proceedings, he was summarily removed by the indignant farmer delegates. George Baker was then elected as chairman, apparently not because he was the best choice for that position but because he was the most fair obtainable, in face of the tactics of Thomason and his followers.

### "Red" Scare Launched.

Thomason then opened an attack upon the Communists. He began with a claim that the National Conference, held in St. Paul on Monday and Tuesday, had been "dominated by thirteen Communists." And he read telegrams from Senators Magnus Johnson and

Frazier, stating that they would not join in any convention that was "packed by Communists." But under questioning, Thomason was forced to admit that he had sent misleading telegrams to these Senators, in order to bring out such adverse replies.

### Women's Auxiliary Deceived.

In the meeting of the Women's Auxiliary, on previous day, the reactionaries—led by Thomason's wife, a delegate—railroaded through a blanket motion to vote as a unit in this convention, against affiliation with the Farmer-Labor Federation. This Mrs. Thomason was very actively engaged in button-holing the delegates here and trying to influence them against voting to join with the Federation, her chief argument being the "red" scare spread by Thomason. But her wiles were not at all successful, even with the added enhancement of her \$1,000 fur coat and gold-trimmed hat, and the silk-stockinged legs which she so freely displayed in her Circean efforts.

In the midst of general turmoil, a Conference Committee from the Farmer-Labor Federation asked for the floor. Delegate Manahan, as spokesman for the Farmer-Labor Federation, was allowed 30 minutes to present its program, and was admonished to "confine the report to facts and don't indulge in any propaganda."

Following a confused session of debate, the motion to ratify and affiliate with the Farmer-Labor Federation was put to a roll-call vote. And then it was discovered that ten of the regularly credentialed delegates had not been seated by the Credentials Committee. After this little "mistake" had been corrected and the delegates properly seated, the roll-call was finished. The motion to affiliate carried, by the narrow margin of 84 to 78 against. Sixteen of the women delegates had been persuaded to vote against this motion, and only four endorsed it. But with the motion carried—much to the disgust of Thomason and his sort—the convention adjourned, amidst a great cheering for "Unity!" These delegates were to next sit in night session with the Convention of the Farmer-Labor Federation.



## Minnesota Farmer-Labor Federation Convention

On March 12th, at Minneapolis, this convention opened with 300 delegates in attendance, from trade unions, farmers' co-operatives and workers' fraternal organizations throughout the State of Minnesota. William Mahoney, of St. Paul, was elected as chairman; and Fred Siegl, of the same city, as secretary.

This convention was called by a Promotional Committee, for the purpose of launching an organization which would unite the farmers and industrial workers into one solidified political federation, and would be the actual organization of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party. All sincere farmer-laborers of the State have long realized the great necessity for uniting the Minnesota farmers and industrial workers, because of the fact that the old Non-Partisan League and its program is politically bankrupt. It is headed by the editor of a country newspaper and a former speaker for the Non-Partisan League. This individual has been very successful in making his living by "farming the farmers," and preventing their uniting their forces with those of the industrial workers.

### Unity Necessity Recognized.

The prime object of the convention was to ratify the federation plan of organization. And every effort was made, in drawing up the proposed rules, to overcome the feeling of suspicion against such a plan, craftily spread amongst the farmers by such men as O. N. Thomason. Farmer groups were given thirteen places on the State Executive Committee of the Federation, against six for the city workers.

### Constitution Adopted.

At the end of the first afternoon session, a short Constitution was adopted; and two committees were appointed to confer with the conventions of the two Non-Partisan Leagues, to be held on following day. Both of these subsequent gatherings were to be asked to ratify the plan of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Federation, and to join with it in a common session. This plan provides that dues to the Federation shall be \$1.00 per year to individuals; 2 cents per capita per month, for farmer- and labor organizations; and 1 cent per capita per month, for co-operatives, city central bodies and women's auxiliary organizations. Ample provision is made for county and state conventions, with corresponding central committees, as well as for an official newspaper and general organization work.

The convention adjourned amidst great enthusiasm, and high hopes for definite action to be taken on the following day by the two Non-Partisan League conventions.

## Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party Convention

This gathering—commonly known as "Pike's Convention," because it was called by State Chairman F. A. Pike, of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party—was assembled on Friday, March 14th, at St. Cloud (which is 65 miles from Minneapolis). In attendance were almost 300 delegates, elected by mass conventions in the various counties of the State.

Mr. Pike himself opened the convention, with a long speech on the development of the farmer-labor movement in Minnesota; but he told little of the actual struggles to build up an organization really representative of the Minnesota farmers and industrial workers. And Mr. Pike then took for himself the privilege of nominating the chairman for this convention, by presenting the name of O. L. Baldus.

Instantly a dozen delegates were upon their feet, to voice their protest, and it was very apparent that the "steam-roller" methods of State Chairman Pike were not going to meet with a popular reception. After a much heated controversy, D. H. Evans was elected as chairman for the convention, and Ralph Harmon as secretary.

From the outset it became also apparent that a group of reactionaries, headed by O. N. Thomason (with William V. Mahoney, of

## Convention of Working People's Non-Partisan Political League Forces

This convention opened on Thursday, March 13th, with the same chairman and secretary who had officered the previous day's convention of the Farmer-Labor Federation—William Mahoney and Fred Siegl.

After considerable discussion, the plan of the Federation was ratified and this League voted to become a part of it. But little more of note was accomplished until the night session, when the delegates re-convened as a convention of the Farmer-Labor Federation.

With the seating of the 60 or 70 delegates from the Farmers' Non-Partisan League, together with all the farmers' and industrial workers' representatives from the Farmer-Labor Federation—making a total of 500 delegates, it now became clearly apparent that a tremendous step had been taken toward really solidifying the farmer-labor movement in Minnesota. But also strongly apparent was the presence of reactionary elements in the ranks of both the farmers' and industrial workers' organizations. And at the first opportunity—the question of the endorsement of candidates—they made a last-gasp attempt to split these combined forces.

Again Madam Thomason addressed the delegates, informing them that they—and especially the representatives of the industrial workers—did not know anything about the problems of the farmers' wives. And the presumption was readily recognized that this "militant" lady—with her \$1,000 coat, etc.—evidently did know something about them; at least sufficient to provide herself a comfortable income, through her efforts at dividing the workers' forces.

When the roll-call vote was taken on the question of endorsement of candidates, it carried by a narrow margin. And the motion was tabled, rather than allow this to stand as an excuse for reactionaries to propagandize the farmers against the industrial workers.

### Platform Adopted and Call Endorsed.

The convention remained in session until after midnight. And the platform finally adopted contains much that is embodied in the national platform of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party. William Mahoney, of St. Paul, was elected as permanent chairman; and Ralph Harmon, as secretary.

Before its adjournment, the Farmer-Labor Federation unanimously endorsed the call issued by the National Committee of Arrangements for a great Farmer-Labor nominating Convention, on June 17th, in the Twin Cities of Minnesota.

the Washington "Unity" bunch, "sitting in" as expert adviser on the "red" scare) was intent upon sabotaging the business of this convention. Their plan was to introduce a resolution which would empower this gathering—if necessary for their purposes—to call a separate National Farmer-Labor Convention from that scheduled by the St. Paul conference for June 17th.

Following considerable debate of unimportant matters, several delegates demanded to know of Mr. Pike why this convention had been called, if nothing of more importance was to be presented to it.

### June 17th Resolution Carries.

At this point William Mahoney, of Minnesota, acting for the Committee on Resolutions, reported a resolution embodying the call for the June 17th Convention, and gave a short synopsis of the efforts made to create a National Farmer-Labor Party. His motion to ratify this call was then put to a vote, without any discussion, and the vote was almost unanimously in favor of it—the opposition consisting of only Thomason and one or two others.

One of the few who had the brazen effrontery to oppose this mass demonstration of approval was a Mr. Shier, Minneapolis reporter for the New York "Forward," a Jewish so-called "Socialist" daily newspaper, which devotes a great part of its space to unconstructive criticism, of the Communists, and general efforts to create disunity in the progressive movement. Mr. Shier asked of

## Mobilize All Strength for Farmer-Labor Party Struggle!

### Workers' Party Raising Fund

The work of mobilizing the strength of farmers' and industrial workers' organizations, in the campaign for a class Farmer-Labor Party that will effectively function in the 1924 Presidential election, is now well under way. Public meetings are being organized in every part of the country, based on the lessons of the Teapot Dome exposure of both the now dominant political parties. And the Workers' Party, which is affiliated with the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, is raising a fund of \$15,000 to aid in financing this united farmer-labor effort. All funds thus raised will be devoted to the furnishing of organizers, speakers and literature, to aid in the formation of a great national Farmer-Labor Party that will henceforth fight the political battles of the farmers and industrial workers of this country.

In presenting to the readers of its press this call for a campaign fund, the Workers' Party states:

"This Presidential election offers the greatest opportunity that has presented itself in the last quarter century to build up a class political movement of the farmers and industrial workers, for opposition to the political forces of American Capitalism.

"The farmers are in a state of revolt against the unbearable economic conditions which have driven millions of them off the land they have cultivated and have forced other millions of them into bankruptcy. And the industrial workers are smarting under the heavy blows of the open-shop drive which culminated in the infamous Daugherty injunction against labor.

"And the critical situation of the Capitalist system's two political parties—Republican and Democratic—has been rendered more acute by the recent oil-land graft exposures and the rapidly increasing unemployment throughout this country.

"For nearly two years the Workers' Party has carried on a consistent campaign toward the formation of a class Farmer-Labor Party, and it will now throw all its strength into the work of concentrating that movement for accomplishment THIS YEAR."

"I am not afraid of bolshevism, anarchy or any of the other things that are said to be menacing us, but I am afraid of our own lethargy, our own indifference and our sluggishness to questions of vital importance," said Mrs. Thos. G. Winter, president, General Federation of Women's Clubs.

William Mahoney an explanation as to his attitude on the C. P. A. Convention, called for July 4th at Cleveland. Replying to this inquiry, Mahoney said, in part:

### C. P. A. Shown Up.

"The people have lost confidence in the C. P. A. It is true that I went to the St. Louis conference—but I went there to prevent the endorsement of McAdoo. Many of that same bunch who were in the St. Louis meeting, later endorsed McAdoo in Chicago. We do not want this movement to come under the control of that bunch."

The convention delegates bo'd down all further attempts by Shier to question the motives or actions of Mahoney. And among the enthusiastic speeches in favor of the June 17th convention, the most notable was that of Charles E. Taylor, of the Montana Farmer-Labor Party, in which he indicated that "the whole West is now looking to Minnesota for guidance" and said that he spoke in the name of the Montana bankrupt farmers.

### Unity Achieved.

This convention adjourned unanimously committed to the programs endorsed in the various conferences and conventions of the past week. The reactionaries among the farmer-labor forces in Minnesota have now been deprived of their last vestige of capable leadership. And the militant workers, upon the farms and in the shops, are united to put over successfully the coming Farmer-Labor Convention on June 17th.

# FARMER-LABOR VOICE

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## One Hope Remains

There is nothing to be gained by all this talk about relief for the stunted agricultural and industrial life of America through any conceivable action by the Republican or Democratic political parties. Neither by "keeping Coolidge," nor by feverishly swapping him for McAdoo or some other whited sepulchre of political promise, will any such result be achieved.

The two alternatively dominant political parties of American capitalism have outlived their usefulness, and both should have been sent to the scrap-heap long ago. Each is so permeated with political rotteness that no metaphorical "shot of mercury" could ever restore to either of them even a semblance of social health or vigor.

And the time is at hand when a National Farmer-Labor Party must be looked to as the one hope for remedying our national ailments. This new political party will have the vision and passion of youth, and will build in new pattern the fallen structure of present-day society. For the social edifice which it will erect, new materials must be found and used which were unknown in the structure that is now crumbling to ruins. It will build, from the ground to the topmost peak, with materials that shall not be crumbled by quakes of financial crisis and deflation, or industrial depression.

The combined forces of the farmers and industrial workers are now in martial alignment, preparing for the coming political battle of next November. And in that battle will be heard new slogans, chief among which will be: "All wealth to the producers of all wealth!"

## An Achievement in Unity

In Minnesota, farmer-labor unity seems to be no longer a dim hope of the future, but a glowing fact of the present.

At closing session of the Farmer-Labor Federation convention, in Minneapolis, March 13th, this ardently sought achievement was accomplished by the Minnesota farmers and industrial workers. On that day, affiliation with the Farmer-Labor Federation was voted by an overwhelming majority of the delegates attending conventions of the Farmers' Non-Partisan League and the Working People's Non-Partisan Political League—representative of farm- and industrial labor throughout the State. And these two Leagues will now function unitedly in a single political body, as constituent parts of the Farmer-Labor Federation.

Article I, Section 1, of that organization's Constitution reads as follows:

"The name of this organization shall be the Farmer-Labor Federation. Its purpose shall be to unite the members of the farmers' organizations and labor organizations into a political federation, together with those organized or unorganized elements supporting independent political action by the workers and farmers, and to carry on an intensive program of education and organization, incidental to participation in the political campaigns of the Farmer-Labor Movement."

With an agreement on candidates for the coming national election, this new political party should have little difficulty in disposing of both the Republican and Democratic Parties—or what is left of them after the Teapot Dome committee completes its investigation of these two odoriferous aggregations of political crooks

## The "Patriotism" That Pays Profit

When the United States Naval Department consulting board made report that the oil supply of this country would be exhausted within about twenty years, the Oil Trust crowd got busy.

Various great oil fields had been reserved by the United States Government, so that in case of war or other emergency there would be ready at hand plenty of fuel oil for its naval operations—in order that the world might once again be made safe for something or other. Interference with such a plan would usually be termed "unpatriotic."

But in 1920 the Standard Oil crowd, without hindrance by the Democratic administration in Washington, was permitted to grab \$500,000,000 worth of such United States Oil Reserve Lands in the State of California.

And in 1923, with the assistance of the Republican Secretaries of the Navy and Interior Departments, Sinclair's Mammoth Oil Company obtained a lease upon the Teapot Dome Reserve in Wyoming. At the same time—or a little later—Secretaries Denby and Fall leased to the Doheny oil combination what was then left of the California Oil Reserve lands.

Some years ago, quite a little was said—and quite a lot done—by the United States Department of Justice, when charges were made that certain industrial workers had declined to produce spruce timber for the building of war air-craft, and had thus "interfered with war preparations." Many of these, charged with such "unpatriotic" action (or lack of action) were in fact condemned to long terms of imprisonment. And this, notwithstanding the fact that no real evidence was ever produced to prove such charges against them.

Evidence has been produced to so amply prove this later "interference with war preparations," that none of the accused has made much effort to even deny the charge. But in this case the accused are not workers. And so we have yet to hear of any prosecutions by the Department of Justice—at the head of which is stationed one of the principal conspirators in this little game of unpatriotic "patriotism."

But of course this is all "old stuff"—and we beg pardon of our readers, for even calling their attention to it.

No office-seeker is bigger than the various farmer-labor political conferences. These Conferences are bigger than any individual on the inside or on the outside of them.

A Minnesota unvalued contemporary makes the bald-headed statement that, "The radicals are for anything to beat Coolidge." But we venture to say—even at the risk of being considered not very "radical"—that, by his later performances especially, Mr. Coolidge has pretty thoroughly beaten himself, without assistance from "anything."

In the old days the big thieves stole public agricultural lands, and when these had played out they swined the grazing lands and mineral lands. Today they are swiping the oil lands that belong to the public. Only a farmer-labor government will stop the thievery, and make the thieves disgorge.

The "plain people"—who are the workers—are beginning to get mighty sick of the smooth-talking, "more polished" professional politicians—who do all their work with their mouths.

"The greatest of all terrors, is man in his delusions," said the poet, Schiller. And he might well have thus referred to the worker who cheerfully votes for the political party of his industrial masters.

We know of a senatorial "farmer" who is such a liar that even the hogs—if he really had a farm and some hogs—wouldn't believe him when he called them to dinner!

"The farmers are the core of the out and out third party sentiment," declared John C. Kennedy, secretary, Washington State Farmer-Labor party. "They have been forced down to economic brass tacks and are facing a far more bitter situation than the trade unionist has before him. The farmers would not dream of indorsing a man like McAdoo after the oil revelations had shown him intimately allied with the big business interests that are after the natural resources of the country. Yet a large number of railroad unions indorsed McAdoo in spite of the revelations. That was too much for the farmers. They are no longer looking to the railroad unions for leadership. When you are bankrupt and see only more bankruptcy before you, no old party platform and no old party candidate has any appeal to you."

Nothing proves the strength of the farmer-labor movement these days more than the fact that the workers know enough not to get discouraged merely because of traitorous or misfit leaders. As soon as these Judases or misfits are uncovered the rank-and-file just rises up in its might and throws them through the transom, and selects new and better leaders.

Comes one Robertson and announces for governor of Texas, and generalizes glitteringly. He promises to give the farmer a "square deal" and is going to give the tenant question his "earnest attention." But he keeps on the safe side of the land and farm products speculators by not specifying.

"Corruption has been exposed in America worse than in any civilized country except imperial Russia, in the past hundred years," says Congressman Berger. Absolutely correct, and only the farmer-labor forces can clean up the corruption.

The wife of that poor fish of a farmer who comes to town and lets the open shopper turn him against the interests of his own family, ought to sue him for divorce.

### WANTED—

Local correspondents in all sections of the country, who will send in news items with reference to the farmer-labor movement in their immediate vicinity, or special articles of general interest to the farmers and industrial workers everywhere. In order to increase the scope and value of our newspaper, we have been reiterating this call to the readers of Farmer-Labor Voice. And the response to our S. O. S. has been very encouraging, thus far—as may be readily noted by an inspection of these columns. It is the desire of Farmer-Labor Voice to speak directly from the hearts of the farmers and industrial workers, in their own language, and from their own point of view. If you have not yet contributed to these columns, do not longer refrain. And if you have—then come agrin!

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# How Rich We Are! Oklahoma Outlook Industrial Conditions In Kentucky

By LELAND OLDS.

(Federated Press Industrial Editor)

Mr. Head, the head of the American bankers, gets a rush of blood to the head when he considers the resources which guarantee further material progress in America. And at the end of a rhapsody which fairly makes a poor guy feel rich himself he spoils it all by classing labor among the resources, material and other, which the bankers look forward to exploiting in such abundance. But just the same it is worth noting how these bankers slap on the butter thick when talking about this fair land of theirs. So here's how President Walter H. Head, of the American Bankers' Association, talked to his cronies of the American Institute of Banking:

"We have today 110,000,000 people occupying 3,760,000 square miles of territory and possessing wealth estimated at \$300,000,000,000. (Don't that make you feel rich?) Our bank deposits aggregate approximately \$40,000,000,000. (Just sit down right now and reckon your share.) Outstanding life insurance amounts to over \$70,000,000,000 (that's about enough for a \$2,000 policy for every person gainfully employed.) Our 500,000,000 acres of improved farm lands are valued at \$77,000,000,000. We have over 24,000,000 milk cows and 40,000,000 head of cattle—approximately 40,000,000 sheep and over 60,000,000 swine. In a single year we have produced over 3,000,000,000 bushels of corn and over 1,000,000,000 bushels of wheat. (Surely no man, woman or child could ever want for bread or meat or milk in this land overflowing with food.) The value of our manufactured products in a single year has exceeded 900,000,000,000! our annual production of crude oil has exceeded 23,000,000,000 gallons. We have wealth untold in our forests, in our mines of iron and coal. (This represents wealth only when wage-earners have added their labor to it.) We have 250,000 miles of railroad; we have 250,000 miles of commercial telegraph lines and 8,000,000 miles of telephone lines. (All useless without labor.) We have 20,000 daily and weekly newspapers to disseminate information and to bind our people together by ties of common knowledge and for a common purpose (to disseminate misinformation and to bind our people for a common purpose!) We have resources of labor so abundant that we have placed an artificial check upon immigration. Our resources are incomparably great."

And so he runs on with more of the same stuff. Yes, America has all the essentials which could make a very wealthy nation. But some old and conservative economist has remarked that it is not gold in treasuries but the general diffusion of the necessities and comforts of life among the people which marks a wealthy nation. And because these bounteous resources are today exploited for the sake of the profits which they yield to a small minority of hereditary owners, millions lack the necessities and comforts which are alone evidence of wealthy people. All that can be said is that the American people are potentially wealthy. The full potentialities of their natural wealth can be realized only when these resources are exploited co-operatively by the people in order to contribute to the fullness of their own life.

## OHIO FARMERS DEAD BROKE.

By Federated Press.)

TOLEDO, O.—Farmers east of the Mississippi are as hard up as their western brethren. In Ohio where diversified farming is recommended by President Coolidge, is the rule, the average farmer is forced to sell his stock to keep alive until the next crop is harvested.

Scores of farmers near here are selling. The country papers are full of advertisements like the following taken from one of them:

## MINNESOTA FARMERS HARD HIT

The farmers in Minnesota—according to a report from one of them—seem to be confronted with a state of affairs just about as serious as in any other section of the country. He states that in the vicinity of the town where he lives, every farmer who bought land during the war period of "prosperity" has now lost that land and is flat broke. And he says that these conditions are not merely local but are generally prevalent, the farmers in most communities being not only financially bankrupt but so deeply in debt that they see no hope for recovery.

(By J. E. SNYDER.)

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla.—(Special to Farmer-Labor Voice).—I made a trip recently out into the country around here, and find the farmers in a state of general discontent with the crop and market conditions. After the Walton let-down, they are feeling quite blue and uncertain as to the future.

The landlord system has wrecked this district, so far as farm homes are concerned, and there is a very perceptible tone of hopelessness which they voice an opinion on their prospects for betterment. This seems to pervade the entire farming community.

The conservative farm-journals have been getting in deadly work against farmer organization, blaming the various union leaders for the present dire situation. And it seems that at least half of the farmers hold to that sort of opinion. The commercial traveling men also busy themselves in propaganda against every progressive idea that is started. They try to demonstrate the failure of all farmers' co-operative enterprises, their talk being universally against organized labor and farmers' unions, of whatever sort. And as several of these birds of ill-omen flock into the small-town general store every day or two, their sophistries reach many ears. Then idle tongues carry afar this propaganda against united action by the easily beguiled farmers and industrial workers.

Of course, present conditions make fertile soil for the growth of such false propaganda. I went into the district where in 1893 we made the great "run" for a homestead upon the former Indian lands. As one of those industrial pioneers I had worked there and helped build up a community where practically every 160 acres showed fairly good improvement very soon. But as I rode around there this time, the impression that came into my mind was of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village"—so far as farm-homes are concerned. The farmers here have produced very little during the past three years, and can see little hope ahead of them except the optimistic future promises of the oil-boomers. Drilling for oil is going on, all around. It is a queer situation, where the settlers of such fine farm land have to delve thousands of feet under the surface of the earth for any hope to produce an income from their farms!

Farmers and wage-workers have plenty of common sense and ability; all they lack now is self-confidence. But they are getting it fast, in view of the proven insanity of the present ruling crowd.

The farmer-labor tidal wave is running still higher in this nation. A little more Teapot Dome and the government is ours.

## Some Missouri "Misery"

The "Missouri Ruralist" quotes liberally (but not in any liberal spirit) from that contributed memorial to the man Nicola Lenin, which Farmer-Labor Voice gladly published as an editorial in its issue of February 1st. And then the "Ruralist" editor truculently inquires: "Does this laudation of the Blood Lenin represent farmer sentiment?"

We are willing that the farmers themselves shall say whether it does or not. And here is a letter from one of them who has already expressed his opinion upon the subject:

Editor, Farmer-Labor Voice:

This clipping from the "Missouri Ruralist" shows me that you are one of those who know the man Lenin as one who wanted to see a real government of the people, by the people and for the people.

All of the murderous monarchy-loving class would have burned Lenin alive, if they could have got him into their power. And I presume this clipping expresses the editorial idea of John F. Case, who is one of the few American farmers still having ex-chattel slaves to do his work. His various candidates for Governor of Missouri—whom he refers to as "farmers"—are really large landowners. And of course all such must quiver in the marrow of their bones, when they think of Lenin giving to the Russian peasant millions the right to have land of their own, with no landlord over them.

W. J. HALL,  
Rich Hill, Mo.

(By C. J. STEPHENS.)

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—(Special to Farmer-Labor Voice).—To begin with, it would be well to note that only 30 per cent. of the State population is urban, with Louisville (of 300,000 population) the only big industrial city. This point ranks as twenty-sixth among the industrial centers of the county. It is a ripe field for industrial organization by the progressive labor movement—as are also Covington and Newport, the two next important Kentucky industrial points (just across the river from Cincinnati, Ohio).

According to report of the Louisville Industrial Foundation, this city's industries employ, in round numbers, 58,000 workers, with an annual wage estimate of \$62,500,000.

This report also shows, by a comparison with the U. S. Census Survey of 1919, that since then the number of Louisville's industrial wage-earners has increased by nearly 23,000—with more than 12,000 women employed as workers. Figures with regard to the existent child wage-slavery are carefully hidden. And more than nine-tenth of Louisville's industrial production is carried on under open-shop conditions. As a field for organizing the unorganized, this district offers opportunities unequalled elsewhere.

The "Industrial Foundation" is of course a capitalistic institution, as clearly indicated by its praise of Louisville's "excellent labor conditions." And quite significant is this additional part of that report: "Our labor is alert loyal and dependable, due mainly to the fact that 95 per cent. of the population is native-born."

The economic situation among the Kentucky farmers—constituting 70 per cent. of the State's population—is even worse than among the city workers. In 1920 these farmers, as a class, were just about at the end their resources, and some virgorous action had to be taken by the capitalistic interests to prevent a political upheaval just such as that now imminent in the Northwestern States. A meeting was called of the leading bankers, tobacco-growers, dealers and merchants, to present a plan for co-operative marketing. This meeting was arranged in April, 1921, by Judge Robt. W. Bingham, millionaire publisher of the Louisville "Courier-Journal." And the result was the Burley Tobacco-Growers' Co-operative Association with a membership of nearly 90,000 and big headquarters in Lexington, Ky. At the time of this organizational accomplishment, the prospective farmer membership being not able to pay their dues, all money necessary for the purpose was furnished by Bingham and the banking interests—no doubt "to help the farmers." And about a year later another such organization was formed, the Dark Tobacco-Growers' Co-operative Association, with equally impressive headquarters, at Hopkinsville, Ky. This outfit has a membership of approximately 66,000—the growers of 75 per cent. of Kentucky's dark tobacco crop. And there is also in Kentucky, at the present time, the Farmers' Educational & Co-operative Union, with about 25,000 members—apparently the most progressive organization in the State. But the Kentucky farmers are in need of a whole lot of education along the lines of farmer-labor unity for political action. The Farmer-Labor Party is organized in Louisville only, and there is very little strength to the State organization as yet.

The organized farmers and wage-workers are the only class not responsible for the present state and national governments and their unexamined fraud, graft, waste and corruption. For this and other reasons they are the only class that can be trusted to clean things up.

## THE WESTERN PROGRESSIVE FARMER

is a wide-awake journal of interest to the farmers everywhere. It is published on the 20th of each month, at Sedro-Woolley, Washington. Subscription price: \$1.00 per year.

## A Darkening Prospect

(By TOM AYERS.)

The first wave of bank failures has passed, leaving in its wake nearly one hundred recorded wrecked financial institutions for the year's total. These bankers are taking their losses with stolid composure apparently, but with an inward bitterness which is going to find political expression in the general election.

And there is no longer confidence in any of the banks. The people are gradually withdrawing their deposits, a little at a time, as the chances may seem best for getting the funds without closing the institution. There is deep-seated conviction that the financial "shot in the arm" administered by the Eastern banks and the United States Treasury Department will only prolong the dying agony and make more tragic the final end. The farmers who are in debt to the banks see their doom awaiting them. Some are bitterly resentful and hostile, while others quietly await their financial finish with whatever heroic fortitude they are able to muster. Beneath these surface indications, in both cases, there is a general consciousness that great peril awaits them all. And with the new realization that they cannot hope to pay their debts, many are abandoning the idea of longer trying to do so. Even another fair crop, at present prices, would not pay taxes and interest on the farmers' debts. It would take five years of such production, with prices double those now prevailing, to put the farmers upon a solid footing financially.

### Foreign Markets Failing.

It is apparent that the foreign markets are not improving and will not improve over their present condition. Agricultural production in Europe, while still very much under the pre-war level, is on the gain most everywhere. But with the German laboring masses unable to buy the food-stuffs now possessed in abundance by the land-holding class of that country, very clearly apparent is the futility of hoping for American agricultural relief through foreign markets for such products. And the farmers see also, that the coming period of industrial unemployment in the cities will further decline the prices upon their products for domestic consumption, just as their own lack of purchasing power will naturally contribute toward the slowing down of factory production and the consequent unemployment period. This vicious circle of the capitalistic system is now quite well understood by the working farmers everywhere. All former political illusions are passing away from them, and proposed "farm relief measures" recently offered have received scant courtesy from the tenant or worker farmer—and will receive even less consideration in future!

### McMaster's "Progressivism."

The pre-primary fight is now in full swing in this district. In preparation for the coming election, Governor McMaster—until very recently one of the most reactionary of the banker politicians—has been trying on some "Bolshevik" clothes. But they don't seem to fit him. He tries to talk like a "pink" farmer-laborite. But his "conversion" is so recent, and his pretended change of political color so extreme, that all his "radical" declarations are received with a knowing grin by the voter farmers he would thus deceive.

McMaster's debut on the "radical" road to political preferment is well remembered by these farmers of his district. It was inaugurated by his recent attempt to sell gasoline in competition with the Standard Oil Company. And he might have successfully "put over" this gesture, but for the discouraging fact that for two years previous to the beginning of his "war on the oil trust" he had bought—from his seat on the Highway Commission—Standard gasoline at from 11 to 14 cents per gallon, and sold it at from 24 to 26 cents. Only when it became clear that Sterling would enter the Senatorial race against him, did he begin selling oil for 16 cents, at highway mobilization points. In the course of this little experiment he bought a great deal of gasoline that had stood on track for several weeks, until it had accumulated demurrage estimated at \$7,000—and he sold all of this to the Texas Oil Company, at a loss. Then he discovered that an old statute, enacted in 1882, gave the railroads the right to refuse to "spot" oil-tank cars unless there

was a receiving tank at the station destination. This was indeed "a monkey-wrench thrown into the graft machinery," and the worthy Governor raised his hands in frantic appeal to the oily administration gang at Washington, D. C.

### "Probe Committee" Ghost—

Governor McMaster could probably have won his fight, right there, if he had had the nerve to call the Legislature into extra session to give him the required authority. But he feared this would be too dangerous a proceeding. At the last preceding session a "Dynamite Committee" was proposed, to probe the Rural Credits Board, the State Treasury and other departments. But this move was squelched by the doughty Governor's friends. He certainly did not want any investigation of the State House "dome," at that time.

### "Oil War" Scare-Crow.

And so McMaster's gasoline "war" is looked upon with considerable suspicion; particularly on account of the well-known fact that gasoline was selling at the filling stations in Oklahoma and California at from 5 to 6 cents a gallon, ten days before he opened fire in that fake war. Also he had signed a bill which provides that it is a crime to cut prices on petroleum products—an oil combine bill, so plainly that none could fail to understand it. But it is now quite evident that the Governor did not then know what course his political plans were to later take. And his actions then have quite effectively crippled his chances now, for election to any sort of office.

### Sterling's "Honesty" in Evidence.

Meanwhile, Senator Sterling is busily "stumping" the State. But he also is a very poor politician—spending most of his time in attempting to defend an indefensible Senate record. His vote against the Soldiers' Bonus has started the American Legion hot on his trail. But the Standard Oil outfit has come to his rescue by sending out "on the stump" its general attorney, L. L. Stevens, in an effort to line up the Legion for this adversary to the Legion's efforts—and Stevens is State Commander of the American Legion!

It is quite apparent that Standard Oil is undoubtedly for Senator Sterling. But even Sterling's friends admit that Texas Oil is for McMaster. Thus it might be facetiously said that "Oil is oil oil the time." Or, as The Daily Worker has so humorously paraphrased Shakespeare, it is "Bubble, bubble—oil and trouble." And the people have the privilege of making their choice between these two—if they insist upon having oil representation in the United States Senate.

### "Fusionist" Fakery.

The minority "fusionists" have been making a desperate effort to get into the McAdoo-Cherry oil chamber of the "regular" Democrat outfit. But their applications have met with no response. Their chairman, Houlihan, has been doing a lot of bluffing about putting on "a great primary campaign." He has announced that he expects Senators Magnus Johnson, Shipstead, Brazier and Wheeler to come into South Dakota and boost for his "fusion-labor Democrat" ticket. But the wily Magnus has already replied that he will not be on hand for that performance. Hence, there has been a sad reaction to this false alarm set off by Chairman Houlihan.

It appears that the "fusionists" are attempting to do what no other group has ever yet accomplished—to win in two separate political parties at the same election. Henry Ford failed dismally, in a similar attempt. And if the "fusionists really expect to win out by dividing their vote between the Democratic and the Farmer-Labor Parties, they are certainly a hopeful group of politicians.

### The Over-ripe Cherry.

Also Mr. Cherry, of the "regular" Democrats, is getting busy, since the McAdoo oil-scandal connection broke loose. And this Cherry Mr. Cherry—old-time enemy of the Non-Partisan League and chief legal counsel for big insurance corporations—expected to ride into the United States Senate upon the back of the Doheny donkey. But it now seems that the donkey broke a leg. Likewise Mr. Cherry was very busy, for several months, attempting to fix up county "fusion" tickets between the Democratic and Farmer-Labor forces. He succeeded in making some such arrangements in 12 out of 47 counties; but these are only minority groups, quite futile

of accomplishment. The real expectation was, of course, that the Farmer-Labor voters could be persuaded into the "regular" Democratic fold, through this crafty plan. But the oil gusher has pretty much changed such prospect—if there ever was any—and even Democrats of long-standing are looking for a more unsoiled, less oily-greased, perch to light upon. Also, new recruits to the Farmer-Labor banner are flocking in from both the Democratic and Republican Parties. Mr. Cherry's "dream of empire" has thus proven to be but an asinine night-mare.

### Farmer-Labor Sentiment Grows.

Upon the other hand, many rousing Farmer-Labor meetings have been held in the Eastern section of the State, where Alice Lorraine Daly is billed to speak, clear on to the 25th of March. And I have been addressing very enthusiastic meetings—sometimes two a day. It is clear that the Farmer-Labor Party sentiment is not only dominant but practically unanimous, wherever these meetings have been held. And the meetings have been largely made up of former Democrats and Republicans.

On March 6th the Farmer-Labor candidate for Governor, A. L. Putnam, will take the platform, and will continue on speaking tour until seeding time, holding afternoon and evening meetings.

### New Registration Law.

It is significant to note that the new registration law, enacted by the last session of Legislature, is not at all popular. This law requires registration of party affiliation, before vote can be cast in the primary election. It was a Republican measure, designed to bar out Democrats and Independents who might undertake to force weak candidates upon the Republican ticket. And in resentment, the voters are declining to register in such large numbers as to greatly worry the Republican politicians. It is probable that not more than 30 per cent. of the voting strength will be shown in the primaries. This situation of so many voters "on the fence," and declining to pledge party affiliation, looks bad for both the old political organizations. And they thoroughly appreciate the danger, but are now quite helpless in the face of it.

### Light Over All.

So it may be said that although the prospect is darkening—financially for the debtor-farmer, and politically for the "old-line" partisan—yet there is imminent upon the horizon a great burst of political enlightenment. And in the wake of this enlightenment must surely follow a mass political action that will produce real betterment of the farmers' economic situation.

## New Home of Workers' Newspaper

The Daily Worker, which began publication in Chicago less than two months ago, now announces the purchase of its own printing plant, where this militant working class newspaper will be permanently and permanently installed for the carrying on of its work.

The new plant—a four-story stone building, located at 1113 W. Washington Boulevard—is a complete and up-to-date printing establishment, with ample facilities for handling not only this daily newspaper but also several weekly newspapers, monthly magazines and other publications issued by the Workers' Party of America.

This new home of The Daily Worker appears to be one of the best-equipped relatively small printing plants in the country. And the workers everywhere will recognize as a good augury the fact that their daily newspaper has been so quickly enabled to place itself in this advantageous and comfortable situation.

## MORE BUBBLING TROUBLE.

(By Federated Press.)

WASHINGTON.—One of the next scandals to be charged to Coolidge and the "millionaire class" regime now in office will be the attempt on the part of Secretaries Hoover and Weeks to commit the United States, to an "international" water power conference in London soon, in opposition to public development and ownership of super-power. Secretary Merrill, federal power commission-agent for Hoover and Weeks in giving out power-site-leases in this country, is to go to London to join in a protest against public ownership, and even public development of hydro-electric resources. That is to say, he will go unless protest in congress shall stop him.



## Why Not the Fedje Bill?

The farmers of North Dakota will have presented to them, for their approval or rejection, in the State primaries of March 18th, a measure popularly referred to as "the Fedje Crop Lien Bill" (House Bill No. 164).

Representative Ben Fedje, from Williams County, as sponsor for this measure, the purpose of which he concisely states as follows: "The Fedje Farm-Labor Lien Law proposes merely to pay the farmer and his family for their work upon the farm."

Surely there should be no objections to the proposal for such a just and equitable law. At the present time a hired farm-laborer may place a lien upon the crop, for payment of his wages. And why should there not be equal consideration given to the work performed by the farmer and those of his family who assist in the crop production?

Yet there is a vigorous opposition to this proposed measure—voiced by the newspapers that serve the interests of Big Business, and led by henchmen of the mortgage-loan bankers of that State. These bankers, during the past few years, have been more and more pressing the farmers to mortgage their crops—even before the crop has been sown—for the purpose of better securing farmers' notes held by the banks. And many farmers, unable to pay their notes already in the bankers' hands, have complied with this demand. In very few cases has the farmer received an actual cash loan upon his crop mortgage. And generally, when the crop was harvested the banker took the entire proceeds—leaving for the farmer and his family only the memory of the year's hard, grinding work, and the hopeless thought that next season he would have to again mortgage and lose whatever crop this labor might produce.

So there is little question as to what the farmer thinks of the proposed Farm-Labor Lien Law, which provides that the farmer may retain from each crop a sufficient amount to pay for the labor performed by himself and his family in raising and harvesting the crop. Because the farmer has at last come to know that he is nothing more (and he certainly considers himself nothing else!) than a daily wage-worker upon the farm. The only difference is that the hired wage-worker is assured of compensation for his labor, and the farmer has no such assurance—but after harvesting the crop, may find himself without sufficient to feed and clothe his family, from the proceeds of his season's work.

The arguments of those who are in opposition to the remedial measure which will change this ridiculously unjust situation, principally upon the claim that "Such a law would deprive the farmer of his chief credit basis"—that with his land, stock, machinery, etc., already mortgaged beyond redemption, his only resource to carry him over another year of toil is to mortgage in advance of its production the crop which he might thus be enabled to raise—for the banker. This latter part of the argument is, of course, not put into words by the opponents of Fedje's proposed bill; but the part that is stated can have no other meaning—as all farmers well know. And there are few farmers still so ignorant, after all their recent hard lessons, as to willingly give into the control of others the very food and clothing needed for the health and comfort of their wives and children.

Getting down to fundamentals: why does any farmer need to borrow money in the Spring—at ten per cent. interest to the banker? Just because he was left high and dry at the end of the previous season, by the banker annexing the whole crop in payment of such a mortgage-loan already made. And when that farmer is paid for his work, and the work of his family—as the Fedje Bill will provide—then he will not have to borrow money in order to put in his crop, because he will have his own capital for that purpose. And he will save at least the ten per cent. interest—which the banker will lose, along with the rest of his present unearned profits from the farmer's labor. So it is quite easy to see why there are "two sides to this argument"—a right side and a wrong side!

The other chief argument of Fedje's opponents is that with such a law in force, no land-owner would sell a farm to a man who

might want to buy on the crop-share payment plan. Which is an argument at all. Because with the Fedje Bill in operation, a would-be farm-purchaser on the crop-share plan would contract to pay in cash according to the crop yield and market price at a fixed time, and he would have to pay the required crop-share, regardless of his having filed a labor lien under the proposed new law. Which disposes of that "argument," quite effectively.

Until the farmer can be assured of some such return as the Fedje Bill provides, for the labor of himself and his family in raising a crop, his economic situation is below that of the chattel slave before the Civil War. Those slaves were assured a sufficiency of food, clothing and shelter, in return for their work upon the plantations of their masters. But the American farmer of today, without such protection as the Farm-Labor Lien Law will provide is in imminent danger of finding himself and his family—after a year of successful crop production—driven from his home, hungry, unclothed and penniless. And this is not an imaginary but a real danger, as evidenced by actual occurrences unnumbered.

## Farmers, Beware! Don't Take the Baited Hook!

By Joel Shomaker.

(State Chairman, Farmer-Labor Party of Washington.)

That proposed loan of public money to help the farmers is a farce. The trick is too old for wise men of this day. Such legislative bills serve only to hide the sun of hope beneath a cloud of fog.

It is too late to do any good to the farmer by putting money in banks of his state. The act of dumping money into a bank, where the patrons are farmers, may help the bankers. But it will prove a detriment to the farmers. In fact, the more money the banker gets, from outside sources, the better equipped is he to fight the farmers, by refusing loans and demanding full payment of old notes.

The farmer should have been helped four years ago. The acute stage came on during the 1920 campaign. It was then that the currency was deflated, for political purposes. Now comes the doctor, in the garb of the politician, offering a temporary reviving tonic. Farmers, I say, beware of the political ringsters bearing gifts, in the form of remedial legislation.

### Banker's Threat Materializes.

I was doing the organizing work of the Farmer-Labor Party in the wheat counties of Washington in 1920. I was a sort of modern John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of old foregism. A banker then remarked in my hearing: "We'll show the old farmer his place." And they did show him.

The deflation period cost the farmers hundreds of millions of dollars. Many lost their homes. Others went to the poor house, committed suicide or died of broken hearts. Yes, every son or daughter of the farm, in America, will remember the fall of 1920, even to their last hour upon the earth.

In answer to questions as what the financiers thought the farmers should do to save themselves from everlasting disgrace, I was informed by persons who thought they knew the inside. The gist of the advice given was for the farmers to stay at home, keep away from towns and not meddle in business or politics.

### False Picture of Farmer.

The picture of the farmer, painted to city people, by the fat financiers and political parasites, is that of a man of great wealth. He owns so much land and has such great annual income that he is a capitalist.

Plutes would have the farmers exist as renters of land owned by bankers. They would then have to discard the old "Tin Lizies" get mules and linchpin wagons, scratch the earth with grasshopper plows, and know nothing but cuss words and the inconvenience of stumbling over leased clods, to get produce to haul away to the landlords, while their families starved.

### Loans Lead to Ruin.

I put in eight years at experimental farming in the State of Washington. I started out with a big tract of land, free of encumbrances. Soon the money-lending friend got

me. He painted the possibilities of the use of 8 per cent cash in doing development work. So I took the bait.

It was not long before I found out the fact that I was paying 18 per cent for the use of the money. For the banker had to have 8 per cent, the man who loaned had to have 5 per cent, and the fire insurance, title insurance, abstractor, attorney, recording fees and other expenses ran the cost up to more than double the legal interest rate.

When I went to the private office to get my loan renewed, I had to sign for a note of about double the first mortgage and received nothing in return but cancelled papers. So will the farmers of the wheat districts be forced to sign new notes of greater dimensions and at higher charges, just to take up the old accounts. The bankers will hold the cash for the other fellow.

### All Profits Grabbed.

My crops of berries was sold in the city, by commission men, for the reason that I could not do the work myself, and the city ordinances would not permit me to peddle my own products. Those fellows who had possession of my fruits for possibly an hour, each day, after receipt from the steamers, got 15 per cent for selling.

What did I get out of the products? Well, I followed some of my choice shipments from the commission man to the retail market and bought back berries at five times the price paid me at the commission office a few hours before making the purchases.

So, farmers, until there is a marketing system and a plan by which the user cannot take all you have at any time he sees fit, it is better for you and your families not to bite at the baited hook.

### FOUR PROGRESSIVE LECTURES

Joel Shomaker, State Chairman of the Washington Farmer-Labor Party, has planned a course of progressive lectures to be delivered by himself in every one of the 39 counties in Washington.

These lectures will deal with the present great social, financial and political questions, and economic conditions generally. In them, the legal rights, duties and powers of American citizenship will be clearly defined, with complete analysis of the principle problems now confronting the farmers and industrial workers. The general subjects of farming, irrigation, conservation, etc., will likewise be dealt with during this course of lectures.

And Joel Shomaker is a man who knows the subjects that he will talk about. As a resident of the State of Washington for twenty-five years, he has been long a writer for many of its leading newspapers and magazines. He has been a farmer, fruit-grower; a teacher, a lecturer, an editor, an author—thus teaching, speaking and writing from his own wide experiences.

Later information with regard to this comprehensive lecture tour will be found in the columns of Farmer-Labor Voice.

The hopeless know-nothing is the one who will not know.

The ignorant will condemn the things they don't understand.

Bankers take a lot of interest in their business.

## Farmer-Labor Party Launched in Oregon

PORTLAND, Oregon.—(Special to Farmer-Labor Voice).—A group of active workers in the farmer-labor movement held a meeting on March 1st and formally launched the Farmer-Labor Party of Oregon.

State officials were elected as follows: Otto Newman, chairman; Frank L. Rusmisl, secretary-treasurer; A. L. Karnopp, state organizer.

The State Executive Committee consists of Otto Newman, Frank L. Rusmisl, A. L. Karnopp and P. L. Turner.

Temporary headquarters have been opened at 455 Alder Street, and an active campaign for organizing the State will begin immediately. It is the intention of this group to work in full co-operation with the national farmer-labor organization, which has called for the nominating convention of the Farmer-Labor Party on June 17th.

# Farmer-Labor Forum

The Farmer-Labor Voice solicits from its readers a free expression of their opinions upon all subjects of special interest to the farmers and industrial workers, generally.

Contributions to this Forum should usually be of not more than three hundred words. With those, pen-names only will be published if requested. But name and address of writer must accompany each contribution.

The Farmer-Labor Voice assumes no responsibility for the opinions expressed in this manner.—ED.)

Editor, Farmer-Labor Voice:

I have just been reading your good paper, and the change is certainly refreshing after a long "dry spell" of elephant trumpeting and jack-ass hee-haw through the columns of the capitalist press. And such relief from the odor of those animals is good for both the mental and physical digestive organs.

Yes, we need a Townser-Sterling Bill—or something of the kind—for more educational publicity. But who can say that such purpose would be accomplished, if left in the hands of that sort? The education is surely needed, with the farmers going bankrupt, right and left, despite all "good advice" given them in the daily press that we have been reading, and the "information" so copiously laddled out by politicians, bankers and farm-bureau agents. We are advised to "raise more wheat and less oats." Then, when the wheat market is flooded, it is "more oats and less wheat"—or it's "raise hogs" or "raise cattle." But none of this advice seems to enable the farmer to raise money enough to pay his debts. So last year it was "produce more milk," and this year it is "diversification"—whatever that means. "Diversified farming," of one sort or another, has been tried out for the last forty years—with the only result of diversified disaster.

Now the Norbeck-Buttness patent medicine is proposed—to prolong the farmers' misery for yet a little while, by loading more debts upon the already over-burdened. Then there is the proposed McNary-Haugen Bill, for a Governmental export corporation to handle the "ten per cent. of surplus wheat." And the question arises,—why not handle the other ninety per cent. of wheat crop in the same way, if less profiteering and better prices to the grower will result from the exporting of this grain?

And now comes a big rush to aid the banks—which are closing their doors because of the farmers' ruination. But who can affectively repair the walls of a house after the foundation has been destroyed?

At last the fact seems to be appreciated that "the back-bone of the nation" has been sprained, in this financial crippling of the farmer—and a remedy is wildly sought. The doctors are many and various. But who among them would think of treating a sprained-backed horse, without first removing the load he was carrying? They would, first of all, remove the load and give the animal a rest. And this treatment might very well be applied to the farmer, in the present situation—but that is the one thing that is not done. The more this "back-bone of the nation" cracks, the more of a burden is loaded upon it. The taxes are endless—due mostly to "over-production" of office-holders, inspectors, investigators, committees and "pie-eaters" of all descriptions. And the farmer must work sixteen hours a day, in an effort to feed all these parasites of the agricultural industry. Only occasionally he gets an injection of "dope," in the form of a farm loan; or a dose of laxative co-operative marketing, grain pooling, restrictive production, etc.

But there will be no real relief for the farmer, until he learns to unite for political action, along with other working-class groups, to obtain proper representation in the government, state and national. And the first step in this direction is for the farmer to learn how to "cull the political flock," for removal of "roosters" and "non-layers." Just as in poultry culling, the "roosters" are quite easily located—because they are the non-essential office-holders, or "pie-eaters." But closer observation is necessary in order to locate the "non-layers"—for these are the farmers' mis-representatives in the state and national legislative halls—and they must be hunted out. For instance, such as Senator Sterling, South Dakota's staunch supporter of Wall Street—who quite consistently votes *always* with the political machine that does not "help the farmers."

JOHN EIDE.  
Baltic, S. Dak.

# "Each For Each!"



To the Editor:

I have seen your Farmer-Labor Voice, and believing it is just about the right thing I am enclosing my check for a year's subscription. Also will add a few remarks for publication in the Forum.

It seems to me that in these times, with such as Sterling, McMaster and Norbeck running round and round each other, and each telling the people how much more than the others he loves them and will fight for them, reformers should be very grateful over having such benevolent friends in court. And of course we understand that they cannot devote all their time to helping us, when they are so very busy helping to protect the oil-land thieves.

Also we now have the cheering information, by the way of the banks, that every farmer must make a return list to the Collector of Internal Revenue, or be subject to prosecution and fine. Quite a brand new system of plunder! But of course we also understand, that these people "have to live"—upon the slender resources still left to the farmer. I have made out my list, and will send it in today, by registered mail.

In view of the popular cry that "most farmers are making all kinds of money," I would like to say that here is my financial condition—and these facts are subject to verification.

"During 1923, on a farm of 1,280 acres, pretty well stocked and equipped—with an extra 320 acres, leased to round out the convenience of operation—my income was \$2,812.65, and my out-go was \$5,448.80. And in this I have taken no account of the \$1,000 spent to recover the health of my wife, worn down by the long siege of slavery that has enabled us to keep this farm in running order.

It looks like the proverbial "cat climbing back out of the well" would have an easy time of it, compared with the job ahead of me. And I want to add right here, that I am one of the very few who have no unpaid debts—as yet. But I am fully aware of the financial hell in which so many are struggling, just below my lucky present situation. And I seem to hear, arising from this fiery furnace in which so many mortgaged farmers are stewing, their mournful howls: "The G. O. P. has brought us here for our own good, and surely it will save us; stand by the G. O. P.!" But they will soon have that idea stewed out of them.

As for myself, I needed three sets of harness this spring—but after inquiring as to prices, we decided to get along somehow without buying any. The factories are all loaded with this sort and other farm necessities, and the farmers' inability to buy these things is already causing quite a rumble of discontent among the merchants.

This should result in a thunderous political protest, before many more days have come and gone. We are told by some that times are improving, and that in fact we are right next door to prosperity. And it sure looks that way to me. Because we have about 100 cattle and 30 horses on our farm, and the proceeds from the hides of all of them—which would be our best sale—would not buy one of the sets of harness which we are needing. Really, in my opinion, the panic is only at its beginning. And I think that when we have gone clear through with it, all will agree that it was "a peach of a panic!"

A Close Observer,  
MIRANDA, S. D.

To the Editor:

I have seen a copy of your paper, Farmer-Labor Voice, and am sending you my check for one year's subscription.

I am certainly in favor of all the small political parties uniting with the Farmer-Labor Party, for independent party action.

As a member of the Socialist Party for twenty years, I was three times candidate for member of Congress on that ticket. But the people seemed to be prejudiced against the name "Socialist," and we could get nowhere. Then the so-called Non-Partisan League fooled the farmers for a while. But it is now sleeping in well-deserved death.

By all means, let us nominate a national ticket on May 30th, and not wait for Robert M. LaFollette, or any other senator of the old political parties, no matter what sort of "good men" they may be. We have certainly been having plenty of opportunity to see just how corrupt these old political parties are, and how hopeless is the job of trying to reform them.

In my opinion, one of the main planks of the Farmer-Labor Party should be based on the money question. I have been, for five sessions, chairman of the Rural Credits Committee of the State Grange, and have written much on that subject, for the Grange News, etc. I hope for the success of your paper, and will assist in any way possible.

Fraternally yours,  
WALTER PRICE,  
Outlook, Wash.

## "THE FARM CRISIS."

(By H. M. Ware.)

Another installment of this lengthy article by "Hal" Ware, dealing with the agricultural situation, will appear in next issue of this paper—and there are yet several chapters to follow. Then the whole study will be issued in pamphlet form.—ED.



# "Each For Each!"

