

IN THE INTEREST OF A SQUARE  
DEAL FOR THE FARMERS

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## Comment by the Editor on Current Events

**A**FTER a great expenditure of time and money in making investigations and holding hearings in Washington and all over the country, the joint committee of congress, appointed to study agricultural problems, made its report. So inadequate were its recommendations that, although much publicity was given them, the average farmer probably does not even remember what the committee proposed. Nothing that the committee did stuck in the farmer's mind.

### No Agitation for Harding "Remedies"

Following the report of the joint committee, as if to admit frankly the inadequacy of the committee's findings, President Harding and Secretary of Agriculture Wallace called a national "farm conference." This conference met and likewise made recommendations. Some weeks have passed since the conference adjourned. It was given great publicity, and was declared by the president and Mr. Wallace to be the greatest event that ever took place in the history of American agriculture.

Yet, does anything the conference recommended stand out as a leading issue and as a remedy for the present farmer distress? Is anybody talking about what it recommended? Are farmers circulating petitions, writing letters to congressmen and meeting and passing resolutions to forward the carrying out of the conference's "remedies"? Have the conference's plans become an issue in congress? Does any one seriously claim that the fate of the farmer and a change for the better within a reasonable time depend on congress passing any bills which may have been introduced to carry out the conference's recommendations?

Read over those questions again. "No" is the answer to all of them. In fact, the average farmer, just as in the case of the report of the joint congressional committee, will find difficulty in recalling just what the conference did say was the matter, and just what it did propose to solve the problem.

Something ignored by both the congressional committee and the conference is now the big issue. Only one remedy proposed has convinced any considerable number of congressmen or farmers that it is a solution. That proposal is stabilization of farm prices, through the revival of the war grain corporation, or by new machinery of some kind. To forward that plan hundreds of rural communities are bringing pressure on congress—flooding congressmen and senators with petitions, resolutions and letters. The farmers have forced price stabilization to the front as a solution. That is the issue—not anything the congressional committee or the conference proposed.

The Congressional Record, the newspapers and many other "straws," not to mention the Leader's reports direct from hundreds of farming communities, show which way the wind is blowing. The demand is emphatically for price stabilization. All the praise of the administration for the result of the farm conference, all the opposition of the Republican machine in congress, all the prattling of Farm Bureau federation leaders, all the sage advice of agricultural college "experts" and farm agents—all this will not down the demand for price stabilization. It is the only adequate remedy.

If congress refuses to act, or if congress does act and the president vetoes the bill, as is threatened, it is not going too far to say that the Republicans will lose their majority in congress at the coming elections.

There are even possibilities of the Democrats, or a new party, electing a president. The farmers are aroused and will not be put down.

**E**DGAR WALLACE, legislature representative of the American Federation of Labor, and Albert Fechner, member of the national executive board of the International Association of Machinists, appeared before the senate committee on agriculture and urged the stabilization of farm prices. Numerous other labor representatives sent letters and resolutions approving the revival of the grain corporation and the fixing of living prices for farmers.

### Labor for Relief of Farmers

The Minneapolis Trades and Labor assembly is one of the many labor organizations which have passed formal resolutions asking congress to give relief to farmers. All indorse the Sinclair-Ladd bill. Only a few years ago labor, like many farmers, believed in a narrow class policy. Labor felt that higher prices for farmers meant unnecessarily high cost of living in the cities. Farmers shunned labor as "radical." They believed that labor kept prices of manufactured articles up through demands for unreasonable wages.

But now labor comes forward to help farmers get better prices. A long road has been traveled in a few years. Labor understands that one reason for the widespread unemployment and its disastrous effect on wages and the solidity of the unions, is due to taking buying power away from farmers by starvation prices. When farmers stop buying, factories shut down and there is nothing to pay labor wages. On the other hand, when labor is unemployed or working for starvation wages, one of the biggest markets for farm products is destroyed.

It has taken a long time to bring these ideas home to the two classes of producers. But they see the point now, much to the menace of certain interests that have attempted to foster the opposite view on both sides.

**J**UST now organized labor is waging a hard battle for existence. Capital has taken advantage of unemployment and competition for jobs to smash the unions and lower working standards and wages. One of the chief weapons of employers in this fight is the courts. The labor injunction has been revived and made more

effective than ever, after many states and even congress had passed laws that it was felt would protect

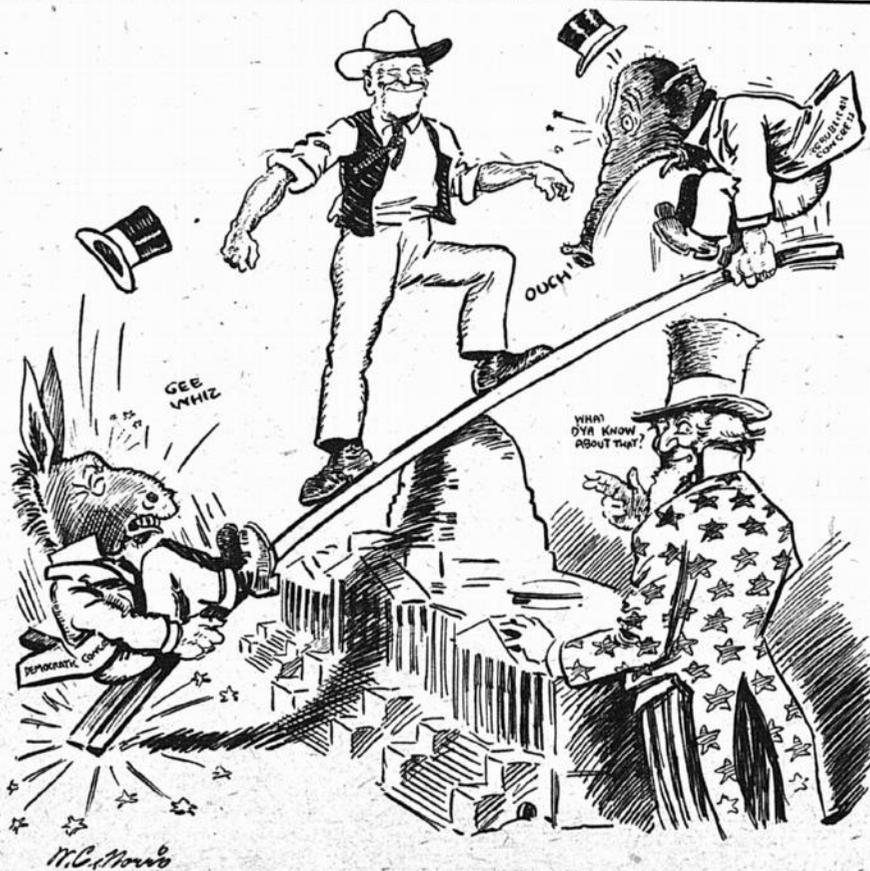
labor against this procedure. Many state and federal lower courts have issued

injunctions in recent industrial disputes which have had the effect of defeating the labor cause. Even the supreme court of the United States has made a decision upholding an injunction that restricts the right of labor to peaceful picketing and argument during disputes with employers.

Mr. Gompers declared that the Clayton act, which forbade injunctions against labor in certain cases for "restraining trade," was the greatest "bill of rights" labor ever was granted. Likewise labor leaders hailed state laws which prohibited labor injunctions as great advances in the cause of unionism. But these laws now seem to count for naught. The courts are making the labor injunction more potent than ever.

But what is the farmers' interest in labor injunctions? It is an interest just as great as labor's. The Clayton act was in-

## FARM BLOC BALANCE OF POWER



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