

IN THE INTEREST OF A SQUARE DEAL FOR THE FARMERS

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Real Triumph in North Dakota—League Program Victorious

THE farmers organized in North Dakota with one, great clear idea. That idea was to put over their industrial program. The realization of that program would be a victory, regardless of anything else. The Nonpartisan league was not organized in North Dakota simply to get offices for Leaguers or anybody else. It was necessary, of course, in the first place to elect men to office, preferably farmers, who favored that program. But that was a MEANS to an end. It was NOT the object of the farmers simply to get offices for the sake of the offices. Personalities were entirely secondary. The first and final object was to have the program adopted by the people, and then carried out.

The Program Is the One Big Thing

The farmers of North Dakota were entirely successful in having their program adopted. The people approved constitutional amendments enabling the program to be carried out. The legislature passed laws putting the program in effect. The state now has a constitution and laws enabling the program to be realized. These laws and constitutional provisions make it MANDATORY to proceed with the complete carrying out of the program, NO MATTER WHO IS IN OFFICE.

After the program was adopted and made part of the laws and constitution, it of course was advisable that men in office be friends of the program. It could be carried out sooner and more efficiently if friends of the program were in office. This was so at least until all the enterprises undertaken by the farmers were established on a permanent basis and their future success assured. There is no denying that. But, after the program was adopted and started, a change in state administration, providing the program remained in effect, could be only a partial and temporary set-back for the farmers. The laws and constitution provide means for carrying out the program, and make it mandatory that whoever is in office shall carry it out.

Keeping these things in mind, let us consider what was the real object of the League opposition in the recent recall election in North Dakota.

THE Independent Voters' association was financed by and represents interests which chiefly desired the destruction of the League program in North Dakota. The I. V. A. brought about the recall election of October 28. While they put up candidates against the farmers' governor and other state officials, their REAL OBJECT was to close the Bank of North Dakota, to make the state mill and elevator project a failure and to put the state industrial commission out of business. They therefore proposed by initiative petitions measures to close the bank, to cut down the bond issues for the mill and elevator, and to destroy the industrial commission.

Attack Was Chiefly on the Program

The I. V. A. would have won a victory, and the farmers would have suffered a bad defeat, if the opposition could have put over those measures. It would have been a victory for the I. V. A., and a defeat for the farmers, if those measures carried, NO MATTER WHO WAS ELECTED TO OFFICE.

The re-election of Governor Frazier, and the other two state officials attacked by the recall, would have been a hollow vic-

tory for the farmers, if at the same time the I. V. A. measures were adopted by the people. For then the League program would have been destroyed, and it would have meant nothing for the farmers to have their men in office. Governor Frazier and the state administration would have been tied hand and foot. The people would have repudiated the program and the farmers' movement would undoubtedly have been killed off. For the holding of office means nothing, unless you have the power to do what the farmers want.

On the other hand, if the I. V. A. could be defeated in its attempt to pass measures destroying the program, the farmers would win the election, no matter who was put in office. For even if unfriendly candidates were elected, they could not destroy the program and tear down what the farmers have built up. Of course, no one will deny that it would be a set-back to have friends of the program taken from office, and enemies of the program put in. Such a change would mean some delay in getting the program fully operative. Enemies of the program in office would naturally not work as faithfully to make the program a success as its friends would. They would even try to hurt the program and make a failure of it, in order to prove to the people that the program was impossible. But such a condition would not be fatal. It would not even be very serious. Particularly it would not be serious if there was another election coming within a few months, and if the farmers could reorganize in the meantime and get their friends back in office within a reasonable time. Just the condition last described above has been brought about. Let us examine the result of the recent election and the condition now prevailing.

AT THE recall election October 28 the people of North Dakota defeated by big, decisive majorities, the measures proposed by the I. V. A. to tear down the League program. The people refused to close the Bank of North Dakota, against which the chief attack of the I. V. A. was directed. The people refused to cut down the amount of bonds previously authorized to carry out the farmers' program. The people refused to destroy the industrial commission, which exists to carry out the League program. In other words, the people declared in clear and forceful language that they wanted the farmers' program carried to successful conclusion. The I. V. A. and the League opposition within and without North Dakota were defeated in their chief object. That opposition does not care how many offices the farmers hold, if farmers in office are powerless to do anything for the farmers. But they DO care when farmers, OR ANYBODY ELSE are in office, if the people make it mandatory for such officeholders to carry out a fundamental reform program in the interests of agriculture. So the defeat of the I. V. A. measures has been a defeat for the League opposition, and a triumph for the farmers.

People Give Big Majority to Program

It is true that the I. V. A. did recall Governor Frazier and two other state officers friendly to the farmers' program. But they did so by a very small majority—smaller BY FAR than the majority by which the League program was vindicated and retained by the people. It is also true that this recall of a state administration friendly to

AN INTERRUPTED FORWARD PASS



—Drawn expressly for the Leader by W. C. Morris.