

EDITORIAL PAGE OF THE MONTANA NONPARTISAN NOVEMBER 30, 1918

THE Montana Nonpartisan

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF NONPARTISAN LEAGUE IN MONTANA

Published Weekly at Great Falls, Montana by the Montana Nonpartisan. Entered as second class matter, November 30, 1918, at Great Falls, Montana, under the act of March 3, 1879. Place of Publication Great Falls, Montana, November 30, 1918.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR

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CARRYING ON.

The Montana Nonpartisan with this issue again takes up the burden of carrying to the members and friends, and we hope the enemies, of the league through this State the message of the organizations. We have been forced to suspend for two weeks owing to regulations of the pulp and paper department, which advised the starting of no new papers during the period of the war and requested the curtailment of those already in existence, except, apparently, the big metropolitan press. We shall now proceed to publish again and hope to make the Nonpartisan a permanent feature. The members have expressed their desire for this publication in no uncertain terms, both by petition and private correspondence, for which we thank them. We shall continue to "carry on," doing our part as well as we may in the great campaign which shall give to the people of Montana control of the law-making machinery two years hence.

THE BILLINGS GAZETTE SAYS AMEN.

The Billings Gazette in a recent editorial undertook to preach the funeral sermon of the Nonpartisan league. It was quite eloquent and satisfactory as a weep-fest and lacked only one thing so far as we can see, the corpse was absent without leave.

After reviewing the situation very carefully and hopefully, the Gazette reaches the conclusion that "There will be few tears shed over the passing of the league as a would-be political factor in Montana, to which pious hope it says, Amen; quite sanctimoniously. Brother, you are wrong again. There has been buckets, oceans, oodles of tears spilt over this, weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth has been something frightful, for you state the trouble correctly but draw the wrong inference. It is that very "Passing of the league" from a propaganda stage into a political entity in Montana which is causing such dismay in the high places of the Mighty. Those who mistook their class prejudices for intelligence and fought the farmers' movement with abuse, slander and misinformation, are slightly upset over the result, thank you.

For the rest, the corpse is resting quite easily and a thoro' good night was reported this morning. Seventeen members in the legislature, three senators and over 100 county officers, 25,000 members, and still they come—um, some corpse; say Amen again, brother. And in conclusion, we don't know how the rest view it, but if we had assisted at the defeat of one of the most intelligent women in Montana, if we had supported those who tarred and feathered citizens for their political opinions, if we had attacked all who were opposed to copper, if we had striven to block the spread of democracy amongst the mass of the people, we would at least keep still after the deed was done, lest some amongst the generous minded abused, remember it. Wonder the Gazette doesn't tumble.

THE FIRST CONVENTION.

The gathering together of the state executive boards in convention at St. Paul December 3 is an affair of great moment to the league. A good deal of abuse has been handed around about the autocratic management of the league and the gang press has never ceased to wonder where the dues paid by the members go. They have persistently said that A. C. Townley was the recipient and that most of the money was spent on his wife, in fact, being themselves corrupt and debased to the last degree, having no ethics other than those of the jungle, which are summed up in that delightful excuse for all manner of skulduggery, "Get the mon," they are absolutely incapable of comprehending the mind of a man whose ideals of social progress are such that "getting the mon" for personal pleasure is positively abhorrent. They could forgive Townley if he were only a dreamer, but what hurts is that he has made dreams come true, and placed North Dakota on the map as a real commonwealth, also that 12 other states are in the process of setting their various "old gangs" once and for all. With \$16 bi-annual dues, and a vast deal of horse sense, this has been accomplished.

The convention will show HOW the money was spent, since every thinking person knows that carrying on an organization the size of the league is WHERE it was spent. The examination of the books and accounts however, will settle that thing up in proper shape. Problems of future organization methods and modes, are also to be discussed, and the league position made plain in relation to the vast social developments confronting us. Altogether it will be an interesting and absorbing event.

WOMEN STILL WAITING.

The suffrage amendment still waits to become part of the constitution. A remarkable situation indeed. Here is a nation making a roar throughout the civilized world of its devotion to democracy, peering its world neighbors with almost uncivil insistence, to kindly note that it is the head and front of the legions of Demos, if not the very fountain head and source of government of the people, by the people and for the people, and still denying to its women what Russia, Germany, Britain, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Finland, Scandinavia and a dozen other "backward" nations have already granted them.

Some say the Solid South is responsible for it, because the southern women will not tolerate admitting to equal suffrage rights their colored sisters. Others, that senate and congress realize that the sentiment of the country is opposed as a whole to women participating in the business of politics—out of chivalrous regard for their tender feelings we understand—while still others maintain that even if the women had the ballot they wouldn't know what to do with it, and therefore should not be trusted with such a dangerous weapon any more than a three-year-old should be given an automatic firearm.

All of which moulted piffle has been shot to pieces so often and so long ago outside the confines of this nation, that to discuss it would be to dignify it. It seems to us that the real reason behind it all, is that ever since the founding of political democracy—which at best is a mere shadow of the real thing—a struggle has gone on between two groups, one to exclude as many as possible from the business of balloting, the other to include the largest possible number. English folkmoet, willangemote, parliament, French commune, states general, chamber: American county, state assembly and congress have each suffered from this scourge. Always has a small coterie sought to hold the machinery of government as a mere weapon with which to hedge their property rights about with impregnable defenses. Always have they therefore inflicted as limited a suffrage upon the rest of the nation as was humanly possible, and woman being the last to emerge from the status of personal property and therefore the lawyers would say, sufficiently protected by law, in that category, naturally are the last to receive recognition as people.

Universal suffrage, regardless of sex, seems to the great property owners like putting forth upon an uncharted sea, studded with submerged rocks which seem to simply ache to wreck the ship of "special privilege," for, once admit ALL to the business of voting and a little education of the masses would mean the end once and for all of the rule of the few against the many. This is the source of opposition. That the woman's movement itself is rent by the same quarrel does not matter, woman should at once be plucked from the degrading status of megalomaniacs and enfranchised with all adults. We hope the amendment will carry.

AMERICA'S CHOICE TODAY.

With the fall of the ancient governments which rested like an incubus upon the peoples of the central empires has come, not merely political change, but revolution; and revolution which seems as yet to assume no final and ordered form, but to run from one fluid change to another, until thoughtful men are forced to ask themselves with what governments, and of what sort, are we about to deal in the making of the covenants of peace? Excesses accomplish nothing. Unhappy Russia has furnished abundant proof of that. Disorder immediately defeats itself. If excesses should occur, if disorder should for a time raise its head, a sober second thought will follow and a day of constructive action, if we help and do not hinder.—President Wilson, in his address to Congress, November 11.

THE WAR ENDS.

It is finished. Furl the bloody banners of battle, away with trumpet-call and rolling drum, strik' off the ensanguined garments of world strife and turn again to progress. The sombre shadow of the Beast has obscured the sun of day long enough. It is finished. Tenderly bury the unnumbered dead, bind up the gaping wounds of those who live, assuage their grief. Let the merry grinding of the plow replace the rumble of the red-tongued guns, let there be life where yesterday there was only death. Away with it. It is finished.

So it should be throughout the earth, so is the wish of all forward looking folk, so it shall be if in the great tussle now toward, the progressive forces of the world emerge triumphant. Let us take heed tho, lest those dark forces who today are plotting the continuation of the war spirit and all it entails, outwit us.

They seek to rivet the yoke more tightly upon the people of the world, they would rob us of the fruits for which so great a price has been paid, they still think in terms of property rights, to the exclusion of human rights. Already a large group has disclaimed their glowing promises made when they needed the co-operation of the working people. Self-determination of nations, no annexations and no indemnities and the participation of laboring folk in the peace councils are already forgotten, and they are busy with plans to rearrange territory and influence in such a manner that in ten years hence we shall see an outbreak similar to that from which we have just emerged. The progressive forces of the continent, amongst which the league is one of the foremost, have a great task ahead, a task which must be brought to a successful conclusion, if all that has been gained in this bloody inferno be not lost forever.

WHO LOST?

Don't think for a minute that it was the league. It must have been someone else. At any rate it was not the farmers. Reviewing the situation as briefly as possible, we find the league entered this campaign two years ago. At that time we did not hold a single office in the state, so you see, we had nothing to lose. It is true, we failed to gain all some of us had hoped for, but we did not LOSE. To lose, we must be worse off than when we started. Are we? If you will look around you will see the OLD GANG is the only one that has the right to lay claim to that distinction.

The league gained over 100 officers in the state. Among these officers there were 20 or more legislators and a supreme court judge. In some counties every officer in the county was elected by the league. In addition to this we are starting this next two years campaign with a membership of over 25,000, over 100 elected officials, a well organized working force, a knowledge of the state and numerous other advantages, none of which we had two years ago.

Attention Butte Miner, Miscellaneous and Helena Independent: We may also serve notice on your working force, such as mobsters, bar-files, gunmen, stool pigeons and some small weekly papers and traveling men—that

WE HAVE JUST BEGUN TO FIGHT.

When anyone ventures the assertion that the farmers are going to quit, it might be well to call to their attention that they have left us no place to quit. When they took away our right to be patriotic and loyal, they took away everything else, not only a place to quit, but all desire to quit. No, the word "QUIT" is not OURS. They are the central powers in this battle, ours is the position of the allies. We may lose a battle, but we will not lose the war.

In our work during the past two years we have had to contend with many abnormal conditions which were tremendously in the favor of the opposition and against us. The last two years, crop conditions were bad, then followed our entry into the war, and on top of this the "flu" epidemic, preventing a speaking campaign. This was followed by a heavy snowstorm on election day over almost the entire state, preventing at least 10,000 league members and 5,000 sympathizers from getting to the polls. These members and sympathizers would have increased the vote of Jeannette Rankin to approximately 40,000, or nearly 40 per cent of the entire vote of the state. This is the actual strength of the league gained in face of the most tremendous campaign of misrepresentation and prejudice, together with extreme abnormal conditions.

So we have a start for the next two years of 100 elected officials, 25,000 seasoned troops, and a well organized working force, driving toward complete state control in 1920. But, on the other hand, we do not anticipate a drought, war or pestilence, followed by a heavy snowstorm on election day. We shall also have the marked advantage of it being presidential election year with a governor and full state ticket to elect.

Taking this all into consideration, we never entered a campaign that held such promise for the farmers as does the next two years in the state of Montana. The many letters coming in to this office assuring us of the determination of the members to follow up what they feel to be a distinct advantage, runs our enthusiasm up to near 100 per cent pressure. So if you feel the same, and we believe you do, we can easily go "over the top" in 1920. How many are ready to renew your pledge "WE'LL STICK"? Have your answer ready when the organizer calls.

With a pledge of unflinching loyalty to you and our cause, I am  
Fraternally yours,  
D. C. DORMAN, State Supt.

The rosy promise of participation by the common people in the peace councils, seems to have gone glimmering with no annexations and no indemnities and also, has anyone seen young Self-determination around anywhere?

The league being dead, rises to remark that the worst is yet to come for the undertakers. There will be some haunting scenes at Helena next session.

Conspiration reigns in the sanctums of the copper press, those ripe old reliable retorts, seditious, disloyalist, and pro-German, have fallen from their high estate. We understand that an extra session of the invisible government is to be called to devise something equally telling to take the place of the dear departed.

The Kaiser having been deposed and his various cousins, grand aunts and "Uncles" twice removed having followed suit, what's the matter with suggesting a permanent vacation to some of our industrial Kaisers.

MINNESOTA ON THE WAY.

It is a glorious victory even if we have failed to oust all of the political barnacles who have stood for re-election upon the debasing and disgusting political trick of "100 per cent Americanism" and a few other like slogans that sullied the Stars and Stripes and makes the true American ashamed of his fellowman. A glorious victory because it shows that Minnesota is coming to its senses at last, and that while we may have to endure a few more years of the special privilege disgrace, the end is in sight, and it will not be long until the people will have a voice in state government. — MESABA (MINN.) ORE.



Some Things To Ponder Over

SEEK RETURN TO PRE-WAR CONDITIONS

The great war has not yet driven from the minds of the political troglodytes who infest the legislative halls the outworn ideas and slogans of the past. They still seek to raise a dust about things of minor importance and to deliberately ignore the real vital and shipen doubly important things of today. They have discovered a new bauble, glittering enough at that; it is "reconstruction." All the little men who sit in the editorial chairs of great dailies and weekly papers, every little, insignificant office hunter, has enlarged upon the "great period of reconstruction just ahead of us," hardly knowing of what they speak and write, for most of them are incapable of reconstructing anything. Question any of them, analyze the editorials and articles and it speedily becomes apparent that for them reconstruction means flopping back to pre-war conditions, simply that and nothing more.

Reaction Not Reconstruction.

This is simply the cry of reaction and not of reconstruction. For instance, under the terrible urge of the great war there was forced, however unwillingly, upon the ruling class of this country the necessity of government control of the railroads. Under the direction of Mr. McAdoo these roads began to be welded into one system. An effort was made to eliminate as much as possible the duplication which was one of the evils of private enterprise, a better system of distributing cars enforced, and what hurt the profiteers most, labor-power was handled with some idea that it was contained in living human creatures and was not a mere senseless commodity like pork, for instance. Wages were not increased, it is true, and the eight-hour day was shot to pieces. We mean that the money wage, altho advanced somewhat, did not begin to equal the sharp rise in the cost of living, hence the standard of living fell. But at that it was better than the conditions prevailing under private control and ownership, a great deal better.

Now comes another advance in rates, coupled with the resignation of Mr. McAdoo and it begins to look as if the junker control of congress is pretty nearly iron-clad. The advance in rates will of course raise a howl from those who use the roads, and it is bringing joy to the "reconstructionists" because it means that their hands will be strengthened in the battle which is bound to come for the return of the roads to private ownership. There is one thing, however, which still stands in their way, the management of the roads and their return to old conditions is absolutely impossible from the point of view of the exploiters until wages shall have been forced down.

They are planning to do this. The labor organizations, fearfully weakened by the war, both by the drafting of most of their best fighting men and by the utter subservience of many leading figures in the Federation to the dictates of capital, are in no shape to resist. The promulgation of the insidious falsehood that labor has no business in politics which has been the great slogan of those controlling the federation, has resulted in the total prostration of organized labor, as such. Well might a great reactionary eastern journal rejoice that "We have no political laborites in this country," and that the American trades unionist votes as a citizen and not as a worker. It is all too true. Labor faces its Armageddon at the hands of "reconstructionists."

Farmers also are in the same boat, altho they have a powerful political organization, the Nonpartisan league, officered and directed by men who have no delusions and see the struggle as it really is. Let the reactionaries control, let them get back the roads, let them once more plant their blood-sucking tentacles deep in the hide of the producer and worse conditions will develop than existed before the war. Modern systems of getting the world's work done depend absolutely upon transportation, the farmer would get no coal, no machinery, no lumber, no one of the thousand things he must use, were it not for transportation, or would he be able to get his products to the markets of the world. The same is true of all industry; who holds the lines of communication in war, reaps the victory, who holds them in peace, dominates the rest of the world. The reactionaries seek to fix themselves again upon the arteries of this system if they can.

Forward, Not Backward.

We have advanced a little step in world progress, a very little step 'tis true. Let us not go back, let us press on. We have, thanks to the war, at last jarred the unutterable self-suf-

iciency of this nation and set it to thinking. We have at last broken out of the swaddling bands of colonial thought and entered into the first phase of a real world nation. Some reactionaries realize that too, but they view it from exactly the opposite direction to that of the radical. They see only the aggrandisement of themselves, they see the Stars and Stripes in the same place as the German eagle, domination of the world; and such a world. A world full of antagonism, of hatred, of fierce and half suppressed rebellions. They see a world of which the center is New York and into whose treasuries flow constant streams of gold from the rest of mankind held in the thrall of low wages and long hours. They are inconceivably stupid, hideously greedy, horribly reactionary. The summum morum of their existence is the extraction of surplus values from the hides of the producing masses, their dream of progress, a swelling pile of gold. It is the work of the progressive forces to hold this thing back, and it is going to be a man's task. Across the water is being hammered into shape, clean and pure, a democracy. Let it never be written in the pages of history that the producing element of America failed their co-workers in the hour of their trial.

BRIT JUNKERS KNOCK WILSON

(From Literary Digest.)

Frankly, there is no person of whom we are so much afraid at this hour as President Wilson, and we say it with a profound respect for his high character and station. Indeed, it is just because we know the independence of his mind and the purity of his purpose that we are afraid of him. President Wilson is an idealist, and idealists are sometimes very dangerous people. The Americans, taken in the mass, are a curious compound of sentimentality and realism. But their president's idealism is an idol of the Theater, and is quite untouched by the realism of the Forum or the Tribe.

Let us consider two or three of the articles of the president's message. Article II runs: "Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas outside territorial waters alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants." The limit of territorial waters is three miles, which was fixed in the time of sailing vessels, or when steam navigation was in its infancy. In these days, when guns have been built to carry 70 miles, and can easily hit a mark at 15 miles, when steam and electricity have developed all kinds of methods of warfare, the three-mile limit would be absurd. It would be necessary to return to the mare clausum for the channel and our coasts. We could never accept this.

President Wilson's message and address ignore the fact that the peace, now slowly emerging from the smoke of the guns, is not the president's peace, and has not been won by the abstract doctrines of democracy or the Utopian propositions of a league of nations, but by the blood and the money of England, France, and Italy, poured out like water during four terrible years. It is true that without the American troops the entente allies could not have turned the tide of war toward the German frontier. But it is equally true that without the four years' fighting by the French, British and Italian armies the present military situation could not have been achieved. President Wilson would be the first to admit this; He must already have realized it. When it comes to the application of abstract principles to concrete details we feel sure that the American president will perceive that some of his propositions or terms of peace can not possibly be accepted by the governments of the allies without the grossest injustice and the gravest injury to their national interests.

There is much talk about the ignorant Russian peasants and their harsh treatment of the ruling classes. Before forming an opinion it is worth while to ask why the peasants are ignorant when these ruling classes did the ruling up to a little over a year ago. If they raised the peasants as beasts of burden only, they can hardly complain much if the beasts bite and kick.

If Colonel Roosevelt is so anxious to denounce something, why not attract his attention to the profiteering packers? The colonel seems to find it difficult to denounce anything of real importance — MILLE LACS (MINN.) NEWS.