

---

# National Farmer-Labor Meet Plans Made: Include-All June 17 Call is Agreed On: Expect Thousands of Delegates at Farmer-Labor Meet

by William F. Dunne

Published in *The Daily Worker* [Chicago], v. 1, no. 363 (March 13, 1924), pp. 1-2.

ST. PAUL, Minn., Mar. 12 [1924].— After considerable discussion the call for the June 17th convention to organize a national Farmer-Labor Party, which will wage a vigorous campaign in the coming national elections, was adopted by the St. Paul Conference of Farmer-Labor delegates here.

The only opposition to the call came from the handful of delegates who represented a negligible following in Illinois. William E. Rodriguez, Gifford Ernst, Robert M. Buck, J.G. Brown, and William V. Mahoney, of Washington, DC, whom everybody believes to be the undercover agent of Samuel Gompers, constituted most of the opposition to this call.

## Call All-Inclusive.

The delegates are going back to their respective Farmer-Labor Parties imbued with confidence that the June 17th convention will be the biggest gathering of progressive workers and farmers this country has yet seen. The call adopted by the conference is an all-inclusive one and invites the labor and the political groups of the workers and farmers the country over.

Mr. Mahoney, of Washington, who represented at this gathering "the Unity Committee of Washington, DC," a creature of his own making,

was the leading opponent of this call. Brown, Buck, Rodriguez, and Ernst of Illinois, in cooperation with Mr. Teigen, Magnes Johnson's secretary, made repeated but vain assaults against the call being so inclusive.

## Workers Party the Target.

The target of the attack launched by the Rodriguez faction was the Workers Party and the Federated Farmer-Labor Party. The delegates overwhelmingly defeated these disruptive efforts of the disturbers.

Rodriguez and his followers were given all the time they wanted to make their attacks. Mr. Rodriguez, in the course of one of his speeches read for more than half an hour extracts from articles and manifestos that appeared from time to time in *The Daily Worker*.

## Stuff Too Old For Capitalists.

Rodriguez made no headway at all with his arguments. At the close of his speech a reporter for one of the capitalist newspapers, *The Pioneer Press*, remarked: "I believe he made a lot of converts for the Communists."

Buck and Brown followed along the same

lines that Rodriguez did. They made a desperate effort to stampede the delegates by painting crimson pictures of a red menace. This did not take at all with the delegates, particularly the farm delegates, who time and again wanted to end the discussion.

### **Manley Makes Able Reply.**

Joseph Manley, National Secretary of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, then took the floor and in one of the ablest speeches delivered to the conference completely disposed of all the arguments made by Rodriguez and the others.

The welcome that Manley's speech received showed what sorry figures Buck, Brown and Rodriguez cut before the conference. The arguments of the latter were so childish that even the capitalist press did not fall for them and discontinued giving them the prominence which their authors had hoped would be accorded them.

### **Communists Defended.**

Delegate W.H. Green, from Nebraska, ridiculed the fears of the Illinois faction with considerable effect. He was followed by Delegate R.D. Cramer, editor of the *Minneapolis Labor Review*, and a member of the Minnesota delegation.

Cramer delivered a brilliant speech. Point by point he took up the objections, insinuations, and lies of the obstructionists, and mercilessly tore them to shreds.

"You people," said Cramer, "hold up Minnesota as the model you wish to be guided by, yet you ask and insist that this conference do the thing Minnesota has refused to do, namely, exclude any group of workers that will go along with the program. This all-inclusive policy is responsible for our success in Minnesota."

### **Communists Are Dynamic Force.**

Cramer went on to shell the arguments of the obstructionists with deadly effect and said: "You want to exclude the elements that are the dynamos of the movement, and without which no movement can live and be successful. We have to choose between being successful and being respectable, and you want us to choose respectability. These arguments of yours are the arguments used by Daugherty, Denby, and the rest of the 100 Percenters, before they were using all their time to wipe off the stain of oil and dodge the penitentiary.† These arguments of yours would be all right in a convention of Republicans or Democrats, but they are out of place in a gathering of farmers and workers who are here to build a defense against a common enemy. Let's start to build and quit acting like small editions of Elbert H. Gary."

Tremendous applause followed Cramer's speech, and the previous question on the convention call was carried.

### **Teigen's Last Effort.**

The question was reopened, however, in order to permit Teigen to stage the last effort of the obstructionists by introducing an amendment to eliminate all national parties from, the call.

This amendment was defeated. A committee on arrangements was then elected and the conference adjourned.

### **Negligible Opposition Discredited.**

The Illinois malcontents have been thoroughly trounced and discounted at this conference. They have declared that they will not attend the June 17th convention. The numerical strength of this group is negligible. It was obvious to everybody at the outset of the conference that

†- Reference is to the Teapot Dome oil scandal, in which the nation's political elite was then embroiled.

their sole object in coming was to make war on the Workers Party.

The delegates are convinced that the only purpose of these obstructionists was not constructive, and was directed at breaking up the conference through an attack on the Communists.

### **Expect Monster Convention.**

The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Federation will open its sessions today [March 12, 1924]. There is very little doubt as to its action on the call. The call and the basis of representation will be adopted by the Federation, and it will join immediately in calling the June 17th convention.

It is estimated that 5,000 delegates will be present at the June convention. The basis of representation decided upon calls for 1 delegate for each vote which a state has in the Electoral College and 1 vote for each 5,000 votes cast in any state in the election of 1922 for a "progressive can-

dicate."

Five votes are allowed for each national political organization which subscribes to the platform. One delegate from any state political party not legally recognized and 1 delegate bearing credentials from any group of 25 or more farmers will be permitted.

### **LaFollette's Manager Speaks.**

Before the conference adjourned John F. Sinclair, a northwestern bankrupt banker, who recently returned from Europe after making an investigation of the economic and political conditions in various continental countries, was permitted to address the delegates. Mr. Sinclair is recognized to be LaFollette's manager in Minnesota. In his address to the delegates Mr. Sinclair praised the Soviet government and the Russian Communist Party. He urged the conference to include all

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

*Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing Corvallis, OR, 2007. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.*