

THIS article is drawn from Mr. Morlan's forthcoming history of the Nonpartisan League, *Political Prairie Fire*, which the University of Minnesota Press will publish late in July. The author is associate professor of government in the University of Redlands, California.

The Nonpartisan League and the *MINNESOTA CAMPAIGN of 1918*

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POLITICAL apathy was no problem in the Midwest as the election year of 1918 rolled around. It was do or die for the Nonpartisan League in North Dakota, where the organization had been looking toward this election since 1916, when it had become obvious that control of the state senate could not be achieved. There was optimism among Minnesota farmers, where the real battle was likely to take place, and there was talk that there might be surprises even in the less completely organized states. Nor were the anti-League forces biding their time. North Dakota might be "lost," but if ever the Nonpartisan League were to be halted as a national organization, this was the year.

The call for precinct caucuses in Minnesota had been issued for February 22, the same as in North Dakota, and the familiar procedure was followed to the letter. The *Nonpartisan Leader*, official organ of the National Nonpartisan League, carried detailed instructions, and special letters were sent to every League member in the state. To the fifty thousand Minnesota Leaguers

the *Leader* of February 18, 1918, flung a militant call to arms: "Farmers of Minnesota! The hour has come to strike! . . . It is the opening gun of the campaign. It is the first step in redeeming Minnesota from the clutch of the politicians and the interests they serve."

On Tuesday, March 19, a group of forty-eight farmers representing forty-eight of the state's sixty-seven senatorial districts met in an assembly room on the ninth floor of the Pioneer Building in St. Paul to select their state ticket. The nineteen districts not represented were located either in the large cities or in the iron range area, where there was no substantial farm population. In those districts it was agreed that the League would back labor-endorsed Congressional and legislative candidates. Republicans predominated among the delegates, but there were a strong minority of Democrats and a few Socialists and Prohibitionists. Several veterans of the Alliance and Populist movements were present.¹ The League did not operate as a third party, but instead sought to nominate its endorsed candidates in the primaries of the established major parties.

Laying aside their party affiliations, the delegates, after long discussion, selected a

¹ *Nonpartisan Leader*, April 1, 1918, p. 11. The Minnesota Historical Society has a file of this weekly, published in St. Paul.

slate of candidates upon whom to pin their hopes for 1918. Endorsed to head the ticket as candidate for governor was former Congressman Charles A. Lindbergh, a lawyer and operator of a small farm near Little Falls, a member of the House of Representatives for ten years, well-known writer and speaker, and father of the young aviator whose solo transoceanic flight nine years later was to make him a popular idol of the world. Endorsed with him were, for lieutenant governor, state representative R. E. Crane, a Mower County farmer; for attorney general, Victor Power, a lawyer and labor leader then serving as mayor of Hibbing; for auditor, S. O. Tjosvold, a pioneer farmer and former county auditor of Yellow Medicine County; for secretary of state, Henry Holmes of Big Lake, a state representative and former minister, now farming; for treasurer, Thomas Meighan, a banker from Preston, the only Democrat on the slate; and for railroad and warehouse commissioner, Fred E. Tillquist, a railroad engineer from St. Paul who was endorsed by organized labor. Endorsements were not made until later for justice and for clerk of the Supreme Court, and after much discussion a decision on whether or not to endorse a candidate for United States Senator was indefinitely deferred.²

The two-day rally jointly sponsored by the League and organized labor which followed the official convention was attended by more than seven thousand and was addressed by a battery of speakers which included William Kent, a former Congressman from California and now a member of the Federal Tariff Commission, Gilbert Hyat of the United States Department of Labor, Judson King, secretary of the National Popular Government League, Walter Thomas Mills, a well-known Socialist author and lecturer, Mayor Thomas Van Lear of Minneapolis, Arthur C. Townley, who organized the League in North Dakota in 1915 and was now its national president, Lynn J. Frazier, League-elected governor of North Dakota, and others.³

Governor J. A. A. Burnquist, as chief executive of the state, had been invited to deliver the address of welcome, but, as anticipated, he refused, and in so doing wrote a scathing attack on the League and organized labor. The League, he indicated, constituted the pro-German element in the state, while the labor sponsors were mentioned simply as a "criminal element," apparently with particular reference to the current prolonged and much condemned strike of St. Paul street railway employees.⁴

After the governor's refusal to speak, the mayor of St. Paul also declined an invitation, and the words of welcome came finally from labor-backed City Commissioner Oscar Keller. For this action Keller was viciously condemned by the *St. Paul Dispatch* and *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, but two days later he was renominated in the city primaries by the largest vote a commissioner had ever received in a primary election. Messages were read from Carl Vrooman, assistant secretary of agriculture, and George Creel, chairman of the wartime Committee on Public Information. Vrooman was quoted as saying that "the National Nonpartisan League is the only movement which will save the United States from a revolution." Creel's letter, as quoted in the *Leader*, stated: "Despite attacks, I believe intensely in the loyalty of the Nonpartisan league. I have done all in my power to defend it from unfair assaults."⁵

In his speech of acceptance Lindbergh spoke with deep sincerity of the seriousness of the world situation and the fact that success in the economic management of the nation was the most important single factor in the winning of the war so far as civilians were concerned. Those fostering distrust of fellow citizens and class prejudice by shouts of "pro-Germanism," he said, were seriously harming the nation's well-being. Few persons were really disloyal to the United

² *Leader*, April 1, 1918, p. 11-12.

³ *Leader*, April 8, 1918, p. 13.

⁴ *Leader*, March 25, 1918, p. 5.

⁵ *Leader*, April 8, 1918, p. 6, 14.

"FIND the Coward,"
a cartoon by
W. C. Morris,
in the "Leader,"
May 13, 1918



States, but the most truly so were "the profiteers who subvert their loyalty to selfish action." Those "seeking to perpetuate themselves in special privilege and in office" fear the will of the majority and raise false issues of "loyalty," denying constitutional rights to honest and sincere citizens. "We must put into practice at home those principles for which we have sent our boys to fight abroad," he said. "It will avail little to win a war for democracy abroad if in the prosecution of that war all the traditional rights and privileges of the people of this nation have been surrendered and abrogated. This is the time to test our sincerity. We must guard against any acts in state or national life which would in any way place doubt upon our honesty or cast reflection upon our motives. The battles of industrial democracy are still to be fought at home."⁶

⁶ Quoted in the *Leader*, April 8, 1918, p. 11.

THE RESOLUTIONS passed by the convention were lengthy and far-reaching in their proposals. Pledging anew allegiance to the nation and support of the war effort, they condemned German autocracy and re-dedicated the group to the establishment of political and industrial democracy throughout the world. The platform viewed with concern the lawlessness tolerated or encouraged by public officials in Minnesota, yet persisted in the refusal to meet violence with violence. It is necessary, the platform pointed out, to "maintain the dignity of good and peaceful American citizens," while at the same time standing firmly for principles of justice and against the suppression of democratic rights.

The platform incorporated the League's economic program, adding to the list of projected state-owned enterprises—chiefly mills and elevators to date—warehouses, stockyards, packing houses, creameries, cold-

storage plants, and pulp and paper mills. A tonnage tax on iron-ore production was demanded, and the following labor program proposed: a state insurance system, state-operated free employment bureaus, state old age pensions, and a state eight-hour-day law, except in agricultural pursuits.

To further the national war effort the platform urged a series of measures: increased taxes on large incomes and excess profits, expanded presidential price-fixing power, a tax on unused land, permission for the national government to purchase and distribute "necessaries of life" through parcel post, government operation of munitions plants, government seizure and operation of all industries in which industrial disturbances occur which cannot be settled by federal mediation, assistance to and encouragement of agriculture, increased agricultural production, the extension of food market regulation after the war, and other measures.⁷

This platform the *Minneapolis Journal* of March 21 denounced in no uncertain terms: "These are but the beginnings of a Socialist program such as has wrecked Russia. But the Bolsheviks at least have been consistent . . . they have never attempted such a class combination as the Nonpartisan League is trying to put over in Minnesota—that of the capitalist farmer and the industrial worker. . . . The plot will fail. The ears of the pro-German donkey stick out from the skin of the lion."

However, William Kent, sent to the League rally by President Wilson to represent the national government and, incidentally, to determine whether or not the farmers of the Northwest were really disloyal, took a different view. His speech on the concluding day was a high light.

"Wilson knows what democracy means," asserted Kent. "He is not afraid of radical measures. . . . We must go from profit to service. You are doing an everlastingly right thing. . . . I shall go back to Washington carrying from you what I have seen and

heard here—the message that you are loyal, and that you will stick."⁸ As proof of his faith, before leaving the state he sent Lindbergh his personal check for a thousand dollars for use in his campaign.

At the crowded closing rally Arthur Townley in spectacular fashion called forth a mutual pledge. Pausing at a dramatic moment in his address, he said in a quiet but vibrant voice: "Farmers of Minnesota, is there any hatred in your hearts toward organized labor?" The building shook as the men from the country roared back "No!" He then continued: "Those of you who pledge allegiance to the workers of the city will stand." Thousands of Minnesota farmers jumped to their feet and the applause was tumultuous. "Workers of the city, if you likewise pledge your allegiance to the farmers of Minnesota, please stand." In an instant the rest of the packed auditorium was on its feet, while hats sailed in the air amid deafening cheers. Near the front of the hall, a few steps from the press tables, a man in the uniform of the St. Paul Street Railway Company, with a tiny baby in his arms, stood, his wife by his side. Tears rolled down the man's cheeks unheeded. The impossible in American politics, a farmer-labor alliance, was coming to pass.⁹

From the day of Lindbergh's endorsement it became customary to refer to him as the "farmer and labor" and soon as the "farmer-labor" candidate. *Leader* cartoons relating to Minnesota invariably pictured the farmer and the worker together, and there was unending emphasis on common objectives and the need for wholehearted co-operation. The pledge asked of legislative candidates was essentially that used in North Dakota except for the words "elected by the League and organized labor," and the reiteration of "farmers and workers."¹⁰ At the opposi-

⁷ *Leader*, April 1, 1918, p. 10, 20.

⁸ Quoted in Lynn and Dora B. Haines, *The Lindberghs*, 279 (New York, 1931).

⁹ *Leader*, April 8, 1918, p. 14.

¹⁰ The pledge was printed in the *Leader*, June 3, 1918, p. 6.

tion's claims that the capitalist farmer and proletarian laborer could never successfully work together, the League jeered. Both were producers, it insisted, and both worked with their hands — their views of a just and equitable social and economic order were the same.

CHARLES A. LINDBERGH was in many ways admirably suited for the League endorsement. All that he had stood for throughout his entire public career was in harmony with the program he was now pledged to support. Sincere, selfless, hard-working, quiet yet extremely forceful, he was respected by all who knew him and his integrity was beyond question. Nevertheless, he tended to be reserved and had few close friends. A fighter for principles in which he believed, Lindbergh was one who asked and gave no quarter. He had been sympathetic with the League from the beginning, writing a series of articles for the *Leader* as early as 1915, and assisting in the work of organizing Minnesota

¹¹ Quoted in Haines, *The Lindberghs*, 267.

from the day he left the Congress in March, 1917.

Yet there was a sense in which Lindbergh was perhaps an unfortunate choice, for, rightly or wrongly, he was extremely vulnerable on the war issue. How important his background in this respect may have been no one, of course, can say. Anyone endorsed by the League would have automatically been vilified on this ground, and possibly it was best to take the bull by the horns. Although he supported the war effort consistently after the United States entered the conflict, he had been strongly opposed to participation, arguing that "war will not get us any more rights than we can get without war. If we get in a war we will have to support it, but it is wrong and I don't want the country in."¹¹ Once the nation was involved, he greatly deplored the common attitude that the people should not question why the war was being fought; he was convinced that there should be public statements of objectives so that the people might know their goals.

To make clear his position on the war, Lindbergh personally published in July,

LINDBERGH speaking at a League picnic, Fort Ridgely, May, 1918



1917, a pocket-sized volume awkwardly entitled *Why Is Your Country at War, and What Happens to You after the War, and Related Subjects*.¹² This book was neither particularly well written nor in any sense seditious, but throughout the campaign it was misquoted, partially quoted, and quoted out of context the length and breadth of the state to "prove" its author's disloyalty. On March 20, the day following his endorsement, the *Minneapolis Journal* headlined an article "Nonparty Governor Candidate Author of Antiwar Book," and from that day forward the opposition discussed no issues, but devoted itself to proclaiming that the League's candidate was opposed to the war, further evidencing the organization's disloyal nature.

The anti-League forces were well aware of the great importance of this primary campaign, and were prepared to spend almost any sum to defeat Lindbergh. As early as January it was rumored that there were moves under way to unite all "loyalists," both Republicans and Democrats, behind "loyalist candidates," the *Journal* of January 12 commenting coyly: "It would be a handsome thing for the Democrats to come forward with organized support for the State Administration. . . . And it would be a nice recognition of such service for the Republicans to suggest to the Democrats that they name a strong candidate for one of the state offices, the Republicans to give him support."

Correspondence which later came into the possession of the *Leader* indicated that the opposition to the League was headed by a Twin Cities group whose executive committee consisted of an imposing array of prominent bankers and heads of commercial and industrial interests. The most active leaders and those known to the League from the beginning were F. H. Carpenter, a wealthy lumberman, Charles S. Patterson, a wholesale shoe dealer and municipal lighting contractor, and Rome G. Brown, an attorney and lobbyist working for several large corporations.¹³

Toward the end of 1917 representatives of this group dealt with a League organizer named Walter E. Quigley, offering to set him up in a law office and pay him two hundred dollars a month and expenses if he would announce that he had become disgusted with the pro-German leadership of the League and write a series of "inside story" pamphlets. Quigley led them on for some time, keeping the League informed of his activities, and finally on January 21, the *Leader* "broke" the story in great detail, citing it as proof that the opposition would stop at nothing.

The anti-League forces, however, never ceased to seek an exposé and to hope that sometime internal dissension in the League might give them their golden opportunity. A few months later their efforts were crowned with partial success when they secured the services of Ferdinand A. Teigen, a former League organizer who had been discharged because of his habits of failing to turn in to headquarters the money collected from the farmers and of telling foreign-born farmers that if they would join the League it could get the war stopped and have their sons brought home. Teigen was not particular for whom he worked as long as there was money in the proposition, and he shortly turned out a pamphlet entitled *The Nonpartisan League: Its Origin, Development and Secret Purposes*, in which he asserted: "The purpose [of the League] is to pull down the ideals of our fathers and to substitute in their stead other ideals that will compel the reconstruction of the entire industrial and social fabric of the nation on Socialist lines."¹⁴ It was sold as widely as possible, primarily to small-town businessmen, and when it could not be sold it was given away.

¹² His earlier book, *Banking and Currency and the Money Trust* (1913), had already marked him for the financial interests as a man who must be beaten.

¹³ Herbert E. Gaston, *The Nonpartisan League*, 219 (New York, 1920).

¹⁴ Teigen, *The Nonpartisan League*, 37 (St. Paul, 1918).



CAMPAIGNING for Lindbergh in Carver County

BEGINNING on January 14, 1918, Minnesota subscribers received a Minnesota edition of the *Nonpartisan Leader*, but a month later this was discontinued and members began to receive both the *Nonpartisan Leader* and a new *Minnesota Leader*, the latter designed to be a newspaper rather than a magazine and so able to provide more up-to-date local news.

To counteract the power of the League press, the opposition resorted to a news service for country weeklies. In early 1918 Tom Parker Junkin, former editor of the *Grand Forks Herald* and arch-enemy of the League, went to St. Paul to direct the "Reliance Publicity Service," designed to furnish free editorials and "news," coupled with the promise that lucrative advertising might be thrown in the direction of papers that were on the "right" side. In May all rural editors were asked to return a questionnaire on League-endorsed legislative candidates, noting particularly anything of a pro-German nature that might be used against them.¹⁵

In the same month Junkin was arrested for violation of the state corrupt practices

¹⁵ *Leader*, May 13, 1918, p. 6.

¹⁶ *Leader*, May 27, 1918, p. 7, September 9, 1918, p. 12.

act, after the Reliance Publicity Service issued twenty-five thousand copies of a pamphlet scurrilously attacking Lindbergh. The statute required that political pamphlets carry the name of the publisher, the cost, a statement as to who had paid for it, and in whose interest it was circulated. The pamphlet had none of this information, and the prosecution claimed that it should state it was in the interest of Governor Burnquist, inasmuch as he was Lindbergh's only opponent for the gubernatorial nomination. Junkin promptly stated to the newspapers that this did not constitute a violation because it was a "loyalty pamphlet" rather than a political pamphlet. Four months later he was acquitted after insisting to the court that Lindbergh was a disloyal candidate and that the pamphlet was intended to serve the cause of the United States at war rather than the cause of Governor Burnquist.¹⁶

Word of the huge "slush fund" built up to combat the League spread rapidly, and just as a variety of "promoters" had descended on the League when it first came into power, so now they hovered about the anti-League group in the Twin Cities, eager to have a hand in the till. One of the first to be successful was H. M. Van Hoesen of Chicago, who managed to sell the idea of



PAUL Fjelde's bust of Lindbergh

publishing a large and attractive magazine that appeared to be a general interest periodical but actually was devoted to attacking the League. Elaborate advertising solicitations were issued and a staff of clerks was employed to make up a list of two hundred thousand Minnesota farmers from tax lists, rural telephone directories, lists of rural newspaper subscribers, and so on.¹⁷

On the Square—A Magazine for Farm and Home made its appearance in May, containing a few articles on farm problems and a fiction story, but confining itself for the most part to bitter denunciations of the League and discussions of the disloyalty of its leaders. Its purpose was clearly stated in a brief editorial: "In each issue of this magazine we are going to fight Socialism, half-baked Socialism, and the Socialism of the National Nonpartisan League—for all of them are the real enemies of the nation and its institutions."

Since there was no paid subscription list, the issue of necessity was mailed at regu-

lar rates, free to all two hundred thousand, who also received a letter on fancily engraved stationery seeking subscriptions. The *Minnesota Leader* had obtained a copy of a confidential advance dummy for advertisers and exposed the whole scheme in advance, necessitating a fast change in layout before publication. *On the Square* did not receive the enthusiastic response which Van Hoesen had predicted; in fact it was a complete dud. The second issue was its last, and a *Minnesota Leader* reporter shortly had the pleasant task of watching the expensive furnishings being moved out of the magazine's St. Paul office and sold to second-hand dealers.¹⁸

On the Square was later followed by two other short-lived magazine ventures of a very similar nature but with less camouflage, one having the imposing title of the *Pan-American Anti-Socialist* and the other a super-patriotic affair with a cover festooned with flags and goddesses of liberty entitled *America First*. The indefatigable backers, having lost heavily in this type of publishing business, turned to the more feasible procedure of printing leaflets, and for some time *Minnesota Issues* was periodically distributed throughout the state.

LINDBERGH opened his campaign on April 25 at Willmar before a crowd so large that it had to be moved to the fair grounds in order to accommodate all those who wished to hear. He gave his views on the origin of the war and stated his conviction that America sincerely felt that it had entered to make democracy secure throughout the world. This aim, he felt, must be kept ever to the fore. His call for the fullest support of the war effort, the Liberty Loan, and the Red Cross was enthusiastically applauded by an audience which according to one report was "bespangled with Red Cross and Liberty Loan buttons."¹⁹ Lindbergh concluded his discourse with a review of

¹⁷ *Leader*, August 19, 1918, p. 8-9, 15.

¹⁸ *Leader*, August 19, 1918, p. 9, 15.

¹⁹ Haines, *The Lindberghs*, 281.

the League platform, which, he said, represented the surest way to secure democracy at home.

In some areas huge crowds turned out to hear the League candidate and he was greeted as a hero; in others he met violence such as few candidates in America have known. A feature of the last two weeks of the campaign were the mammoth parades of from a hundred to seven hundred cars covered with flags and League banners which streamed through dozens of Minnesota counties. They were snowballing affairs, adding a car at every farm—one parade in Meeker County was claimed to be twelve miles long. The biggest meeting was at Wegdahl, where it was estimated that fourteen thousand persons attended an all-day picnic on June 14. Carloads of farm families traveled as far as seventy miles, and four mounted policemen were necessary to handle the traffic and parking.²⁰

Yet there were Minnesota towns in which merchants closed every store on days when a League parade or rally was scheduled, and in some cases even the streets were barricaded. In the city of Red Wing the Home Guard was called out to disperse a League parade when city officials learned that it was nearing the city.²¹ In some towns parades were met with fire hoses, ripe tomatoes, and yellow paint; cars were tipped over and side curtains slashed. It is a striking commentary on the times that a widely known and respected citizen who had served his state ten years in Congress should now be stoned, rotten-egged, hanged in effigy, and subjected to an unending torrent of abuse and vituperation. Towns and even whole counties were barred to this candidate for the Republican nomination for governor, and he was constantly followed by detectives.

Lindbergh, however, was not one to flinch, as is well evidenced by an incident

related by Lynn Haines, a well-known political writer: "He came out of a meeting and found the friend who had been driving him had been dragged from the car and was beaten nearly to unconsciousness. By sheer force of will and in a quiet penetrating voice, Lindbergh made the men listen to reason and they fell back. He helped his friend into the car and they went off. They had gone but a few rods when the mob began to shoot at them. Lindbergh turned to his friend and said, 'We must not drive so fast.' And with a rain of bullets hitting the car, continued, 'They will think we are afraid of them if we do.'" ²²

In addition to the standard disloyalty charges, use was made against Lindbergh of a resolution he had introduced in Congress in July, 1916, asking for an investigation of the political activities of the Catholic church and of those organizations which were accusing it of such activity. Though it was made to so appear, the resolution was not directed against the Catholic church but was designed to clear the air of a welter of charges and countercharges prevalent at the time. The day before the primary, the *Catholic Bulletin*, official paper for the archdiocese of St. Paul, carried a two-column editorial disparaging Lindbergh's candidacy and making particular reference to the resolution, which was said to have been distributed widely throughout the state. Bishop Joseph F. Busch of St. Cloud, closing his address at the commencement exercises of St. Benedict's Academy at St. Joseph on June 7, was reported by the *St. Cloud Times* to have "begged the good Sisters of the Academy and all women to throw their whole souls into the prayer, 'Lindbergh shall not be Governor.'" ²³

Even one of the state's major cities, Duluth, went so far at one time as to lock the hall where the League candidate was scheduled to speak. The comment on this incident by the *Duluth News-Tribune* of May 29 was a masterpiece of misrepresentation and a fair sample of his treatment by the daily press: "Lindbergh wanted to speak

²⁰ *Leader*, July 8, 1918, p. 12.

²¹ *Minneapolis Journal*, June 11, 1918, p. 1.

²² Haines, *The Lindberghs*, 282.

²³ Quoted in Haines, *The Lindberghs*, 293.

here. No one cared to hear him. The city objected to the disgrace. It has entertained too many returned soldiers, bearing the wounds of battle, to be willing to act as host to a friend of the Kaiser.

"It had just gone away over on its Red Cross quota; it did not care to hear a man who objected to Red Cross contributions. It had just oversubscribed its quota of the third Liberty Loan. It did not want as guest a man who opposed these war loans.

"Two thousand more of its sons are in France or on the seas or on the way. It did not care to listen to a man who had opposed enlistment and whose dirk has been aimed at the backs of these men."²⁴

GOVERNOR Burnquist and his supporting press announced that he was not campaigning this year because he "doesn't believe this is a time to go into politics" or to "advance his own candidacy." Devoting himself to being the hard-working wartime chief executive, he would not discuss issues or defend his administration, it was said, but he was "confident" that the "patriotic people" of the state would return him to office because he was "loyal." Yet beneath the surface a hard-fought campaign was being waged. Workers combed the state encouraging local groups to call "loyalty meetings" and invite the governor to make "loyalty speeches." In fact these engagements kept the governor busy every day for weeks prior to the primary election on June 17, and oddly enough they had started just about when a governor making a campaign for re-election would have started. Burnquist's tactics, fumed the *Leader* of June 10, were simply a "dodge" to avoid having to discuss the real issues, and the "loyalty meeting" technique was nothing more than a method of campaigning at public expense, since the Public Safety Commission financed all such gatherings.

The *Leader* did not dare to seem too hopeful of success, and spoke cautiously on election eve of the youth of the organization in the state and the fact that the League

had the support of no daily paper; yet it put strong emphasis on the significance of this election in its issue of June 10, where the following statement appeared:

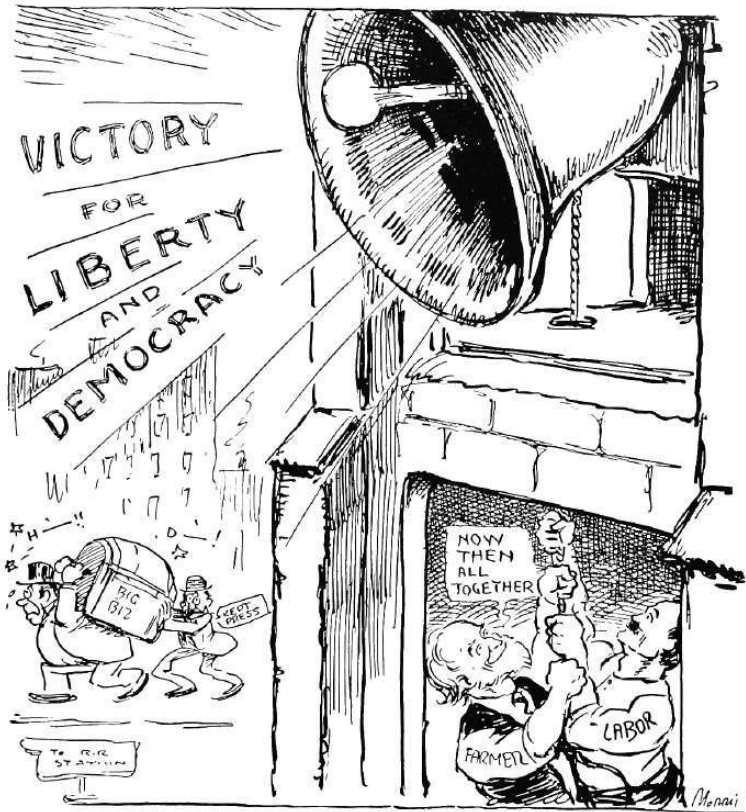
"It can be truly said that the coming state-wide primary in Minnesota is one of the most important, if not *the* most important election that any state ever held. It will be the first test of the ability of farmers and city working people to cooperate and take over the functions of government for *producers*, who constitute two-thirds of the mass of the people, and who are consequently entitled to rule. . . .

"If organized farmers and organized labor can carry Minnesota, they can carry any state in the Union. Carried to its logical conclusion, this sort of cooperation will eventually mean the election of a president of the United States and of a majority in both branches of Congress."

To the *Minneapolis Journal* it was clear that "the nomination of Lindbergh would be more than a disgrace — it would be a great misfortune." The emergency, it declared in its issue of June 1, "calls for an omni-partisan counterattack to rout the Nonpartisan offensive." Every action and utterance of Governor Burnquist's received extensive publicity, while Lindbergh's campaign was scarcely mentioned except in editorial attack. There was no doubt about the duty of every citizen, concluded the *Journal* of June 14, which told its readers that "The only way to be fair to your Country, State, and City in 1918 is overwhelmingly to vote down Socialism, wherever it shows its head." And on the following day the paper announced: "The *Journal* believes Republicans and Democrats alike should vote in the primary for Burnquist in order

²⁴ It is interesting that a man so reviled as a traitor and coward should be looked upon by a later generation in a very different light. Minnesota today has a state memorial park named in his honor, and the only bust gracing the main hall of the Minnesota Historical Building is one of Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Sr. For a note on this bronze and the sculptor, Paul Fjelde, see *Minnesota History*, 21:294 (September, 1940).

“WHEN They Pull Together,”
a cartoon by Morris
in the “Leader,”
July 15, 1918



that the stigma of disloyalty may not rest upon this state. In this way a loyal governor will be insured whether Burnquist or his Democratic opponent should win in November.” The election-day headline of the *St. Paul Dispatch* on June 17 reported that “Patriots Battle at Primary to Rout Non-partisans.”

The League and its candidates had put up a valiant fight against tremendous difficulties, but the odds proved too great. Lindbergh was defeated by Burnquist for the Republican nomination by a vote of 199,325 to 150,626, yet in any ordinary year he would have had a decisive victory. Never

before had the total vote in a Republican primary reached 200,000 (168,308 in 1916), but here was a total of nearly 350,000. Many prominent Democrats had joined their voices to the persistent appeals of the Twin Cities dailies in asking Democrats to vote in the Republican primaries for Burnquist, Minnesota being an open primary state, and the pleas had obviously had their effect. The Democrats had polled 93,112 votes in 1916, but dropped to 32,649 in 1918. Lindbergh carried thirty of the eighty-six counties, lost six others by fewer than a hundred votes, and ten others by fewer than three hundred.²⁵ In nineteen counties the League had been forbidden to hold meetings.

The only League-endorsed candidate to win nomination was the candidate for clerk of the Supreme Court, Herman Mueller, who emerged with a plurality of three thousand in a three-way race.²⁶ Approximately three-fourths of the League’s candidates for the legislature were successful,

²⁵ Minnesota, *Legislative Manual*, 1919, p. 252; *Leader*, July 29, 1918, p. 2; Robert Kingsley, “Recent Variations from the Two Party System as Evidenced by the Nonpartisan League and the Agricultural Bloc,” 30. The latter is an unpublished master’s thesis submitted at the University of Minnesota in 1923. The Minnesota Historical Society has a copy.

²⁶ *Legislative Manual*, 1919, p. 252.

assuring, thought the *Leader* of July 8, "at least . . . a strong minority that will be the balance of power." The *Journal* of June 18 saw the results as heart-warming proof "that the vast majority of the people of Minnesota . . . are true-blue loyalists."

But the *Leader*, for its part, was not in the least downcast. With a membership of 50,000, the League had polled 150,000 votes, and in each of the counties in which it was at least fifty per cent organized its candidates had received overwhelming majorities — often two or three to one. Labor wards in the cities had likewise returned large majorities. Both farmers and workers had "stuck," it said, and the results were actually an amazing victory, considering the odds faced, the shortness of time for organization, the character of the opposition campaign, and the fact that this was the first attempt at farmer-labor co-operation. If such inroads could be made in two years, what could be accomplished in four or six? Surely the outcome of this election ensured "the permanency, growth and final complete triumph of the people's cause in this state."²⁷

The efforts to elect a state administration were not abandoned with the defeat of Lindbergh. Delegate conventions of the League and of organized labor assembled separately in St. Paul on August 25, and endorsed David H. Evans of Tracy, a well-to-do hardware merchant and owner of a small farm, for governor, and Tom Davis of Marshall, a lawyer and member of the preceding legislature, for attorney general. Evans, well along in years at this time, was not a well-known political figure, but had been a staunch Populist and now classed himself as a Democrat. It was the first time in the history of the state that labor had called a political convention. Though they met separately, the two conventions worked closely together, and the *Leader* recognized that they had deviated from previous principles and had "virtually formed a new party, and are contesting with nominees of both old parties." The petitions were origi-

nally filed for the candidates to run as independents, but because of a ruling of the attorney general that names could be printed on the ballot only as the candidates of some party, the name "Farmer-Labor party" was adopted.²⁸

The Minnesota campaign continued to be conducted along essentially the lines laid down before the primary, though there was far less excitement on both sides. No wave of enthusiasm had been generated by the Evans candidacy, and the opposition clearly felt him to be a much easier candidate to beat than Lindbergh. The Public Safety Commission's publicity department, maintained for the purpose of circulating "loyalty literature" throughout the state, continued to be of tremendous help to the campaign which Governor Burnquist was or was not waging, depending upon how one looked on his activities. It distributed endless attacks upon the League, and much of its literature contained fulsome praise of the governor and all his works.

Governor Burnquist once again emerged victorious, this time by a vote of 166,611 to 111,966 for Evans, although he lacked a clear majority. The only successful League candidate for state office was the clerk of the Supreme Court, who, it will be remembered, had the Republican nomination. Seven League senators and twenty-five representatives were elected, and Minneapolis and St. Paul labor contributed five senators and nine representatives.²⁹ While the dreams of the preceding spring were far from realized, substantial progress had unquestionably been made, and the Minnesota Farmer-Labor party had been conceived if not yet born.

²⁷ *Leader*, July 1, 1918, p. 5.

²⁸ *Leader*, September 16, 1918, p. 3; William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 3:548 (St. Paul, 1926).

²⁹ *Legislative Manual*, 1919, insert facing p. 670; Henry G. Teigan, "The National Nonpartisan League," in *American Labor Year Book*, 1919-20, p. 284; *Leader*, November 25, 1918, p. 4. These sources vary slightly, and the figures given are the best possible reconciliation.



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