
Candling the CPPA

by William F. Dunne

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The round of investigation halts for the weekend and as the dust settles and quiet impends it is possible to estimate the casualties suffered and the terrain lost or gained by the fire of charges, countercharges, accusations, and denials that the press reports to a palpitating public.

Outside the immediate zone of the struggle, a non-combatant within every meaning of the term, the Conference for Progressive Political Action has suffered vicariously but severely. Its spiritual leader, William G. McAdoo, venturing into the combat area, received the fire of both forces and retired in great disorder, blood and oil dripping from a thousand wounds.

Gathered in St. Louis to rally the faithful to the McAdoo standard, the Conference for Progressive Political Action found the name of its leader on the casualty list. Prepared to serve under no other banner, it met, mourned, and went home after calling another meeting for Cleveland for lack of something better to do.

In the meantime, careful nursing had restored McAdoo to activity if not to health.

Hope Revives.

The more obvious oiliness of others whose love for lucre had brought them to the edge of the Teapot and into which they slipped, gave encour-

agement to the McAdoo clan. Perhaps the chieftain was not so badly wounded after all.

The spark of hope, almost extinguished, began to glow again in the breast of the Conference for Progressive Political Action. To what unkind critics referred to as the McAdoo candling conference in the Great Northern Hotel, came the still downcast but more hopeful spokesmen of the railway unions.

The candling completed, it was discovered that the McAdoo albuminous content was somewhat addled by oil; undeterred by this discovery leaders of the Conference for Progressive Political Action present made a few quick comparisons and announced that addled or not McAdoo was not addled to the extent that other candidates were.

It was a noble decision and tears were in the McAdoo voice as he referred to their loyalty in accepting the "command" to serve, delivered by leaders of organized workers, rallying to an open and avowed supporter of the blackest labor-hating interests in America.

McAdoo Messiahs.

What term is too opprobrious to characterize labor officials like B.M. Jewell, head of the Railway Employee Department of the AF of L; Ryan, head of the Railway Carmen; Franklin, head



of the Boilermakers Union; Manion, head of the Railway Telegraphers; Sheppard of the Railway Conductors; Flojsdal of the Maintenance of Way Brotherhood; Fitzgerald of the Railway Clerks; Healy of the Firemen and Oilers; Wharton of the International Association of Machinists, and others who sign a resolution expressing confidence in McAdoo with the full knowledge gained from his own statement that he was employed by Doheny to foment a war against the workers and peasants of Mexico, so that his paymasters could seize the Mexican oil lands?

What of William Johnson, head of the Machinists Union, who issues an apology because some newspapers quoted him as saying that McAdoo was unavailable as a candidate because of his oil connections?

What of this whole crew of labor officials who control the Conference for Progressive Political Action in the interest of the parties of American capitalism and who, when their chosen candidate in the Democrat Party is found to be on the payroll of oil companies in a particularly vile capacity, apologize for his actions, stall for time, and finally end by endorsing him on behalf of the organized workers?

Some Illusions Shattered.

It has been said by persons more charitable than discerning that these labor officials were honest in their convictions; that in good time, when the opportunity presented itself, they would lead their followers into a political party independent of the capitalist parties; that they moved slowly because they felt the weight of great responsibilities. It was even said that these labor officials would themselves launch a great mass party of the workers and farmers of America.

They have been the petted darlings of American liberalism; the intelligentsia who hang about the fringe of the labor movement and write their collected impressions have been greatly impressed

of late with the new spirit that animates labor union officialdom.

The Chicago conference which renovated McAdoo gives the lie to all these statements.

The officialdom of the Conference for Progressive Political Action has been shown to belong to the Right Wing of the Democrat Party; its officialdom has announced to the world that its policy is the Gompers policy of getting something for labor officials in the shape of appointments to fat jobs while the rank and file fights injunctions issued and wars declared by the successful candidates whom their officials fawn upon.

The endorsement of McAdoo has shown the Conference for Progressive Political Action to be part and parcel of the Gompers machine, its progressivism to be a sham, and its inner infamy to exceed anything hinted at by the most bitter critic of the American Federation of Labor.

Previous Servitude.

We say here and now that the crimes perpetrated upon the American workers during the world war by the Wilson administration, of which labor union officialdom was a part were of such an atrocious character, their connivance in the gigantic looting schemes so flagrant, their betrayal of the active unionists in cooperation with the Department of Justice so infamous, that they dare not, unless confronted by a greater danger, desert the parties of the employers.

The Conference for Progressive Political Action since the McAdoo endorsement stands convicted before the American workers and farmers as an agency for sabotaging the Farmer-Labor Party movement; an organization dominated by officials whose stomachs are so strong that the crudest of crude oil does not act as a purge; an organization whose mission is to confuse, demoralize, and finally sell out to the lords of oil, steel, coal, transportation, and credit, the men and women who pay their salaries.

The Conference for Progressive Political Action waits now for payment for its treason. It hopes that one or the other of perhaps both of the capitalist parties will incorporate planks in their platforms or nominate candidates that can be held up as concessions to labor.

They join with the employers and bankers in slandering the organizers of a Farmer-Labor Party and in whitewashing the spokesmen of American capitalism, at whose names the American people spit.

What Must Be Done.

There is one thing that may force these capitalist party politicians in the labor movement to acknowledge their attempts at betrayal and discontinue their efforts to sabotage the formation of a mass party of workers and farmers. If the May 30 [1924] Farmer-Labor Convention in St. Paul is a great demonstration of the disgust with and

distrust of the parties of American capitalism on the part of great sections of the workers and farmers, the Cleveland meeting of the Conference for Progressive Political Action may be swung into the movement.

Only mass pressure can accomplish this.

For the organization of a great mass convention on May 30 that will launch a great party of workers and farmers every nerve must be strained by those who understand that the time for such a movement is here and is prevented only by the treason of ignorant and corrupt officials.

The Conference for Progressive Political Action must not be allowed to consummate its open and obvious plans for wrecking the May 30 Convention and making the Cleveland conference a ratification meeting for McAdoo or some other representative of oil, steel, transportation, and banking.

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