

THE PRODUCERS NEWS

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Friday, December 30, 1932

FARMERS SHOCK CONGRESS

(By Rodney Dutcher, NEA Service Writer)

How others look at the Farmer Marchers:

Washington.—The marching farmers, who were greeted amiably when they came to make their demands here, seemed more revolutionary than the harassed, baited-hunger marchers who preceded them.

Their Farmers' National Relief Conference represented a militant, radical group on the farmers which abandons leadership of the old large national farmer organizations, demands immediate emergency relief and is often not afraid to interfere with the due processes of the law to save a farmer his farm.

The hunger marchers made mild demands for unemployment insurance and cash relief, but the farmer marchers threatened the credit system and operation of the government itself when they demanded a moratorium or cessation on debts, taxes, mortgages, foreclosures, tax sales and evictions.

The farmers shouted their sympathy for the hunger marchers on several occasions and cheered speakers from among their own ranks who told them that a union of the working class, on the farms and in the cities, could rule the world. The frequency with which they used the terminology and tactics of the radical labor element in the cities and of the hunger marchers was rather startling.

But these were genuine farmers, with a high percentage of Americanism among them. They wore few white collars, but nearly all had shaves and recent haircuts and many wore their best clothes. Rugged, outdoor types were the rule. They leaned forward eagerly to hear their speakers.

They were also distinguishable from the hunger marchers in that they were well fed.

"We eat our best chickens and eggs and vegetables now" said a woman off a New Hampshire farm. "Because we can't sell 'em. Being Yankees, we always used to sell our best stuff and eat the poorest."

Also, these farmers were property owners, with farms to lose. The other marchers had nothing to lose but their lives and their appetites.

Nevertheless, the parallel between the two movements was inescapable. In a tiny minority—like the radical labor group, this crowd of delegates was urging farmers to repudiate the present farm organization leaders just as the other radicals deride and oppose the A. F. of L.

The communist effort for "solidarity of the white and Negro workers" was reflected in references to this movement of "white and Negro farmers." A Negro farmer sat on the platform and a couple of them spoke. There were attacks on the profit system as the cause of unequal distribution.

The need for "solidarity" was emphasized. Many were the references to a movement of "rank and file" farmers—the expression commonly used by communist sympathizers among the bonus army here last summer and in the hunger march. "This is not just a battle of the farmers," speakers said, "but of the entire working class of which the farmers are a part."

That didn't mean that many were communists—members of farm holiday associations and old non-partisan league elements predominated. But it meant that these farmers and the groups which sent them here had had no difficulty in picking up much of the radical jargon and applying it to their own cause.

They did represent the grievance of millions of farmers who can't get enough cash out of their crops to pay taxes, interest and other debt charges and the costs of living. They were of the breed which summons the neighbors to assemble at a farmer's place and prevent eviction or a tax sale.

They told of various methods used to "keep American farmers on American farms"—including conspiracies to keep the bids at sales down to \$1.98 so that the foreclosed farmer may be given his farm back as soon as the auction is over.

This movement grew out of the lawo farm strike, organized by the more radical participants in that effort. There's no telling whether it will grow to much larger proportions.

BEER GUZZLERS

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intendent of the Anti-Saloon league, said:

"Before anyone can step up to a bar and blow the froth off a legalized 3.2 beer it will be necessary for the bill to be also passed by the senate and then signed by

the president. Thereafter, the supreme court would have to decide whether a 3.2 beer law is constitutional under the 18th amendment."

What a merry-go-round this can be made into if handled right. People who have no money to buy bread with, to them the "much needed revenue" can be handed out to buy beer with, that will bring

CONGRESS WORRIES OVER FARM CRISIS

The crisis of non-payment of farm debt throughout the country is worrying every member of the House and Senate. Not worried so much about what becomes of the farmer, but worried about the insurance companies and banks which are able to collect interest on the money they have invested in the farms.

In the year 1932 will see default of tax payment by hundreds of thousands of land owners. Other hundreds of thousands will not only default on interest payment on their farm debts but will join with their neighbor in refusal to submit quietly to foreclosure and eviction.

What worries the politicians is that the farmers cannot, at existing prices for farm products, pay interest to the mortgage holders, whether the latter be hard or soft on their terms. The fire insurance and life insurance companies hold too many farm mortgages; the savings banks hold far too many of them. This coming year, 1933, is to see default, such as America has never dreamed of. It is to see a new and ominous problem of saving the insurance companies and the savings banks, thrust upon the new Congress.

The farmers may starve and may be forced into the position of rebels to hold their homes. But once more the government must save "our American institutions,"—the insurance companies and the banks.

That is the thought that ran through the minds of Curtis and Garner, and of Hoover, when they politely listened to the demands of the radical and desperate farmers who called upon them Dec. 9. They hoped these farmers would not threaten default on farm mortgages; they were glad when the farmers merely insisted on a farm debt moratorium, with cancellation of debts owed the government. In the White House there was fear that the farmers would try to pull down confidence in insurance companies.

Congress will be carefully steered by the administering officials so that it safeguards the unlucky private holders of farm debts. Rugged individualism must be preserved, even if the government has to take over every mortgage that has become worthless, from San Diego to Bar Harbor.

ILLINOIS MINE BLAST TAKES 54

(Continued from page one)

The women were. Few tears were seen. They were miners' wives, knowing how to bear grief silently. But the children whimpered. The first body was brought up at 8 p. m. Sunday, about 24 hours after the siren shrieked its message of disaster and brought the 1,400 townspeople to the mine.

Throughout the morning other bodies were brought up. As each blanket-wrapped form was put in an ambulance, the crowd deserted the mine gates. It followed the ambulance to the impoverished morgue.

There the crowd waited. Inside the morgue were two old time miners who knew each of the 54—the two made their sorrowful identifications. Then names were posted on the morgue windows.

POST DEATH LIST

The crowd gazed at the names. A woman would shriek as she recognized the name of her husband, her son, or her brother on the death list. A tight-lipped man would lead her away.

The crowd then would go back to the mine opening to await the next body.

Crews were brought in from Springfield, Pana, Vincennes, Ind. They worked in shifts of 20, wriggling and snaking thru small openings made by pick and shovel. They worked ceaselessly, doggedly.

RESCUERS IN DANGER

The squads themselves were in danger. They know not when the weakened walls might collapse, might bury them also. While they fought frantically to penetrate the wreckage, others propped up the weakened places by "timbering."

There were no candles glimmering from the Christmas trees here Sunday night. Instead, searchlights flared at the mine opening, giving fleeting views of drawn faces.

27 REMOVED; 15 REMAIN

Mowesqua, Ill., Dec. 26.—Weary rescue workers found 27 more bodies in the blast wrecked tunnels of the Mowesqua community coal mine today.

They carried them one at a time through the long main tunnel and up the shaft to the mine entrance where women and children had been waiting since an explosion trapped 54 men underground the day before Christmas.

In all, 39 bodies, seared and swollen from the gas and fire which followed the explosion, have been found in the mine. Tonight the rescue crews worked on, wearing gas masks which made them look like monsters as they groped about in the gas-filled, debris-strewn tunnels seeking the 15 men still missing.

The work of bringing them up was slow and laborious. At several points in the tunnel the openings through the debris were small. Bodies were wrapped in canvas inside the mine, handed through the small openings and carried to the shaft. Late this afternoon 17 had been taken to the morgue. It was planned to bring up others before morning.

more revenue, we can all have beer and live happy. The more we drink the happier we will be, we will drink ourselves out of the depression.

"PROGRESSIVES" ACT LIKE REACTIONARIES WHEN PRESSED

(Continued from Front Page)

to try to do anything real for the masses of the farm population. When pressed for an answer on cash relief for the most impoverished section of the farm population, they all became embarrassed and Mr. Patterson of Alabama whom we had particularly pressed because of the poverty stricken condition of the share croppers of his state, suddenly remembered he had an appointment somewhere else. Not a single one of these "friends of the people" would agree to sponsor a bill for cash relief.

When pressed upon the question of cancellation of seed and feed loans the general reply was "They have already been cancelled." They expect anyone to pay their loans. Of course, no legal action has been taken in this effect, and they are still held against the farmers. All agreed that they ought to be cancelled as the loans to the railroads and banks by the reconstruction finance corporation amounted to pure gifts.

When pressed upon the question of debt and tax moratorium most of them agreed in principle, but when pressed for an answer, to the question what will you do about it, they all threw up their hands. "We can't do anything. It is beyond our power. You'll have to ask your states for that."

Representative Keller of Illinois seemed to be the chief spokesman. He took an hour trying to show us how the Frazier bill would help the mortgaged farmer, but he was floored upon the question of

how the farmer could sell his products for enough to pay even 1 1/2 per cent interest as provided by this bill. He admitted that only by giving work to the unemployed can such a market for farm products be secured. To show that his heart is in the right place, he says he has a bill which will give work to all of the unemployed—then, presto, the Frazier bill will help us. He admitted 12,000,000 unemployed and his going to put them all to work on public works. Some job for a Congressman who claims the opposition is too great to get a paltry \$500,000,000 appropriation for cash relief or who backs down at the task of cancellation of the feed and seed loans.

The gong calling the House of Representatives into session was sounded before we were thru. All were glad to leave excepting Keller and one or two others who remained to tell us how we could pick ourselves up by the boot straps.

The whole affair should emphasize to the masses of toiling farmers that only a government selected from the ranks of their closest allies, the city workers, can have the courage and understanding to attack and solve the problems of the masses of the producing class. Only a political party based upon the unity of farmer and city worker can intelligently lead such a government.

Toiling farmers unite for struggle. For cash relief now! To save your homes now! For a workers' and farmers' government.

FARMERS FROM 23 STATES ATTEND WASHINGTON CONFAB

Some 250 delegates from 23 of the farming states, representing thousands of farmers, assembled in Washington last week under auspices of the Farmers National Relief Conference. Georgia share croppers, Negro farmers from Florida, Montana dirt farmers, Minnesota stump farmers, truck farmers from New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, representatives of farm organizations ranging in character from United Farmers League to the Grange—told the same story; they have not been able to get the cost of production for their products for many years, no farmer anywhere is secure, they are menaced with losing their land because they can not pay interest or taxes.

The Department of Agriculture estimates the mortgage indebtedness of the American farmer at between nine billion and 10 billion dollars with short term indebtedness bringing the total up to between 13 and 14 billions.

The object of the meeting was to present concrete resolutions to Congress, asking for an end to evictions, a moratorium on debts and a remedy to bridge the gap between what the farmers get and what the public pays.

FARMERS DONT COVER COSTS

A classic example is milk. The farmer gets two cents a quart, and the public pays from 10 cents to 14 cents. As the price of milk has fallen, the middleman has not taken the loss. He has passed it on to the farmer. The same is true of wheat and of all commodities. The farmers want the middleman to shoulder some of the difference.

One delegate told of a farmer who sent a carload of sheep and was notified that the price of the sheep didn't cover the cost of the freight. "I have no money," he said, "but I have more sheep."

The watchword of the conference was unity and direct action. Every reference to resisting eviction met with a thunderous applause. Excitement was in the air. These were all men who had taken things into their own hands and were ready to fight. Accused of being living, they suddenly found comfort in unity and cooperation. It was an extraordinarily impressive audience which gathered in Typographical Union hall, a militant crowd, prepared to fight and to fight hard for what it meant to them, for its meat, life and death.

FIGHT TO LIVE

The first day was taken up with personal recitals from farmers all over the country. A farmer's wife from New Hampshire came down with other New England farmers in a log cabin car to attend the conference. She had worked for a week to get food cooked for her five children. "They asked me why I was going," she said, "and I said I was going to Washington to fight so they could live." She had been married 20 years and in that time had bought just two hats at 35 cents apiece.

A farmer representing the Farm Holiday Assn. of Wyoming said, "Farmers don't take kindly to breadlines. We want to keep our own beans and make our own soup in our own kitchens, and the only way to keep our homes is by organization and direct action."

A stump farmer from northern Minnesota, a member of the U. F. L. different from the usual tall dirt farmers, small, vibrating with anger, told of the triple experience of his family, exploited in the mines, the lumber fields and on the land.

A Montana member of the F. U. L. said "We are not having foreclosures where I am because 75 per cent of the farms have already been foreclosed and the rest are subject to foreclosure any minute." Farmers are leaving their wool in sacks because they can't get anything for it, he said.

CANT EAT FOOD ON SOUP LINE

Frightful statistics dotted the

MONEY COULD BE SAVED ON INTEREST

The United States Treasury recently offered for sale \$250,000,000 of one year certificates paying three-quarters of one per cent interest a year. Subscriptions for these certificates totaled \$4,123,000, or more than 16 times the amount desired.

There is still outstanding about \$1,900,000,000 in bonds from the first Liberty Loan, bearing 3 1/2 per cent to 4 1/2 per cent interest per year, with an average rate of almost exactly 3 and three-fourths per cent. These bonds can be called in and paid at any time from the present year to 1947.

The Treasury statement proves that Uncle Sam can borrow 18 times as much money as he asks for and more than twice as much as the amount of these bonds now outstanding for three-fourths of one per cent a year. On the total now available to be called in now, that would be a saving of \$57,000,000 a year, or a little more than Congress is being asked to take out of the pay envelopes of Federal employes.

If Congress wants to save money here is the chance.

WHAT THINKING PEOPLE SAY

(Continued from page one)

that spells the doom of capitalism, that they are to be pitied rather than censured.

Communism means a government by the farmers, soldiers and workers. Who else has a right to a government? Not the parasites that pull coupons from non-taxable securities. Not the white collar guy who spends their days in travel and riotous living while their white slaves eke out an existence on starvation wages. Who else should own the waterpower, coal deposits and oil fields of the earth if not the men who work from early morn until late at night at hazardous jobs that enormous profits may be piled up for the exploiters.

You say the coal fields, the oil deposits and the great forests are privately owned and so we can't get them? How did they become privately owned? Did you ever take time off to find out? We suspect not, else you would know that congressmen and senators who were elected by the people and sent to Washington to safeguard the holdings and legislate in the interests of the masses, sold out their birthright for a mess of pottage to the swindlers and the grafters who operated under the name of Big Business and by fraud and trickery voted away the heritage of the unborn citizens of the United States. One has only to mention a few of the steals. The Guggenheim railroad concession in Alaska, the Dooney-Fall oil leases, the Land Grant act, whereby the railroads were given thousands of acres of land. How were the men rewarded who made the deals possible? By being made directors in railroads, banks, corporations and the like. Delving into the records of the two major parties discloses the startling facts that nearly all of the campaign fund were silence money for legislation received or concessions granted.

The great trouble with Mr. Average Citizen is that he has been so busy trying to make both ends meet, he has had no time or energy to inquire into the business of the government, hence the old ship of state has been left to the tender mercies of those who were not interested in the prosperity of the many, but only used their talents to exploit the rank and file whom they pledged themselves to protect when taking the oath of office. These same men if tried before a court of justice would be sentenced to be hung if our courts meted out to them the same punishment those guilty of minor crimes receive.

True patriotism means interest in the welfare of mankind, therefore those women out in California who hoped to keep Albert Einstein out of the United States because he was said to believe in communism are frauds and hypocrites. Instead of trying to prevent his coming here, they should have deemed it a great honor and privilege to have so noted a personage willing to make this country his home. Patriots, bah! Noisy women seeking a little notoriety and publicity. "Cackling geese."

In years gone by, the thread bare argument against socialism was that the farmer and laborer would have to divide up with the fellow that didn't work under that system. In pursuing the delinquent tax lists of the various countries we discover that the capitalists have beaten the Socialists to it and have forced the farmer and laborer not only to divide but have forced said workers to give up practically everything they possess. And page the fact. It was the capitalist press who warned the people against Socialism and so well did they do the job the only things left to the people are our socialized institutions. It was only because they were also guarded by law and the constitution that they have not been also stolen.

'BEAN GANG' STRIKE IN GREAT FALLS

Great Falls, Mont., Dec. 26.—About a week before Christmas the Unemployed Council led a demonstration of about 250 people to the Court house demanding a turkey and Christmas dinner to every unemployed family; also, two days wages in cash to be advanced to every unemployed man who will work it out after the holidays.

The workers who had been forced into this illegal "bean gang" had called an all day holiday and were with us in our march. The commissioners as usual purposely absented themselves but our demand that our committee meet with the Board of Commissioners the following morning at 10 a. m. was granted. We also, demanded by petition that the Chamber of Commerce Committee (A. C. M. tools) be presented at this meeting, but as usual they coldly ignored the petition.

At 10 a. m. our committee of ten presented the Christmas demands; but were refused with the statement that they could not help because all relief has been placed in the hands of the Chamber of Commerce. We asked them why they placed this relief with the A. C. M. and were told that the poor fund was depleted and that if it wasn't for the great interest and big heartedness of the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. we would all starve to death. By cross questioning the commissioners became frustrated and even disagreed with each other. One of them, blustered out "I can ask you questions too that you can't answer." One of the papers that they handed to us by mistake proved conclusively that they have jurisdiction over the Relief Committee and funds from the R. F. C. This document was signed by Governor Erickson and proved the commissioners to be criminal liars.

A permanent strike on the "Bean Gang" is the consequence. Two of our pickets were thrown in jail, released a short while after when we led a demonstration to the police station. Approximately 72 deputized thugs were hiding in the police station.

The Unemployed Council is growing every day, and the workers are becoming more militant. A "Womans Council" is organized here and growing with leaps and bounds.

—A Worker.

Preparing for State Hunger March to Helena

Roberts, Mont., Dec. 12.—The Y. C. L. Training school came to a close last Sunday, Dec. 18, which was held at Red Lodge, Mont.

Now it is our duty to start the ball rolling—we are faced with the first State Hunger March.

The National Hunger march from Washington, D. C., will be in Roberts, on Dec. 30, to hold their return mass meeting. The state hunger march delegates will also be elected at this meeting on Dec. 30 at 8 p. m.

A. O. KAINU.

Doings of the Advance Guard

Our delegates just come back from Washington. There was eleven of them from this county and they report a very interesting trip. Another thing they report is that the farmers in the east are even more radical and ready to fight to keep their homes, than the farmers further west. They need somebody to organize and take the lead. There is a big field for our Advance Guard to work on.

That trip to Washington sure did a lot of good, and don't fool yourself and think it didn't. The politicians are getting nervous about it. Of course, we know they are not going to do anything for the farmers that will amount to anything, just stall them off and make them live in hopes that will never be fulfilled if it is left to the present politicians to do so.

But the more radicals in congress and senate told the farmer delegates to go back home and protect their homes and property in the most effective way they saw fit to, or the farmers would be on the soup line. The farmers everywhere are getting ready to protect themselves, they don't want to lose their homes and their few belongings. Our Advance Guard must get busy and organize them, and, by all means, get the Producers News to them, so they can read how the other farmers stop the foreclosure sales, read how the farmers of Nebraska intend to march to their State capitol 75 thousand strong and make their demands.

DOINGS OF LAST WEEK

Julius Walstad, Hawkinson, N. Dak., sends us one sub. Geo. E. Kirkens, Lake City, Mich., sends stamps for sample copies. The farmers must wake up to the true facts that are now facing them, which they don't seem to comprehend as yet. I am doing my utmost," he says. The Workers School, New York City pays for bundles received. J. Meisenbach, Hysham, Mont., sends us names for sample copies. Victor Tervo, Aitkin, Minn. pays for bundles. W. E. Brocker, Owen, Mich. also sends us one sub.

GOING RIGHT AFTER IT

Aug Wanhoia, Kimball, Minn., goes after it right. He sent us three subs. Last week he sent us ten. Alfred Tiola, Makenin, Minn., is doing well too, he sent three subs, one of them for a year.

WILL DO HIS PART

A. Snyder, Williamson, Pa., subscribes and sends interesting letter. "If I can be of any service to you at any time let me know and I will do all I can," he writes. Fred Anderson, Billings, Mont., sends two dollars and orders bundles. J. W. Eustis, Buhl, Idaho, sent us another sub. Emil Falk, Glencoe, Minn., orders a bundle of papers. Herman Krogman of Billings, Mont., wants a receipt book.

GETTING THEM BY THE HUNDREDS

Frank Walters, Sioux City, Ia., sends money in advance for another 100 copies to be sent this week. He also bought 100 copies last week. Charles A. Youse, Mercersburg, Pa., subscribes for six months. James Pearson, White Earth, N. D., sends in one more sub.

BREAKING THEM ALL

Jake O. Salo, Rochester, Wash., sends us a sub for one year. Wm. Meije, Norwich, N. D. renews and sends one more sub. I am proud to read the paper. I want to see it in every farm home. United front against foreclosure and eviction is sure helping make farmers class conscious," William says. K. Heikkila, Virginia, Minn. also sends a dollar for bundle to be sent. John Salmen, Deadwood, S. Dak. renews his subscription. Leo Ziebart, International Falls, Minn., subscribes for six months.

UNITED FRONT AGAINST FORECLOSURE

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