

# Minnesota's «Farmer-Labor» Meet

The «Practical» Politicians and Business Men Take Charge

The St. Paul convention of the Farmer-Labor Association closed March 28th after two days of gerrymandering by the small group of political adventurers who have in devious ways attained power in the organization.

Following the course marked out several years ago by men of the Starkey-Shipstead type, and with the example of the shameful campaign in 1928 as a guide, the organization was appropriated by the banker-farmer-office-holder delegates and turned over to Floyd B. Olson who "accepted" the endorsement for governor.

Out of the hundred and fifty odd delegates present, less than half represented any organization. The overwhelming majority were especially picked by the machine for the task of keeping out the platform and program of the Left wing and trade union elements. These were presented by the Hennepin County (Minneapolis) delegation, who, with a dozen notable exceptions, were members of organized labor.

The Hennepin county convention under pressure of the Left wing had been forced to adopt a series of proposals for the State convention which embodied the idea that all candidates of the F. L. P. put forward the organizational and agitational program of the labor movement in the campaign. The rank and file were for this and demanded that these proposals be embodied in the platform. They were in dead earnest about this and even succeeded in placing one of their leaders on the platform committee.

Olson had notified the convention in a brutally frank letter on the first day that "...I shall assume that if I am endorsed and elected to office as a candidate of the F. L. P., I shall have absolute independence the selection of men and women..."

## Left Wing Presents Program; Denied Expression

Lommen, who is known in the Party as "the Steel Trust Senator", was in full charge of the platform committee. Knowing that Olson was already nominated and that the platform already prepared could not be changed, he quite naturally assumed that the demand for "absolute independence" was also already accepted. He did exactly what he was told to do; brushed aside the entire document presented by the trade union workers; and buried a couple of minor demands under a heap of words and rubbish. He handled Walter Frank, the Hennepin Co. trade union centrist, as an experienced and determined politician handles another with less experience and little determination, and brought out the most reactionary platform that has even been adopted by a F. L. gathering in Minnesota. What should have been the center of a really stubborn fight in the convention against the obvious manipulations of the machine fizzled out completely for lack of proper direction and leadership.

Under the chairmanship of the arch-reactionary Rolster, with the secretaryship in the hands of the equally reactionary Starkey, the Communists and Left wingers were denied any voice in the proceedings. The Left wing workers were unable to have their platform resolution even considered. This resolution proposed a platform of political demands coupled with trade union demands for the closed shop, for a six hour day and a five day week, etc., and also proposed a complete re-draft of the program as well as a change in the structure of the party in order to abolish individual membership and to base it upon the workers' movement.

## Left Wing To Continue Fight For Fighting Workers' Movement

The slickers who came in by the individual membership route together with the trade union bureaucrats, who controlled this convention, trampled upon the workers demands and actually, in the person of Starkey, openly insulted them, by crumpling the Left wing resolution before their faces.

In spite of the feeling in the ranks of the workers against fusion with the Democrats, the manipulators in control, by the action of the convention, and in accord with the wishes of the majority of the endorsed candidates including those for the highest posts, have made fusion almost certain.

In the coming campaign and in the following period the Minnesota workers have the task before them to salvage the movement, to keep their unions out of the hands of the clique now in control of the F. L. P.; and to shape a course toward a Labor party, which must be national in scope, based upon the unions and other workers' organizations and with a class-struggle platform. The Communists in this movement, must undertake to clarify and educate the masses and to steer them towards Communism.

(The comrades of the Communist League of America (Opposition) in Minnesota have prepared a detailed analysis of the Labor Party situation in Minnesota. It will be presented to the Minnesota workers in either leaflet or pamphlet form.—Ed.)

# ECONOMIC REACTION WORLD-WIDE

The depression affecting not only the United States but the leading capitalist nations throughout the world, and that brought on a huge unemployment crisis, continues. Seasonal improvement has not changed the basic condition. Uncertainty, doubt and pessimism animate even the more optimistic capitalist elements. No proposals have been set forth by the ruling interests that are likely to have any really important consequence on the mass unemployment situation.

The National City Bank, in its April bulletin, summarizes the situation briefly as follows:

"It is now evident that the failure of business to make a more rapid recovery since the first of this year is due to fact that the situation is not simply a domestic one but that we are involved in a world-wide reaction. (Our emphasis.) The fall of prices of staple commodities has been even more serious in other countries. This is most clearly seen in the state of British industry and trade..."

"The world's industries," the bulletin goes on to say, "have more than recovered their pre-war capacity, but the markets are overloaded with staple goods...Despite the improvement in the past few weeks, the aggregate volume of manufacturing and trade is still running considerably below that of the same date in 1929..."

## Bosses and Government Do Nothing For Jobless

The United States government, President Hoover and state and local governmental agencies know full well the acuteness of the situation. But not one step do they take to appropriate sums of money to compensate the unemployed workers. Every remedy is sought except the ones that will really aid the jobless worker. The willing lackey of the bosses, Wm. Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, warns the Senate Commerce Committee that the alternative to unemployment relief is revolution. This labor faker fears the workers' revolt that will put him and his kind on to the scrap-heap, and would like to stave off the inevitable historic event.

No responsible person or group holds out hopes for substantial change in the future. The condition of mass unemployment is of long standing. Yet investigators, Congress and other bodies are still "taking the census of the unemployed" and "awaiting more data". Public works and construction are the byword of all, but they remain on the blue-prints. None of these capitalists or politicians whisper a word about the development of large-scale economic relations with the Soviet Union.

# LABOR PARTY SENTIMENT POLLED IN PHILLY

PHILADELPHIA—(FP)—By a vote of 10,575 to 7,425, readers of the Philadelphia Union Labor Record, organ of the Central Labor Union decided in favor of the A. F. of L. non-partisan political policy as against a straight labor ticket.

"Out of the maze of letters commenting on the referendum," states the Record, "most of them came from Labor Party enthusiasts, while others, evincing an opposite viewpoint, felt that while there was a growing tendency toward the Labor Party, and that it would eventually come, the time was not yet ripe."

"What the vote did show however," sums up the Record, "is that the shadow of a Labor Party is immediately before us, if not this year, then in the not far distant future."

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NEW YORK—Three Brooklyn judges in special sessions dispensed a little wholesale "justice" by sentencing 26 members of the Independent Shoe Workers Union to 30 days in jail for violating an injunction against picketing struck plants, and contempt of court.

omonic relations with the Soviet Union. Why? This is one of the genuine ways to relieve unemployment in the United States. Every worker must put this question.

## Relieve Unemployment Through Broad Economic Relations with Soviet Union

Let the United States government extend long time and large-scale credits to the Soviet Union, which has always made good on its obligations, and hundreds of thousands of unemployed American workers can be employed and at the same time there is promoted thereby the development of the economy of the Workers' Republic in Russia. It is necessary to break this united front of Hoover and the bosses, Green, Woll and the labor fakers against the Soviet Union and thus against the immediate and ultimate interests of the American working masses.

The workers, organized and unorganized, have a common interest in a struggle against the capitalists and their tools. To make unemployment relief mean anything, the workers must fight for the shorter workday, the 40 hour and five day week; for the abolition of the speed-up; for work or compensation at the cost of the employers and the government, to be administered by the workers' committees and organizations; for the extension of large-scale credits to the Soviet Union by the U. S. government.

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## 20,000 Rush Ford's Plant for Work

DETROIT—Twenty thousand unemployed men gathered at the gates of Henry Ford's River Rouge plant were brutally dispersed by police who hurled tear gas bombs and laid about them with clubs. Eyewitnesses reported scores injured. Three of the jobless were arrested.

Rumors spread throughout Detroit that Ford would hire thousands of men. At 6 p. m. crowds were in front of the Ford gates, pushing to the front in a long weary vigil which they hoped would reward them with work the next morning. Monday morning they were told that the rumor was a fake. Hungry and desperate, the shivering thousands refused to leave the Rouge gates.

Hundreds of police reserves were rushed to the plant when the crowd grew angry at the deception. The jobless stormed the steel fence protecting the plant, smashing it underfoot and assailed the employment office, breaking windows and hurling missiles.

Mounted police rode ruthlessly through the ranks of the unemployed, beating with their clubs and hurling gas bombs.

# Toothless Foster Silent at Party Plenum

Thursday, April 3rd marked the ending of the Plenum of the Communist Party. It can be described as the dullest, most inane and valueless Party gathering ever held in its entire history. At the opening of the Plenum a cable (where have we heard of this before?) arrived from Moscow, stating that the thesis on the economic and political situation in American was unsatisfactory and had to be revised. So discussion on the political questions was postponed till the end of the Plenum and the thesis could be changed.

The Plenum proceeded to occupy itself with lengthy and wordy general discussions. The floor was occupied largely by Johnstone, Browder and the Comintern representatives. The Plenum delegates were made up of fourth-raters. Never was the level so low.

Wm. Z. Foster did not so much as open his mouth during the sessions. He declared that he had left his teeth at the dentist! Maybe it was just as well.

The only opposition that showed itself in any way at the Plenum came from Fred Biedenkapp (ye gods and little fishes!) who had certain objections to offer on the trade union policy. Yet even this opposition, in a gathering of mediocres, was not permitted to express himself before the enlarged session but only in closed executive session...The Plenum goes down as the low-water mark in Party history and activities.

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## Rally Workers on May Day

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etc., for the unrestricted right of press speech and assemblage; for the extension of large-scale credits to the Soviet Union by the U. S. government. These and like demands form a base for a united struggle and demonstration of workers of all political and economic views on May Day.

## For a United Front

The policy of the official Communist Party in the United States, as led by Foster, Minor, Bedacht, et al unfortunately sees in May Day only a Communist demonstration. There persists the false conception that the mass of workers in the United States will rally on May Day under the leadership of the Communist Party. This by no means represents the actual development of the mass of American workers at the present time. The united front still remains one of the main levers by which the Communists will rally the workers to its banner.

Our aim on May Day should be to draw every worker into a common movement against capitalist rule and for specific demands. For the Communist Party to refuse to enter into or develop a united front movement for May Day is to limit sharply the mobilization of the workers' forces for that day. This course is wrong narrow, sectarian and has the result to divide, not to unite, the masses in a common fight against capitalism. May Day draws near, but there is still time for a broader movement. We call upon the official Communist Party to act accordingly. The Communist League (Opposition) at these conferences will work for a May Day mobilization on the above basis.

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DETROIT—Patternmakers of the Kettwell Co. have won a strike against wage reductions.

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