

LA FOLLETTE READY TO LEAD NEW PARTY; ASSAILS COMMUNISM

**Virtually Says He Will Run
Unless Old Parties
Clean House.**

WARNS ALL PROGRESSIVES

**Advises Them to Repudiate St.
Paul Convention, Whose Con-
trol Communists Seek.**

MOVE STIRS WASHINGTON

**Committee of 48 Quits Farmer-
Labor Party—Latter Won't
Change Plans.**

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, May 28.—Senator La Follette, leader of the Radical-Progressive group in Congress, created a political sensation today through the publication of a letter in which he practically stated that he would head a third party ticket in this Fall's campaign in opposition to the Democratic and Republican Presidential candidates unless both the major parties "cleaned house" to his liking.

Simultaneously he roundly denounced the Communist Party and warned Progressives that it was seeking to dominate for its own ends, the Farmer-Labor Progressive convention called for June 17, at St. Paul.

While there has been a growing belief that he intended to father an independent organization, nothing so directly indicating his purpose has come from the Senator himself as today's announcement of his views on the existing situation.

To Await Conventions' Results.

The announcement was made in a letter written by the Senator at Atlantic City in May to Attorney General Ekern of Wisconsin, which was given out for publication from Mr. La Follette's office in the Capitol. The letter chiefly condemns the action of the Farmer-Labor Progressive Party in agreeing to admit delegates representing the Communist Party to its national convention.

In repudiating the use of his name by the promoters of the St. Paul convention, "in such a way as to convey the impression that it has my approval," Senator La Follette serves notice that, unless the Republican and Democratic Parties have a thorough housecleaning, an independent political movement will result.

"If this is not done," says the letter, "a long-suffering and righteously indignant people will find in the coming campaign effective means, independent of both these old parties, to take back control of their Government and make it truly representative."

Read in the light of its context, Senator La Follette's letter confirms the understanding held here that he will not decide the steps he will ultimately take until after the Republican and Democratic national conventions have been held.

In his letters he says that these conventions will demonstrate whether either of the old parties "can and will" get rid of "the evil influences which have long dominated them." This cannot be done "by merely nominating some alleged Progressive and filling the platform with misleading promises."

The major parties, to gain Mr. La Follette's support, must get rid of "monopoly control," throw out "corrupt political bosses," adopt "truly progressive principles" and repudiate "those great campaign contributors who have in the past bought up both parties."

There are parts of the letter that sound conservative, considering, their source. In condemning the Communists he says that "all Progressives should refuse to participate in any movement which makes cause with any Communist organization."

Declares Against Soviet.

The Soviet Government of Russia, the Senator writes, is inconsistent with the democracy of America. The only purpose of the Communists in joining the Progressive cause "is to disrupt it."

Mr. La Follette quotes articles to show that the Communist International at Moscow urged its representatives in America to take part in the St. Paul convention.

The outstanding feature of the comments already heard on the letter is that its condemnation of communism and sovietism, coming from one classed as a radical, will have a far-reaching effect in curtailing the activities of Russian Reds in the United States and injure their movement to a considerable degree.

Politically, Mr. La Follette's denunciation of communism is expected to bear

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LA FOLLETTE READY TO LEAD THIRD PARTY

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fruit. Many farmers of the West, inclined to approve his views, have looked askance at the endorsement of the Soviet Government of Russia by some leading American politicians. Those of this trend of mind will find it easier to make a political hero of the Senator from Wisconsin, and the importance of this is not lost on those who look with apprehension on his apparent purpose to organize an independent political movement.

Washington's View of His Plans.

Still another important angle of Mr. La Follette's declaration is his virtual repudiation of support from the Farmer-Labor Party, which is strong in certain portions of the Northwest and has two Representatives in the United States Senate who have followed his leadership, unless it purges itself of Communist delegates.

The Senator has been at Atlantic City for some time recuperating from an attack of pneumonia and presumably getting himself in physical shape for a strenuous political campaign. While there he has seen many persons active in the Radical Progressive ranks. According to the opinion held here, he is planning to take the nomination of a third party with a view to throwing the Presidential election into the House of Representatives, where, with the following he has in that body, it would be impossible for the candidate of either of the major parties to be chosen without making terms with him.

Under the Constitution, the House, when it is called on to choose a President, must confine its voting for choice to the three candidates having the highest number of electoral votes. If there has been no election of a Vice President the Senate must choose that official, but the choice is restricted to the two persons having the greatest number of electoral votes.

That would mean that the choice would be restricted to either the Republican or the Democratic nominee and would shut out the candidate for Vice President of Mr. La Follette's independent movement. If the House fails to elect a President then the Vice President chosen by the Senate becomes President. As in the House, the La Follette group holds the balance of power in the Senate. The present Congress would make the choice of President and Vice President if there should be no election by electors.

The belief prevails at the capital that Senator La Follette intends, if he starts his independent movement, to have his candidates for President and Vice President brought into the contest through nominating Presidential electors in each State by petition. This is easier than might appear, for State laws are extremely liberal on the subject, some of them permitting electors to be nominated on the petition of as few as 300 persons and others permitting nomination on petition by 1 per cent. of specified classes of votes polled in a prior election.

Text of La Follette's Letter.

The text of Senator La Follette's letter follows:

Atlantic City, N. J., May 26, 1924.
Hon. Herman L. Ekern, Attorney General, Madison, Wis.

My dear Mr. Ekern:
I have your letter of May 17, saying that many of my friends in Wisconsin are anxious to know my attitude toward the Farmer-Labor-Progressive Convention called to meet at St. Paul, June 17.

I should not feel it incumbent upon me to declare my attitude except that my name is being used by the promoters of that convention in such a way as to convey the impression that it has my approval, and as a result some of my friends in different parts of the country contemplate attending the St. Paul convention. Because of these facts, I feel it my duty to state my views frankly.

I have no doubt that very many of those who have participated in bringing about the St. Paul convention have been actuated by the purest desire to promote genuine political and economic progress.

Nevertheless, in my judgment, the June 17 convention will not command the support of the farmers, the workers or other Progressives because those who have had charge of the ar-

rangements for this convention have committed the fatal error of making the Communists an integral part of their organization.

The Communists have admittedly entered into this political movement not for the purpose of curing, by means of the ballot, the evils which afflict the American people, but only to divide and confuse the Progressive movement and create a condition of chaos favorable to their ultimate aims. Their real purpose is to establish by revolutionary action a dictatorship of the proletariat, which is absolutely repugnant to democratic ideals and to all American aspirations. The official declarations of the Workers' Party show clearly that they are seeking to use the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota and other Progressive organizations that lent their names to this convention as a means of advancing their own ends.

This is shown by an official statement of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers' Party of America as follows:

(Printed in The Daily Worker, the official organ of the Workers' Party, March 31, 1924.)

The policy which we adopt in Minnesota will be a precedent for the whole party in relation to the national Farmer-Labor Party when that organization is finally crystallized. It is therefore important that we adopt the correct Communist policy in Minnesota as a guide to our whole party for its WORK INSIDE OF THE FARMER-LABOR PARTY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

The Workers' Party prides itself on being a Communist Party; that means that IT CONSIDERS ITS WORK TO BUILD UP AND LEAD THE FORCES WHICH WILL BRING ABOUT A PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION IN THE UNITED STATES AND ESTABLISH A SOVIET FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
C. E. RUTHENBERG,
Secretary.

Progressives, inclined to attend the June 17 convention should also consider the statement, published in The Daily Worker of May 16, 1924, by the Central Executive Committee of the Workers' Party of America over the signature of William Z. Foster, and C. E. Ruthenberg, Executive Secretary:

"In order to settle the question of whether the Farmer-Labor united front was a policy that a Communist Party such as the Workers' Party should put into effect and in support of which it should throw all its strength, the Central Executive Committee of the Workers' Party submitted this question to the Communist International (Moscow), with which it is affiliated as a fraternal organization.

"The view of the Communist International on this question is expressed in the following cablegram:

"Communist International considers June 17 convention momentous importance for Workers' Party. Urges C. E. C. not to slacken activities preparation June 17. Utilize every available force to make St. Paul convention great representative gathering labor and left wing.

"EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL."

Has No Fear of Communists.

The Communist organization in America thus acting under orders from the Communist International at Moscow, will not only participate in the St. Paul convention on June 17, but has already secured a strategic position in the direction of that convention. C. A. Hathaway, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Committee on Arrangements for the St. Paul convention, is an avowed Communist, and was a delegate to its Third National Convention, held in Chicago, Dec. 30, 1923. All credentials for the St. Paul convention are made returnable to Hathaway as Secretary, and as Treasurer he controls its funds. Joseph Manley, son-in-law of William Z. Foster and an avowed Communist, is also a member of the Committee on Arrangements.

Although the National Communist organization, as such, may be granted only five delegates in the St. Paul convention, the basis of representation adopted is lending itself to their purpose to control. Reliable information shows that a very large number of Communist delegates will be present at St. Paul with duly authorized credentials.

Reposing complete confidence in the soundness of the deliberate judgment of the American people, I have no apprehension that the Communist Party can ever command any considerable

support in this country. I do not question their right, under the Constitution, to submit their issues to the people, but I most emphatically protest against their being admitted into the councils of any body of Progressive voters. The Communists stand for the substitution of the Soviet form of government for the one we now have and propose to accomplish this change through a revolution, with a class dictatorship as their ultimate aim instead of a democracy. To pretend that the Communists can work with the Progressives who believe in democracy is deliberately to deceive the public. The Communists are antagonistic to the Progressive cause and their only purpose in joining such a movement is to disrupt it.

Not only are the Communists the mortal enemies of the Progressive movement and democratic ideals, but under the cloak of such extremists, the reactionary interests find the best opportunity to plant their spies and provocatory agents for the purpose of confusing and destroying true Progressive movements.

Assails Monopoly Control.

I have devoted many years of my life to an effort to solve the problems which confront the American people by the ballot and not by force. I believe that the people through the ballot can completely control their Government in every branch and compel it to serve them effectively. I have fought steadfastly to achieve this end, and I shall not abandon this fight as long as I may live. I believe, therefore, that all Progressives should refuse to participate in any movement which makes common cause with any Communist organization.

There is no doubt that the people have come to understand that private monopoly controls the official machinery of both the Democratic and Republican parties. Recent public scandals, such as the War Frauds, the Shipping Board, Teapot Dome and other oil leases, the Veterans' Bureau, the Allen Property Custodian, the degradation of the Department of Justice, under both Democratic and Republican Administrations, and the endless fraud and corruption in connection with taxation and prohibition enforcement, are but evidences of such control of party by lawless and predatory interests.

The approaching Democratic and Republican Conventions will demonstrate to the people whether either of those parties can and will purge itself of the evil influences which have long dominated them. This cannot be accomplished by merely nominating some alleged Progressive and filling the platform with misleading promises. It demands the elimination of monopoly control, the downfall of the corrupt political bosses, the adoption of truly progressive principles and the repudiation of those great campaign contributors who have in the past bought up both parties.

If this is not done a long suffering and indignant people will find in the coming campaign effective means, independent of both these old parties, to take back control of their Government and make it truly representative.

Sincerely yours,
ROBERT M. LA FOLLETTE.

FOLLOW LA FOLLETTE'S ADVICE

Committee of 48 Withdraws From St. Paul Convention.

With Senator La Follette denouncing as "Communist" and on that ground repudiating the prospective convention of "Progressives," scheduled to meet at St. Paul on June 17, heretofore it had been thought to nominate the Wisconsin Senator for President on a third party ticket, J. A. H. Hopkins, Chairman of the Committee of Forty-eight, up to the present one of the prime factors in the movement, announced last night that his committee would withdraw from the convention and that he would call on all affiliated groups to do likewise.

Of the eighteen groups which signed the call for the June 17 convention, all with the exception of three or four are more or less directly affiliated with the Committee of Forty-eight and in all likelihood will prove amenable to directions emanating from Chairman Hopkins. He said last night that while in the convention, as it was contemplated originally, the Communist element in his opinion would have been in a small minority, the withdrawal of the Committee of Forty-eight and its allies

might possible give control of the convention to the Communists and through them to the Third International in Moscow.

Mr. Hopkins said that while the convention had been called in good faith, he was fully alive to the peril to which Senator La Follette called attention in his letter to Attorney General Ekern of Wisconsin and in thorough accord with the Senator's views. He said the La Follette platform was identical with the platform already promulgated by the Committee of Forty-eight.

In a statement made public last night Mr. Hopkins announced that he would certify National and State delegates to represent the Committee of Forty-eight and affiliated groups at the conference of other third party supporters which has been called to meet at Cleveland on July 4, under the auspices of the Conference for Progressive Political Action, under whose banners have assembled certain labor organizations of less radical hue than those interested in the gathering at St. Paul.

Among local Republicans the failure of Senator La Follette to say explicitly that he was willing to assume the leadership in a prospective third party fight was regarded as not without significance. Some expressed the view that he was merely serving notice on and attempting to "throw a scare" into the two older parties to influence the actions of their national conventions. Others appeared to believe that in a rule or ruin spirit he would take the warpath, not with any idea of winning, but on the long chance of being able to deadlock the Electoral College and throw the election into the House with some ultimate political profit to himself and his group of "Progressives."

In his statement Chairman Hopkins said:

"We recognize the right of the Communists to give legal expression, political or otherwise, to their views, but those views are in direct opposition to everything for which the Committee of Forty-eight has stood and will continue to stand. The Committee of Forty-eight therefore takes a position similar to that announced by Senator La Follette in the statement he issued Wednesday. His political purpose and program are identical with our own. He could participate in no movement controlled, as a whole or in part, by Communists any more than he could participate in a movement controlled by the Republican or Democratic Old Guard.

"For many months we have been hoping that Senator La Follette would issue a positive statement as to his position, which he has now done.

"As the matter stands, Senator La Follette has requested that all Progressives should refrain from participating in the June 17 convention. This request cannot be lightly disregarded, especially by any of his friends who, like ourselves, have labored for years to bring about his nomination for the Presidency. Assuming, as we well may, that the requirements which Senator La Follette has described are quite impossible of fulfillment either by the Republican or Democratic parties, I take his statement to mean that he is ready and willing to accept the Presidential nomination at the Cleveland convention of the conference for Progressive Political Action on July 4 and that the convention will take take action accordingly.

"For the reasons stated the Committee of Forty-eight withdraws from the June 17 convention and will recommend similar action to every organization participating therein. Furthermore, in pursuance of the authority already vested in me as National Executive Chairman through the resolution adopted last week, I shall take steps to certify Committee of Forty-eight delegates to the to the July 4 convention to the extent of three national delegates and two from each of the State organization with which the Committee of Forty-eight is connected, which, with a corresponding number of alternates, is, I believe, in accordance with the representation designated in the call to this convention.

Chairman Hopkins of the Committee of Forty-eight, in the event that Senator La Follette should fail to accept a nomination from the Cleveland conference, might himself become a candidate. He was named as third choice for the nomination at a preliminary conference held some months ago under the same auspices. Last night he said he understood Senator La Follette was in good enough health to lead the fight. "I understand," said Mr. Hopkins, "that the Senator's long stay at Atlantic City has been for the purpose of grooming himself for the coming conflict."

Charles D. Hilles, Republican National Committeeman, expressed the view that Senator La Follette would be unable on account of his physical condition to go through with a campaign. His opinion was that anything the Republicans might do to meet the views of the Wisconsin Senator would prove unsatisfactory to him and that under the circumstances there could be no effective attempt to conciliate him and his fellow "progressives."

President Samuel S. Koenig of the New York County Republican Committee expressed the opinion that Senator La

Follette had no serious intention of running for President and was merely seeking to influence the action of the old-line parties.