
300 Attend FLP Meet In Minnesota: Obstructionists Still Battle the June 17th Convention

by William F. Denne

Published in *The Daily Worker* [Chicago], v. 1, no. 365 (March 15, 1924), pp. 1-2.

ST. CLOUD, Minn., Mar. 14 [1924].— The convention of the official Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, the Pike Organization, went into session here today with approximately 300 delegates in attendance.

State Chairman F.A. Pike made the opening address of the convention. It was a long, rambling speech, made up of timeworn platitudes and a somewhat odious attempt to take a slam at the more progressive elements, without actually calling names. Pike is an unprepossessing individual who reminds one of a fat bleached toad.

Pike's Rough Stuff.

Following the conclusion of his address, in which the mention of US Senator LaFollette was all that brought applause, Pike himself nominated a chairman and thereby aroused a storm of protest. He had moved that Baldus of the now defunct Non-Partisan League be made temporary chairman, but after some bitter debate a substitute motion throwing open the nominations was carried and David Evans, the Farmer-Labor Party's first candidate for Governor, was elected.

It was moved, seconded, and carried that each district — there are 10 Congressional Districts in Minnesota — select one of the delegation as a member of the Credentials Committee, and that the convention adjourn for one hour.

There is a bitter hostility evident in the convention between the Non-Partisan League officials,

who lost out yesterday when their followers voted to join the Farmer-Labor Federation, and the labor group from the Twin Cities and other labor centers.

With what strength they can rally in this convention, which is largely a convention of individuals and not of organizations, the obstructionists, who have been on the job in every one of the conferences so far, are going to try and stage an 11th hour rally and prevent if possible the endorsement of the June 17th [1924] convention, and other decisions of the Farmer-Labor Federation.

In the long run it will make little difference what this gathering does, because it has no economic basis — the unions, cooperatives, and other organization of the workers and farmers being represented by the Farmer-Labor Federation.

Publish Weekly.

It would be the crowning evidence of unity if the convention call and June 17th convention were endorsed here, but if sabotage prevents it the farmer-labor government of Minnesota and the Northwest will have suffered but little damage. One of the most disgusting incidents here, however, is the fact that a few labor men, former radicals, are double-crossing their own delegations from the Twin Cities, and not only voting with the reactionaries, but aiding them to organize their forces. Delegate Vandenberg, of the Painters' Union, of Minneapolis, and Delegate Call Par-

sons, of the World War Veterans, of the same city, are two of the traitors whose actions are most obnoxious.

The Farmer-Labor Federation, in its final session Thursday night [March 13, 1924], decided not to endorse candidates, but to allow members to file in the primaries. William Mahoney, of St. Paul, was elected chairman, and Ralph Harmon, secretary-treasurer.

It was decided to publish a weekly paper devoted to the interest of the farmer-labor movement as soon as arrangements can be made.

The State Committee elected by the Federation consists of 2 members from each Congressional District. The last session was a long and trying one and marked by constant efforts of the obstructionists to destroy the unity effected by the fusion of the farmers of the league with the Federation.

Women on Committee.

David Evans was made permanent chairman and Ralph Harmon, permanent secretary. Both elections were unanimous.

The Resolutions Committee was selected in the same manner as the Credentials Committee, with the addition of 3 women, among them Mrs. I.G. Scott, wife of Minneapolis labor alderman.

The desperate condition of the *Minnesota*

Daily Star was brought to the attention of the convention by a report of the Minneapolis Trades and Labor Assembly, which showed that something like \$250,000 was needed immediately to save the paper.

The convention refused to assume responsibility for financing the *Star* after a delegate had asked, "Is the policy of the *Star* the same now as when it started?"

Insistent demand for some sort of a financial report from Chairman Pike brought him back to the platform, where he spent an embarrassing half hour disclaiming any knowledge of the financial condition of the organization.

The Resolutions Committee has not reported yet and the convention is simply killing time. There are enough contentious matters, including the endorsement of the June 17th convention and the matter of a platform, to keep the convention in session until the early morning hours, if the expected attempt to prevent endorsement of these measures is made.

• • • • •

At press time a report was received from St. Cloud that the Farmer-Labor Convention had unanimously endorsed the call for the June 17th Convention.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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