

WHAT OUR LABOR PARTY POLICY HAS ACCOMPLISHED

By WM. Z. FOSTER.

IN the Workers Party, as a hang over from our two-year labor party campaign, we have a tendency led in the C. E. C. minority by Comrades Lovestone and Ruthenberg, and made up of comrades who may be properly dubbed farmer-labor Communists. These comrades have developed a most extravagant evaluation of the farmer-labor party slogan. With them it has become a fetish. They are for the farmer-labor party dead or alive. Despite their loud protests to the contrary, they tend to look upon the farmer-labor party campaign as an end in itself, and not merely as a means (no longer useful) to build the Workers' Party into a mass Communist Party.

These farmer-labor Communists advance the most bizarre theories and make the wildest claims in order to justify their demand that the Workers Party continue to propagate the dead farmer-labor party slogan. They argue in effect that it constitutes the sole means of applying the united front on the political field. In the Workers' Monthly for December, Comrade Ruthenberg makes this astounding statement: "It (abandonment of F.-L. slogan) means the repudiation of the united front as a weapon of our party on the political field." These comrades conceive the farmer-labor party as THE united front, and not, as in truth it was, merely one application of the united front tactic. They ignore completely the many forms of the united front being used thruout the Comintern, and the many that have been used here—of which I shall speak further along. For them the farmer-labor party was the be-all and end-all of the united front program. The essence of their argument is that if we have no farmer-labor party we can have no united front, which is ridiculous.

"Class Party" Confusion.

These comrades, continuing the confusion which was introduced into our party on this subject by Comrade Pepper, also consider the farmer-labor party to be a class party which carries on class political action. Hence, when we make the statement that the farmer-labor party has been amalgamated into the LaFollette movement, Comrade Ruthenberg accuses us (Workers Monthly, December) of saying that "the movement towards class political action by labor is dead." In his mind the farmer-labor party movement and class political action are synonymous. Apparently he does not conceive of a class party except thru his "class" farmer-labor party. Or perhaps, when the difficulty is called to his attention, he will say there are two class political parties, the Workers Party and the "class" farmer-labor party? Is it not high time for all Communists to realize that in the United States there is only one class party, the Workers Party, and that alone—not some semi-demi farmer-labor party—is carrying on class political action?

The Farmer-Labor Legend.

But the point I wish particularly to deal with in this article is the extravagant claim made by the farmer-labor party enthusiasts that the farmer-labor party campaign, as if by magic, built the Workers Party from an obscure sect into a great party. To hear them tell it, the Workers Party was insignificant until it picked up the farmer-labor party slogan, and it will fall back into insignificance again if it drops that slogan. Says Comrade Ruthenberg (Workers Monthly, December): "We shall abandon the slogan which in the past has enabled us to establish close contact with at least the left bloc of the labor movement and to return to our former status of sectarian propaganda."

This legend of the all-creative power of the farmer-labor party slogan has been carefully cultivated in our party by the farmer-labor Communists. It is time to prick the bubble. The fact is, the farmer-labor party campaign was only one of several united fronts, altho the major one, carried on by our party. All these have contributed most substantially to the growth and influence of the Workers Party. But the farmer-labor party slogan has hogged the credit. We must get the right perspective on all our united front work, and not simply accept the current notion that the farmer-labor party campaign alone lifted us from sectarianism and made us a real factor in the labor movement. Let us glance for a moment at some of our other united fronts.

Successful United Front Efforts.

An important movement was the united front campaign for the protection of the foreign-born workers. That was real political work. It gave us a measure of leadership over great masses of workers under very favorable auspices. It enables us to enlarge our circle of sympathizers considerably and to start many valuable proletarian elements on the way towards Communism. Unquestionably our party won very much prestige in this campaign.

Then there was the Friends of Soviet Russia movement. That was essentially a united front. Leaving aside

the fact that it collected over \$1,000,000 for famine-stricken Soviet Russia, it offered our party splendid opportunities for propaganda and for the development and winning over of sympathizers. Akin to the F. S. R., but not so extensive, were the other united front committees set up to work for famine relief and the recognition of Soviet Russia.

Another important united front was and is the Labor Defense Council. Our party has been able to utilize it to great advantage. The Michigan trials marked an epoch in our party history. Much of their effectiveness, both in the matter of finance (\$130,000 has been raised to date) and of publicity, depended upon the Labor Defense Council united front. These trials enabled us to bring our Communist message most forcefully to tremendous circles of workers.

Finally, let me mention the amalgamation united front in the trade unions, altho to our C. E. C. minority everything connected directly to the mass trade unions smacks of syndicalism. The amalgamation campaign began when the W. P. was still what the minority calls a "sect;" that is, before it had been saved by the magic farmer-labor party slogan. The campaign was highly successful. Fully 2,000,000 union workers were won over to giving organized expression in support of our amalgamation slogan. Large circles of sympathizers were created. Many effective contacts in the unions were secured for our party. These later served as valuable bases for our farmer-labor party agitation. This successful amalgamation united front in the unions did very much to establish our party's pretige and control. Indeed, without it our farmer-labor party campaign would have been a fizzle.

United Front Policy a Success.

All these enumerated united fronts helped very substantially in building our party. But it is quite understandable why the C. E. C. minority, trying desperately to galvanize the dead farmer-labor party slogan into life again, should conveniently overlook them and claim all the credit for their pet slogan. By and large, the farmer-labor slogan was helpful to the W. P. so long as there was a mass movement existing in support of it. But much of the early gains made thru it were destroyed by the collapse of the farmer-labor party movement. This debacle, which left the Workers Party in a serious crisis, cost us the loss of many valuable sympathizing ele-

ments in the unions and elsewhere among the workers. The farmer-labor party boosters, of course, say nothing about this. For them the farmer-labor campaign was all roses and victory. But even tho the farmer-labor slogan was most highly effective in the past, as its ardent advocates claim, still to attempt to use it now, as the C. E. C. minority proposes, when there is no mass movement to justify its use, would be to hamstring the Workers Party and do it real injury.

For a Real United Front Policy.

To maintain, as Comrade Ruthenberg does, that giving up the farmer-labor party slogan means abandoning the united front program is ridiculous. In the past, as we have seen, we have carried on several very successful united front campaigns, in addition to that for the farmer-labor party. And in the future we shall have many more united fronts upon the burning issues in the class struggle, and these will be far more successful than any we have had in the past. Conceivably, conditions may possibly so change in the time to come that, with the growth of a mass farmer-labor party movement, we can again use the farmer-labor party slogan profitably, but in the absence of such a movement we cannot so use it now.

While the farmer-labor party slogan was alive the tendency was to concentrate on that and to neglect other essential party activities, especially the organization of united fronts around concrete issues in the workers' everyday life. The farmer-labor party was used too much as a sort of catch-all it was a too-ready answer to the workers' demands for organs of struggle and for the struggle itself. It is a very significant fact that only a few days ago the C. E. C. appointed a sub-committee whose function it is to organize, for the first time, our united front work. This committee is charged with constantly surveying the various phases of the class struggle and to initiate, wherever opportunity presents, local and national united front movements around concrete demands of the workers.

The charge of sectarianism against the C. E. C. is "hokum." The united front campaign will not be abandoned simply because we can no longer profitably use the slogan of a farmer-labor party. On the contrary, in its many manifestations, it must and will go ahead more systematically, determinedly, and effectively than ever. The united front is the great means to bring the Workers Party directly into the struggle of the toiling masses and to build it into a mass Communist Party.

An Unanimous Decision

A UNITED FRONT UPON THE POLICY TO

Insure The Daily Worker for 1925

AT the last full meeting of the C. E. C. of the Workers Party an important decision was made. It was decided that all party papers must precede the discussion going on in their columns regarding the future policy of the party by a call to action, by a call for a united front upon the POLICY TO BUY A POLICY TO INSURE THE DAILY WORKER FOR 1925.

Nothing must interfere with the campaign now in progress to give the DAILY WORKER a helping hand over a bit of rough road it is at present compelled to travel. The assistance of EVERY party member must be had. The C. E. C. voted that no other campaign shall be made by the party until the DAILY WORKER is made safe.

We understand that the attention of every party member will gravitate towards the interesting party discussion now going on. Every party member should take a vital interest in this discussion. But every party member must give equal attention to helping the DAILY WORKER. The C. E. C. in fact decided that every discussion meeting held must be preceded by a talk upon and sale of INSURANCE POLICIES, issued to INSURE THE DAILY WORKER FOR 1925.

Your branch secretary has received a BIG RED BOOK OF POLICIES. These INSURANCE POLICIES are priced \$10, \$5 and \$1. Party members should buy no less than a \$5 policy. The \$1 policies can be sold to sympathizers.

While the party seeths with discussion over our future party policy and tasks, there is ONE POLICY upon which there must be unanimous agreement. That is the POLICY to buy a POLICY to INSURE OUR DAILY.

WORKERS PARTY OF AMERICA

William Z. Foster, Chairman.

C. E. Ruthenberg, Executive Secretary.

COMMUNIST ACTION NEEDED ON THE POLITICAL FIELD AS WELL AS COMMUNIST FAITH

By KARL REEVE.

Altho the C. E. C. majority declares its supreme faith in the Workers Party, the C. E. C. majority thesis itself leads to just the opposite conclusion. A pessimism and an unwarranted feeling of hopelessness is manifested by the majority when confronted with the present political situation.

Comrade Bittelmann, who has signed the C. E. C. majority thesis, declared in a former article on the party discussion, "We (the majority) still have faith in the Workers Party. We still believe in its ability to develop and grow and become the recognized leader of the American

working class. We are not disappointed in the Workers Party." And Comrade Browder declares that the minority "betrays a complete lack of confidence in our party."

The C. E. C. majority thesis, however, declares, "The masses of the workers and poor farmers, inasmuch as they reject the leadership of the old capitalist parties, and are not yet ready to accept the leadership of and to give their support to the Workers Party, follow the lead of the LaFollette movement."

The C. E. C. majority thesis displays no faith, no thot of the possibility, in fact, that the Workers Party, by means of the united front