
Like a Prairie Fire Labor Party Spreads:

Movement Starts in Widely Scattered Localities — Enthusiasm and Loyalty in Hundreds of Letters

Unsigned article in *The New Majority* [Chicago], v. 1, no. 1 (Jan. 4, 1919), pg. 4.
As Robert Buck had not yet joined the party, most likely author is Ed Nockels.

Like a prairie fire the Labor Party movement is spreading.

It started in many widely scattered localities without prearrangement. No one tried to get it going in these different places, but like Topsy “it just grewed.”

Local unions and city and state central bodies are organizing to get into politics. Letters and telegrams are being exchanged between officials of organizations and the wave grows bigger every hour.

Men with long experience in the labor movement have never seen anything like this common desire, so enthusiastically expressed, for a new deal in America.

Labor’s 14 Points Endorsed.

The Chicago Federation of Labor was among the first to take the initiative, and its adoption of “Labor’s 14 Points” (printed elsewhere in these columns) has been endorsed by scores of unions and central bodies from New England to Florida and from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The Non-Partisan League, the farmers’ political party in western states, has endorsed the Labor Party movement by unanimous vote of its National Committee in convention assembled. This league has ousted big business from control in North Dakota and is winning victories in half

a dozen other western states. It is growing rapidly on the opposition of grafters allied with evil influences in big business.

“Never before in my 20 years’ experience has there been such prompt and enthusiastic response to any proposition sent out to labor bodies as there has to this Labor Party plan,” said Ed Nockels, Secretary of the Chicago Federation of Labor.

Only Socialists Oppose Party.

“Our correspondence shows that the only organizations that oppose the Labor Party movement are those dominated by Socialists, who claim that the Socialist Party is sufficient and a new party is not needed.

“On the returns received from hundreds of Chicago and Cook County organizations, the Labor Party will be a national organization in the very near future, and will be a power competent to take over political government in the cities, states, and nation.

“If we had a million copies of our platform we could not supply all who want to read it and keep it for reference, and as an aid in forming labor parties in other large and small cities.

“The farmers of Illinois are interested and aided by the Non-Partisan League they will be a big force in the Illinois movement.”

Other Cities Have Labor Parties.

New York City will have a Labor Party. The first conference will be held on January 11 and 12 [1919]. They have asked the Chicago party to send a fraternal delegate. The movement has been endorsed unanimously by the New York committee, consisting of representatives of the Central Labor Union of Brooklyn, the Central Federation Union of New York, and the Woman's Trade Union League.

Bridgeport, Conn., has organized the American Labor Party and is about to call a national conference. Charles E. Haines, General Secretary of the Bridgeport party, has asked the Chicago party to send delegates. In a statement published in Bridgeport papers, Mr. Haines said, "Let the bankers, merchants, employers of labor, and others who oppose the labor class vote their own ticket."

Letters Show Eager Spirit.

Letters received from labor organizations outside of Cook County express enthusiasm and joy, such as troops feel when ordered to attack after long waiting under fire.

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Edited by Tim Davenport.

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