

THE PRODUCERS NEWS

A PAPER

OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE

Continuing the OUTLOOK PROMOTER Vol. VI Number 18

VOLUME I.

PLENTYWOOD, SHERIDAN COUNTY, MONTANA, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1918.

NUMBER 36

NORTH DAKOTA READY FOR GREAT REFORMS

Amendments Now Declared Passed Open the Road at Last for Farmer Program

By A. B. Gilbert

The now famous 10 amendments to the constitution of North Dakota, which enable the majority of the voters there to carry out their plans for a better democracy, have passed. This has been officially declared by the state canvassing board.

From the day after election there has been no doubt that the amendments received a majority of the votes cast on them. Final count shows a majority of from 15,000 to 30,000 for each measure in a total vote of less than 90,000. But taking advantage of a court decision in Minnesota to the effect that an amendment to the constitution had to have a majority of all votes cast, the special interests and their press have widely proclaimed the failure of half if not all the amendments in North Dakota. The object of this was to give the people of North Dakota the false impression that the League farmers had rejected their own program. The Minnesota decision, of course, has no bearing in North Dakota, and that state, as well as South Dakota and Wisconsin, have decisions of long standing holding that only a majority of those voting on the measure is needed.

READY FOR REFORM

North Dakota, consequently, is now ready to put into law what has been expressed will of its people for over six years and what venal politicians and cleverly designed constitutional limitations have prevented in law and would have prevented in fact had it not been for the great farmer revolt. In 1912 the voters of North Dakota declared for state-owned elevators and mills by a four to one vote. This was declared unconstitutional. In 1914 they amended the constitution to allow this measure by a four to one vote. This was again thwarted by the politicians. In 1916 they amended the constitution to allow this measure by a four to one vote. This was again thwarted by the holdover senators. In 1918 they amended the constitution to allow this measure by a four to one vote. This was again thwarted by the holdover senators. In 1918 they amended the constitution to allow this measure by a four to one vote. This was again thwarted by the holdover senators.

AMENDMENTS FUNDAMENTAL.

The fundamental character of the amendments which North Dakota is to in-

tiate may be judged from the amendments passed. Important limitations to the organization of co-operative companies are removed. The legislature is allowed to establish a state-managed hail insurance system and to levy a flat land tax on unimproved as well as improved land to cover part of the cost after the precedent set by the Canadian laws. Four of the five judges of the state supreme court are declared necessary to declare a law unconstitutional. A very democratic initiative and referendum has been provided. The methods of amending the constitution are made easier. Another amendment allows the legislature to exempt improvements and personal property from taxation. The debt limit of the state is raised from the absurd limit of \$200,000 to allow for the building of the contemplated state-owned enterprises. The state will be able also, it is thought, to relieve some of the excess interest burden of its farmers by a financial system made possible by this amendment. Another amendment allows the county and city, practically for the first time, to own public utilities and to make improvements by direct labor.

BASIS FOR DECISION

The decision of the canvassing board that all the amendments had passed was based on a thorough and conclusive opinion by Attorney General William Langer. He cites, for instance, a decision of the North Dakota supreme court written by Judge Spaulding in 1908, or seven years before the Nonpartisan league was conceived of, holding that the phrase of the constitution, "all the legal votes cast," means all the votes cast on the amendment. The court held that no legal vote could be cast relative to a measure before the people for adoption or rejection except it was cast for or against the amendment.

In other words, no vote cast for governor or any other candidate or measure could possibly be a vote against the amendment under consideration. Such is the only reasonable and democratic interpretation that could be put on the phrase. What the special interests put over in Minnesota, on the other hand, which is made so much of by the press, is well illustrated by the vote there on the initiative and referendum in 1916. Although this measure received a majority of three to one of those voting, it did not become a law. Again in 1918 the people returned a majority for prohibition, but this again failed because of the absurd court ruling in that privilege-ridden state.

500,000.00 FOR MONTANA HIGHWAYS

Will Give Employment to Unskilled Labor. Hoped to Complete for Use in Hauling Next Fall's Crop

Dec. 18.—In a communication received from the office of public works, federal department of agriculture, by the state highway commission, it is predicted that an excess of \$500,000 will be expended for highway construction purposes in the United States during the year 1919. This prediction is based upon the fact that federal funds already available, which will be made available by July 1, 1919, will aggregate \$50,000,000, of which amount not over \$10,000,000 has been expended.

The vigorous prosecution of a public improvement work is regarded as an effective means of insuring employment particularly to unskilled labor, in the transition period from war to peace. As the benefits of improved highways are immediate to say nothing of the great desirability of having labor employed and money active, it is believed to be better to go ahead with road work wherever it is needed rather than wait for a period of low prices.

By July 1, 1919, there will be available from the federal good roads fund approximately \$588.00 for expenditure on Montana highways, and it is the hope of the commission to have construction work so far advanced as to permit marketing the 1919 crops over the improved highways.

ELGIE ASSAULTS OLE LARSON AT DOOLEY

When an issue for Bill Elgie and battery on Ole Larson, of Peter Larson, Elgie, it appeared that Larson in the H. M.

FACING A NEW JOB



FARMERS TO MEET AT GREAT FALLS MUST APPLY FOR LOANS BY FEB.

EQUITY CONVENTION AND CO-OPERATORS' CONGRESS WILL MEET AT GREAT FALLS ON JANUARY 20.

Farmers and men interested in the development of Montana farms and farmers will gather at Great Falls on January 20, for the purpose of attending sessions of the Equity Convention and Co-Operators' Congress which will cover a period of five days. The opening session of the Co-Operators' Congress, which occurs on the evening of January 20th, will be dignified with the presence of Governor Stewart. A special program for that evening has been arranged and it is expected that the balance of the session will also prove highly interesting.

It is claimed by those in charge of the Congress that it will be attended this year by at least fifteen hundred representative farmers from throughout the state. This increase in attendance over previous years, which has been around the thousand mark, is attributed to the fact that a keen interest is being evinced by the farmer in the governmental program of reconstruction which follows the war.

He knows that he as a farmer has a big task yet before him, he knows that the demands to be made upon him will be many and he wants to learn more about the part he is to play. Knowing this, those placed in charge of the Congress have invited several men of nation-wide renown to appear on the program. These men will talk on different phases of the subject and it is expected that there will be some interesting developments.

Numerous matters of importance to the farmer will be brought up at the annual Equity convention and the membership of that organization is said to be planning to send a strong delegation to the Falls.

It is hoped that the coming congress will meet the mark set by the one held last year which eclipsed all previous efforts and the committee in charge is working hard toward that end.

FRTZ NYQUIST GIVES LIFE FOR LIBERTY

SHERIDAN COUNTY BOY'S NAME APPEARS ON LAST WEDNESDAY'S CASUALTY LIST.

Wednesday's casualty list contained the name of Fritz Nyquist. It is stated that word was received a few days ago by Mr. Nyquist of Froid, that his youngest son was killed during the fighting of October 5th. Fritz has two brothers also at Froid, but up to the time of his enlistment was his father's companion and helper for some years. He also has two brothers, Peter and Algot Nyquist, who live northeast of Glasgow.

Fritz Nyquist was about 23 or 24 years-old at the time he gave up his life in his country's service.

AID CANNOT BE OBTAINED FROM FEDERAL SEED LOAN OFFICE AFTER FEBRUARY 1.

The Federal Seed Loan office at Great Falls announces that all applications for seed loans for next spring must be in by February 1st. No applications will be considered after that time. Farmers whose credit and financial abilities are impaired by the two years of drouth so that they cannot get seed otherwise may get a loan of five dollars per acre up to 100 acres. Information can be obtained at the banks or farm bureau committees. The Farm Bureau has no information as to how these applications can be handled now that the County has no County Agent. The Bureau is endeavoring to find out what can be done so that farmers of Sheridan County who need this aid may get their share.

Two Important Bills Up Before The House

ONE YEAR HOMESTEAD ACT AND MATTER REGARDING EXTENSION OF FINAL PAYMENT SOON TO BE DECIDED.

The passing of the Myers' bill in the senate to extend the time allowed Fort Peck settlers to make final payment for their land leaves the matter now up to the house of representatives in congress.

The bill is one of great importance as it effects thousands of settlers on the Fort Peck reservation. The past two years the settlers who have come to this large reserve to locate a home and settle have had the misfortune to experience two consecutive crop failures, thus putting a burden of expense on their shoulders.

Many letters have been sent by prominent individuals and commercial clubs in this part of the state to Hon. John M. Evans and to Jeannette Rankin urging their support and cooperation in securing an early passage of the bill in the house.

This matter is of interest to everybody, farmers and business men, and every effort used in getting the bill made a law will greatly aid the settlers.

Another important bill has passed the senate and is now before the house. That is the Myers' "One Year Homestead Bill." Indications now point that this will be made a law. Lieutenant Governor McDowell of Montana is now at Washington using every influence to secure the early passage of this bill.

Both bills will greatly benefit Montana, and people are urged to do all they can to help secure their passage by writing to Miss Rankin and Congressman Evans regarding them.

ARMISTICE HAS BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL JAN.

Complicated Political Situation Exists in the Rhine-Land, New Annexation Party Is Formed

Copenhagen, Dec. 18.—The German armistice has been extended until 5 o'clock on the morning of January 17, according to a dispatch from Treves.

Copenhagen, Dec. 18.—The German armistice has been extended until 5 o'clock on the morning of January 17 and the allies have notified Germany that they reserve the right to occupy the neutral zone east of the Rhine from the Cologne bridgehead to the Dutch frontier, according to a dispatch from Treves.

Cologne, Wednesday, Dec. 18.—A new and striking element has been injected into the already complicated political situation in the Rhineland by the alleged organization of a secret party which is working for the annexation of this German territory to France. Overtures will be made to the French government, it is said, to take the Rhineland into France on the same basis as Alsace-Lorraine.

There is only one development in the intensely interesting problem being solved in the rich country west of the Rhine with Cologne as the political capital. There is, in the first place,

throughout the Rhineland, a double-headed government composed of revolutionists on one side and officials of the imperialistic regime on the other, who for the moment are working more or less together for the common good.

In Cologne, for example, the old burgomaster and his staff are still at their posts in the city hall, while nearby are the officials of the revolutionary committee. Between them the affairs of the local government are thrashed out and the business of the city is kept moving. The same situation exists in other cities and towns.

To add to the still more winding labyrinth there are besides the party which desires annexation to France, at least two with distinctly different ideals. One of these is composed of liberal Democrats and Socialists who want to see the establishment of a great republic which will include not only all of Germany but Austria with Berlin as the capital.

The second group is composed of the Catholic or Christian party which is said to desire a German Westphalian republic.

TELEPHONE WORKERS AND PUBLIC MISUSED

Twin City Companies Resort to Any Method of Beating Employes and Increasing Profits

By V. E. Michel
St. Paul, Minn.—Although the telephone companies of the Twin Cities claim that they are unable to pay their girl operators, now on strike, more than \$1.60 to \$1.80 per day, they did pay \$600,000 in dividends to stockholders during the first nine months of this current fiscal year.

This has been brought out in the hearing before the state railroad and warehouse commission on rate increases. The company asked this commission to grant rate increases amounting to \$2,300,000 annually. They said this was necessary to meet the wage demand of striking employes. However, they openly admitted that they proposed to pay their workers less than \$600,000 of the proposed \$2,300,000 for which they asked.

During the strike the companies have hired whatever strikebreakers they could secure and have paid them two and three times the amount for which the strikers worked during the war as a patriotic measure. The companies have come out flatly now, stating that there no longer is a strike and attributing crippled service to federal control, in an attempt to disgust the public with Uncle Sam's management. Strikers declare that the strike has ceased to be a walkout and that it is now a lockout. They further cite instances of credit for groceries being suddenly shut off. They blame the companies for this.

Telephone companies officially declared that they would never take back the strikers because federal control prevents. Strike leaders, however, have called the hand of the companies by demanding to see the instructions received from Washington for such a stand. The strikers claim that this move by the company is designed to disgust union circles with federal control and that it is entirely without authority.

Believing that the calling of the companies' hand in this matter can be done only at Washington, the strikers have started a move to have Secretary Burleson asked on the floor of the house as to just what instructions he gave the Twin Cities telephone companies. At the same time it was stated that President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor has been in conference with Secretary Burleson regarding the Twin Cities situation.

Miss Julia O'Connor, president of

the operators' department of the International Brotherhood of Wire Workers, has denied that federal authorities have restrained the companies' freedom in any manner. She claims to have assurances from thoroughly competent and reliable sources that Postmaster General Burleson has denied that the companies have been deprived of their local autonomy in any degree. Other labor leaders declare that the companies are hiding behind the present elastic federal control of telegraphs and telephones to circumvent the demands of their workers.

G. W. Robinson, president of the Tri-State company, which operates an exclusive telephone monopoly in St. Paul, while the Bell system operates in Minneapolis, is authority for the statement that "none of the strikers will be returned to their former jobs, except those employes who have been deferred from returning within the specific time through fear, intimidation or threats on the part of the strikers." He adds that the "management of the local companies, acting for the government, will carry out these instructions."

However, President Robinson flatly refuses to divulge any telegrams or their purports wherein he got any authority from federal authorities for this position. He merely declares that he got the instructions and he refuses to be more explicit. It is pointed out, however, that the clause of the "instructions" regarding strikers who were "intimidated" leaves a very large loophole in what might just as well be made an airtight lockout.

H. H. Broach, organizer of the workers' union, explained the recent "near settlement" of the strike. He says that the workers were promised reinstatement at their old jobs, with a 28 per cent wage increase contingent upon the companies being granted their demanded rate increase. The strikers, he said, were not to be discriminated against because they had struck. Strikebreakers were to be given no preference.

However, when the workers reported for duty they found that the strikebreakers were given wide preferences over them. The strikers were to be compelled to start with the company as beginners. They balked, and the strike was resumed with 200 more strikers than before. The new total, Broach says, is 1,000.

DON'T FORGET THE DANCE AT COMMUNITY HALL DEC. 31st.