As a result of the Chicago convention, which overwhelmingly followed the Communist lead, the Federated Farmer-Labor Party was formed. Although this organization occupied the center position in the American worker movement, and led in the struggle everywhere for the upbuilding of local and state parties, it was not possible for it to create as yet the centralized national party we unite organizationally, all the forces of rebellion against the capitalist parties. It therefore set itself to the task hitherto carried on principally by the Workers Party, to build the United Front, to bring all the farmer-labor forces together into one party for the 1924 campaign.

Rebuilding the United Front

To this end, negotiations were entered into with the various groups of farmer-laborites throughout the country, particularly with the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party which had elected two United States Senators. In November, a conference was held in St. Paul, in which the Communists participated with the representatives of six or seven parties, at which the conference agreed to call a national convention to unite all groups for the 1924 campaign, and which elected an Arrangement Committee to carry out the campaign.

The call for a convention on May 30, 1924, at St. Paul, to unify the organized workers and farmers against the capitalist parties, struck a responsive chord among the masses. A great swing toward the St. Paul Committee, the idea was everywhere. The idea was to win the country. Union after union endorsed it, state and local parties swung into line one after another, and St. Paul (with the Communists participating) was May 26th. La Follette made another attempt to split St. Paul, with a letter denouncing the convention because of the participation of the Communists. In spite of all the sabotage, there was a great convention of 600 delegates met in St. Paul on June 17th. And here, too, the struggle for unity and for protection of the whole movement against treason, fell to the lot of the Communists. The convention was sharply divided on the question of support of La Follette, and on the question of the immediate organization of the Workers party. The Communists united the convention through an agreement which provided a class-struggle program of immediate demands, stop-

ping far short of Communism, and for the organization of a labor party which should definitely organize the Farmer-Labor Party nationally after the elections.

On the issue of La Follette, the Workers Party, through the William Z. Foster led, made the following statement which crystallized and typified its whole fight for unity and against the Workers Party, as if it were to run as the Farmer-Labor candidate, to accept that party's platform and its campaign funds.

The convention unanimously nominated Dungan McDonald, a coal miner, for president, and William Bouck, a farmer, for vice-president, and instructed its Committee to negotiate with the Cleveland conference on the question of a united list.

The Cleveland Betrayal

On July 4th, the Conference for Progressive Political Action met in Cleveland. It rejected all proposals of cooperation from St. Paul, refusing to seat William Hohman, an ardent supporter of La Follette, because he had participated at St. Paul. It succeeded completely to keep La Follette out of the Cleveland convention, which was held on May 30, 1924.

Communists Fight for Unity

In the entire struggle it was only the Communists who fought throughout for unity, and with the conscious aim of clearing the splitting desires of the labor bureaucrats and capitalist politicians could be combated. They made compromises over all questions except principle—and they stood "as a rock" (to quote the words of a non-communist participant) for the complete break with the capitalist parties.

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A national conference was called in Chicago, July 10th, at which William Z. Foster was named for president, and Ben Gitlow for vice-president. The National Committee of the Farmer Labor Party decided on the same day, to withdraw the candidacies of McDonald and Bouck, and adopted a declaration calling upon all adherents of the Farmer Labor program to withdraw their support of the Workers' Party. This statement was signed by Alex Howat, chair- man, A. C. Hathaway, secretary, Alfred Knut- sen, Scott Wilkins and Joseph Manley, mem- bers. Alice Daly, of South Dakota, declined to sign, and William Mahoney, the remaining member, had resigned.

Thus has the alignment taken place for the 1924 presidential election campaign. The issues are clear. William Z. Foster, the can- didate of the Workers Party, running on the platform of the dictatorship of the working class against the dictatorship of the capitalist class in the campaign. Neither Mr. Gompers nor Mr. Morrison feel the slightest responsibility for the organization of the steel workers. They have not turned a hand over, either to help or to see that the campaign was conducted in a vigorous fashion. The same is true of nearly all of the Internationals involved.

Neither Mr. A. F. of L nor the Internationals have put any organizers in the field. They let the full burden of the campaign fall upon the steel fund. Not content with that they have, moreover, designated the only large group of steel workers with fossils altogether incompetent to act as organizers. At one time there were a dozen organized in the field. These received $250 per month, with $7.00 per day expense, or in other words $460 per month for full time or- ganizers. At present, the campaign being an admitted failure, there are only four men in the field. With few exceptions the organizers engaged in the work have looked upon their jobs as sinecures and have acted accordingly.

The Money Wasted to Organize 200 Men

The campaign, such as it was, has been con- ducted chiefly in Chicago, Cleveland, and Bethlehem, a little work also being done in Buffalo. This resulted in complete failure, due to the antiquated and spiritless methods em- ployed. At no point was enough grip secured in the industry to make a breach. Everything was on a go-between basis. The total number of workers signed up throughout the campaign in all the districts did not exceed 200 at the very outside. Such is the ridiculous showing made by the great American Federation of Labor, with its corps of highly paid organizers, after a year's "work" and the spending of many thousands of dollars — a maximum of 200 steel workers who have been coaxed, cajoled, or kidded into joining the unions.

During the existence of the American Fed- eration of Labor there have been many glaring examples of failure in organization work. Time and again the conservative leaders of the unions have demonstrated that they do not un- derstand the first principles of mass organiza- tion. But the so-called steel organizing cam- paign easily tops the list of such failures. It is the most pitiful example of impotency and in- competency, that the labor movement of this country has yet seen.

But, characteristically, Hannan and his as- sociates have taken no interest in the failure of the iron and steel workers. They have the assurance to come out and make the claim that the recent introduction of the eight hour day in the steel industry was due to their efforts. They say that Gary was afraid of their organization campaign and in- troduced the eight hour day to keep them off. Many mean things have been said about Gary, but to accuse him of being afraid of the spine- less, visionless, organization campaign now be- ing carried on by the A. F. of L. in the steel industry is ridiculous. About the only senti- ment that Gary or any other militant capitalist could feel toward such faint efforts as were put forth by the unions in the present campaign is contempt.

Empty Boasts and Empty Treasury

Even before the campaign began, the agitation for the eight hour day, which developed out of the big strike and which had seized upon a wide breadth of public opinion, had reached the point where the eight hour day had been de- termined upon by the steel barons. For the men in charge of the present campaign to try to cover up their incompetency by claiming credit for the eight hour day in the steel industry, would be a farce if it were not so tragic.

For 25 years, or over since the loss of the great Homestead strike, the conservative lead- ers of the labor movement have failed utterly in the task of organizing the great army of steel workers. Time after time they made efforts, only to still further discredit the unions by showing their weakness. Then, in 1919, a few radicals managed to take a hand in the work, and to apply modern methods, with the result that something substantial was accom- plished. Those who are incurably optimistic thought that perhaps the Gompers machine had learned something from the lessons of the last great struggle, but the bureau- crats have proved themselves totally incapable of so doing. The present organizing campaign in the steel industry is just as antiquated and futile as any that have preceded it under con- servative leadership.

The great steel fund has been wasted and the workers are entirely without organization. And it is safe to say that the conservative lead- ers will never be able to organize them. The job is entirely beyond their comprehension and ability. Only revolutionists can accomplish it. The organization of the steel industry awaits the day when the revolutionary forces are de- veloped to the point where the abundant resources to put on the necessary campaign. This day will come much sooner than many expect.