
No Postponement of May 30th Convention is Sentiment as Farmer-Labor Delegates Meet

by William F. Dunne

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ST. PAUL, Minn., March 9th [1924].— A canvass of the delegations here from the states where Farmer-Labor Parties are organized and functioning shows unanimous sentiment for the May 30th conference. From Washington comes William Bouck, national chairman of the Farmer-Labor Party and head of the Progressive Farmers organization in his own state; John C. Kennedy of the Washington state Farmer-Labor Party; from Montana, Charles Taylor, editor of *Producers News*; and Budden from Nebraska. J. Beebe and W.H. Green from South Dakota, Tom Ayres and Alice Lorraine Daly, and from North Dakota, Dad Walker and H.R. Martinson. New York is represented by Campbell, of the Buffalo Labor Party. Joseph Manley is here for the Federated Farmer-Labor Party. These men and women speak for the Farmer-Labor organizations in their respective states and every one of them has come pledged to work and fight against postponement of the May 30th convention. A panorama of the Northwestern agricultural area and the conditions obtained there is contained in the statements given by these militants in outlining their position on May 30 as against July 4th.

They feel that they cannot agree to further delay, and express the wishes of their state organizations. H.R. Martinson, for instance, secretary of the Farmer-Labor Party of North Dakota, president of the Fargo Trades and Labor Council, states

that a year ago the railway unions in this territory were for a farmer-labor party. They went to the Non-Partisan League conference believing that it would form such an organization but were disappointed and they are now solidly behind the recently formed North Dakota Farmer-Labor Party.

Both Martinson and Dad Walker agree that only for lack of finance due to the poverty stricken condition of unions and farmers the complete organization of North Dakota would be an easy accomplishment. "We are forced to delay organization work, except what can be done by correspondence until the cows come in fresh and the hens begin to lay," said Martinson.

On record for a farmer-labor party in North Dakota is Senator Frasier, in a letter which Dad Walker has brought to this conference and which reads as follows:

Judging from the developments that are coming out of the investigations here I do not know but what the time is ripe for such a movement and with good chances for success in the coming election.

Numerous influential farmers now state officials have endorsed the Farmer-Labor Party and promised to organize their counties, according to Martinson and Walker. "We can absolutely count on 80,000 votes for a Farmer-Labor program and candidates, which is enough to put us in the position of the second party in the state at least," said

Dad Walker.

The same story of lack of finance is told by Tom Ayres, who tells of a meeting of a hundred farmers recently which he addressed and who emptied their pockets for organization work.

The total was less than \$9.00. "Most of the farmers in my state are desperate and have lost hope in everything," says Ayres. "They talk more about buying rifles and ammunition than they do about detailed organization work, but with a national farmer-labor organization launched they will begin to hope and work."

The practical nature of the problem with which the delegates have come to deal is shown by the fact that they are engaged no longer in estimating and weighing sentiment for a national mass, class party, but are talking of what the conference can do to solve the technical matters of finance and organization.

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