

LA FOLLETTE ADRIPT

By JAY LOVESTONE.

UNLESS all the press reports now being circulated by La Follette's associates are just that much smoke screen to hide the real plans of the Wisconsin Senator, one can safely assume, in analyzing the present political situation, that "Fighting Bob" has at last made up his mind to continue his fight against the big business interests with practically the same ineffective weapons he has been using in the last twenty years.

At no time were conditions more appropriate for organizing a powerful movement of political opposition to the controlling financial and industrial interests of the country. Only recently La Follette's closest co-worker declared that "all hell can't stop the organization of a third party now." Yet, at the moment of action, at the period of decision, La Follette tells the world, thru devious channels, it is true, that the best that one should expect from him under these circumstances making aggressive action against the enemies of the masses so urgent, is his running as an independent candidate.

It is evident, that La Follette is still adrift. He is floundering. La Follette has been in politics too long to take seriously what some of his agents would have the world believe, that entering the presidential lists in this fashion, will net more votes or be conducive to the welfare of the big movement against reaction. The Wisconsin Senator knows only too well the power and value of organization to base his policies on such untenable notions. There can be only one reason for La Follette's refusal to lead in

the most effective manner a movement which will tend to smash the organized political machinery of the most powerful reactionary interests. La Follette in his long career in politics has never dared to make a definite and sharp break, has never taken a fundamentally radical step against the capitalist class. LaFollette, at his best, has been, and still is, only a spokesman for the middle class. Today, as yesterday, LaFollette symbolizes and personifies all the shortcomings, all the hesitating wavering, characteristics so inherent in the middle class.

No matter what LaFollette's final decision will be it is clearer than ever that the working and farming masses are confronted by a two-fold task. The city workers, in a closely-knit alliance, with the poor farmers must get together to line up for a gigantic battle against the big reactionary capitalist interests, the greatest masses possible. There is only one way of doing this and that is for these exploited and dispossessed masses to join in the organization of a Farmer-Labor Party genuinely independent from and unalterably opposed to the two big capitalist parties, a party organized on a national class basis. LaFollette's wavering at this critical moment only proves the Communist contention that the movement of revolt against the capitalist overlords stands the best chance of success only if it is actively led by the working and farming classes as classes. As a matter of fact, the LaFollettes, the Norrises, the Wheelers, and the other numerous lesser lights and satellites of "progressivism" will move forward and at-

tack, even feebly, the powerful business interests only to the extent that they are forced to do so by the organized pressure of the masses.

Even a fifth class grammar school observer of politics knows that the time to crystalize the sentiment of opposition, the moment best suited for organizing an effective opposition to so skilled and well-disciplined an enemy as the one confronting the working masses of the country, is before the election. The election campaign itself affords an unexcelled means of uniting the masses and setting up a permanent political organization of the workers and farmers against the exploiters. To refuse to set up a machinery for the campaign is the best way of throwing away all the opportunities that the election struggle affords. It is unpardonable political stupidity and veritable political suicide to hold off organization until the enthusiasm has waned, until the energy of the struggle is dissipated, until the election of a reactionary capitalist champion as president is made sure by the employment of useless weapons against his class and his party.

LaFollette's hesitation, LaFollette's refusal to move forward, LaFollette's tendency to avoid giving open battle to the big capitalist class interests that he has threatened to declare war upon, only make more urgent than ever the need for the working and farming classes to unite their forces for definite, decisive action against the employing class, thru the organization of a mighty national Farmer-Labor Party, a class Farmer-Labor Party, at the St. Paul convention.