

BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR ORGANIZERS

One thing which must never be forgotten is that every step toward progress which has been made in the whole history of the world has been made by "organized people", whether a tribe, Jesus' 12 disciples or organized farmers who stopped foreclosure sales in the 1930ies.

Farmers can promote and defend their interests **ONLY** through an organization in which farmers speak for farmers -- an organization which has no ties with big business whose gigantic profits are piled up at the expense of farmers and workers.

THE SITUATION

No one needs to tell farmers that they are facing the most critical period in the history of American Agriculture.

The squeeze is on. Farmers are receiving less and less for what they sell while costs and machinery go higher and higher. In 1937 Corn was 75¢ a bushel and a "B" John Deere tractor was about \$635. ~~By the same ratio we should~~ Eggs were near 20¢ while coffee was about 20¢. By the same ratio we should have over \$3 corn and 80¢ eggs to buy the same things today.

A MILLION AND A HALF farmers have been eliminated since 1935. Many groups are advocating another 2 to ³/₄ million should go.

PARITY: Although there has been an extension of 90% of parity on corn the Iowa farmer is still without supports on 85% of his ~~his~~ farm income. The Iowa corn farmer is also a livestock farmer and markets his corn through livestock and livestock products. From the past year ~~year~~ we know that eggs, hogs and cattle are very uncertain. To put a supported crop into unsupported livestock can lead to bankruptcy fast for Iowa farmers.

TENANTS: In 1880 25% of the farmers were tenants. Today % are tenants in Iowa. Rents continue to soar. Renters have little bargaining power in competing for a farm.

INFLATED LAND PRICES: Much land is being bought by eastern money to hedge against inflation. This is driving land still higher.

TAXES: Taxes are at an unprecedented high. Most all of it goes for the military.

THE WAR: If all of this was not enough the farmer and his wife are asked to raise their sons to where they would be of help on the farm and then put them into the Army to go half way round the world to kill and be killed, maim and be maimed. General Hershey, head of the ~~draft~~ selective service, said "under 23 the crop is lush and ready to be harvested" and earlier he said we need some young "killers". Farmers are asked to sacrifice their sons to protect dictators and conditions abroad which ~~the~~ they would not tolerate here at home in dying for such tyrants as Syngman Rhee and Chaing kai-Shek.

Only organized farmers have a chance of fighting back. ^{Big} business knows this and that is why they try so hard to destroy or compromise our organization and leaders.

THE IOWA FARMERS UNION HAS DONE MUCH IN THE PAST ~~FEW~~ YEARS:

1. It has stood ^{consistently} since 1948 for 100% of parity. It was the leader among all farm organizations in this.
2. Almost single handed it has exposed the plot to eliminate millions of small farmers.
3. It called the shot right on KOREA in 1950. It stood firm and now the overwhelming majority of people are in agreement with our position then.
4. Last winter and spring the Iowa Farmers Union again stood in the forefront in asking for support prices on hogs and eggs while many leaders stood silent.
5. The Iowa Farmers Union has opposed ~~the~~ UMT, peacetime conscription.
6. The Iowa Farmers Union speaks out uncompromisingly against the corroding of our civil rights.
7. The Iowa Farmers Union supports ^{commodity loans,} REA, MVA, SCS, FHA and other programs of benefit to farmers.
8. The Iowa Farmers Union is for a graduated land tax to protect family type farmers.
9. Stands behind sound tax legislation which does not penalize coops.

3-3- Organizers

When we started we said that ^{we must have} a farm organization "which has not ties with big business". W Let's examine now why that is so.

Big business has ~~always~~ always been the traditional enemy of the farmer. As a matter of fact, mainly the farmer is organized for the express purpose of defending himself against the money interest. In the little people's fight for public education, child labor laws, woman suffrage, RFD, Regulation of interstate commerce, Federal income tax it was big business ~~which~~ with their controlled press which fought against these reforms and called farmers "sons of wild jackasses" and "agricultural anarchists" during and before the turn of the century. In 1892 the Populist Party Platform put it this way "The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up a colossal fortune for a few".

Even as early as 1865 Abraham Lincoln could see what was happening when he made one of the classic statements of all time "I see in the future a crisis arising that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the future of my country. Because of the war great corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow and the money powers of the ~~our~~ country will endeavor to prolong their reign by working on the prejudices of the people until all wealth is concentrated into a few hands and the Republic is destroyed."

What would Abraham Lincoln think today if he knew that one financial group J. P. Morgan can buy up 24 states, lock stock and barrel (total assets) and that 211 corporations control 75% of the dollar turnover and 66% of the corporate wealth of the country.

Justice of the Supreme Court Brandies once said "We can have democracy in this country or we can have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few.
We can't have both."

In more recent history the National Association of Manufacturers called Franklin D. Roosevelt's policies "stagnation, degradation and communism".

Need it be said that big business has opposed ^{price stabilization} the ~~OPA~~ --all farm programs and price supports, REA, MVA and in short everything which interferes with their fabulous profits.

Monopoly has been carrying on a running battle against real bonefide farm organizations for over 75 years. The Farm Bureau was started by the Chamber of Commerce, Lackawanna Railroad and Chicago Board of Trade (\$100,000) to mislead and fool the farmer.

For organizations it could not control it has tried to corrupt and discredit its leaders. The Grange started in 1867 as a read small farmers' organization. It fought against the domination of the railroads, high freight rates and was anti-monopoly. By 1875 the Grange had 2¹/₂ million members. Today, however, the Grange not only has a small membership but they also have a program which is almost identical to the Farm Bureau. It is quite evident to any honest student of history that some place along the line the leadership of the Grange was compromised.

DEPRESSIONS

Always a menacing cloud of uncertainty in the lives of farmers has been the "depression". Farmers have gone through many periods of depressions. The New Republic in a special study in the October 25, 1948 issue said "This country has experienced more than ~~20~~ 30 depressions in its 160 years of independent history." To name a few which many of the old timers might remember 1873, 1879, 1891, 1893, 1907. The panic of ~~10~~ 1903 and 1907. ~~4~~ Further from the New Republic "The depression of ~~1913~~ 1913 ended about two years later with assistance of contracts to supply munitions to participants in the First World War."

~~1920~~ In 1920 and, of course, the biggest one of all was 1929. In 1940 we had not fully recovered from the 1929 crash and were going into another downward trend when World War II saved the bacon. The New Republic said further that the conditions in 1948 "every one of them has come when nearly all conditions were strikingly similar to what we have now."

~~1948~~ Farmers didn't need the New Republic or anyone else to tell them in 1948, 49 and 50 that we were heading into a depression. There were several million unemployed and farm prices were going down.

~~After 1929~~

Farmers remember what happened after world War I. In 1919 average farm income was \$1430. By 1921 it was \$554. In February 1920 corn was \$2.20 a bushel. By October of 1920 it was 23¢ and by March 1921--13 months later--corn was 10¢ a bushel.

The Iowa Farmers Union could see what was happening. We were heading for another depression. In 1948 the Iowa Farmers Union at its convention went on record for 100% of parity while some National leaders were endorsing the Hope Aiken 60% Sliding Scale Law. The Iowa Farmers Union was ~~x~~ first to endorse the Brannan Plan. We said spend money on farm programs, price supports, roads, schools, hospitals, etc.

Big business could see what was happening, too. Just like the people they learned something from the 1930ies. They learned that you ~~xxxxxxx~~ couldn't control farmers ~~xxxxxxx~~ very easy. They also knew that if there was a depression in the United States all of the world would be lost to them. But they wouldn't spend money for Brannan Plans, price supports, etc. They had their phoney leaders such as Kline tell the farmers that the Brannan Plan would bankrupt the country. But their flunkie Kline isn't worried today about bankrupting the ~~xxxxxxx~~ country when the money goes into the pockets of the big fellow.

Monoply was faced with a surplus of goods. Their first scheme was the Marshall Plan which permitted the taxpayers of the United States to give money to Europe to buy "wine", ~~xx~~ "cigarettes" and military supplies. Of course, they told us that it was to ~~x~~ "feed" the poor people of Europe. This was big business's "Brannan Plan". But this wasn't enough, they also decided they needed an army to protect their investments and markets.

Gen. Smedley Butler put it this way:

flag follows the money and the military follows the flag

Marshall Plan, T.D. and N.A.P., the next step war ~~like~~
unless stopped.

If as George Cosson has said Russia by some magic was taken from the earth, wouldn't all of the problems ~~exist~~ still be with us. This is an American crisis--not a Russian crisis. We must turn to peaceful pursuits. U.S. News and World Report said on March 21, 1952:

Arms race is something of a phony. Instead of sprinting to get arms with which to win, attention is on jogging along, using arms money to keep business on a fairly even keel. ~~xExcess~~

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From the Wall Street Journal as early as August 3, 1951: "Grim warnings from the Pentagon are largely propaganda. Global war danger is increasing according to Marshall and Pace. What they really fear is a let-down in the arms program, as fighting subsides in Korea. And they want to be sure Congress will appropriate the full \$1 \$61 billion they're asking for defense

The resolution read as follows:

"As every honest observer knows, the Farmers Union is not Communistic and is not a Communist-front organization. Farmers Union officials on many occasions denounced Communism as well as other forms of totalitarianism. For example on July 29, an official statement of the President, approved by the Executive Committee, charged the North Korean aggressors had been 'trained and agitated into waging war on South Korea by Russia!'"

The Iowa Union Farmer headlined the story in their September issue:

"PEOPLE AND PARITY ARE REAL TARGETS OF BRIDGES' SMEAR; FAMILY FARMERS IN FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL"

James Patton sent a letter to the Convention in 1950 and threatened to lift the charter of the Iowa Union if they (Iowa) did not conform to supporting the Korean War with a copy to the "sewer system", The Des Moines, Register. ~~Rxxx~~ Patton had been invited to the convention. Why didn't he come to present his differences to the convention?

At the time of the convention in 1950 Fred Stover said "those farm leaders who support the Korean War would eventually support all the domestic measures necessary for the prosecution of that war--including the sacrificing of several million farm families."

PROOF OF THE PUDDING

~~The Chamber of Commerce~~ There have been many groups advocating the elimination of small farmers. The Chamber of Commerce was the first to say that ~~xxxx~~ there were "sub-marginal" farmers. Later Life Magazine put the number at 3,800,000 that should go. Allan ~~Kxx~~ Kline has for ^o some time talked about "inefficient" farmers. Senator Sparkman made a report in which ~~in which~~ he set the figure at 2,500,000 "underemployed" farmers must go. ~~xxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~

Most of the people making these reports that a certain number of farmers should be eliminated consisted of some of the most reactionary people in America nearly all of them with ties with big business.

When the National Planning Committee made its report that 2,000,000 farmers ~~xxxxxxx~~ are "underemployed" it was not surprising to find such people as Allan Kline on the Board along with representatives of General Mills, investment bankers, Brankers Trust Co., Chamber of

Page 7, Org.

in current fiscal year. HENCE THE ~~XXXX~~ SCARE TALKS. ACTUALLY, military advisers and diplomats have no evidence of New Russian moves."

They want us to be ~~fakin~~ fooled but they don't want to kid themselves.

General Herbert C. Holdridge (ret.) puts it more bluntly. "War is America's business. 'Murder Incorporated' has become our major industry. Most of the American people--those who are eating regularly--are eating because our boys are dying in Korea, a form of social cannibalism. Figuratively, we eat our own sons."

Can any fair minded person not conclude that this is a war by, for and of big business?

But there is one fly in the ointment. One thing stopping World War III. And that is organized people. ORGANIZED FARMERS.

Shortly after the Korean War broke out they figured there was one way to whip the Farmers Union into line. They called upon their China Lobby flunkie, a former State Secretary of the New Hampshire Farm Bureau and a person who accused Tryvig Lie who came back from Europe in the early part of June 1950 with a proposal to stop the "cold war", of maybe being a communist. They called on this man to deliver a libelous speech against the Farmers Union with congressional immunity.

Although the Farmers Union's position had been against the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine and the North Atlantic Military Pact and said it was leading to war, all of a sudden the National Leaders endorsed the Korean War. This came about when at the September board meeting of 1950 when the National Board was drafting a reply to Senator Bridge's attack. The question under discussion at the time was NOT Korea but an answer to Senator Bridges. In his attack against the Farmers Union, Senator Bridges, had not mentioned Korea, and in the board's discussion of how to answer Bridges, nothing was said about Korea. Patton named a three man committee, consisting of Russell Smith, Lewis Henderson and ~~Ord~~ C.E. Huff to write the resolution and not until the last afternoon when the committee finally brought in its draft was it known that the Korean question had been injected.

Commerce, National Association of ^{the} Manufacturers and the Grange. To find James G. Patton along with this group and explain^{ing} that this group does NOT want to really eliminate farmers is so ridiculous that it is not worthy of comment.

The Iowa Farmers Union has the "precious" program which can bring back sanity, peace and progress.

The fight for Peace is the most important fight in the world today. The fight for peace is tied up with the price of hogs and eggs. Every road of struggle leads to peace and if any organization does not fight for peace, it cannot even pretend that it is fighting for parity, civil ~~rights~~ rights or democracy.

Most of what we have gone over here is back ground material. It is necessary for all of us to understand this correctly so that we will be able to answer questions when they come up.

We want to caution organizers NOT to go out and try to give farmers everything you know. ~~The~~ Many Farmers join the F.U. for many different reasons. Some ~~many~~ may join because of our fight against the elimination of small farmers. Some may join because of our position on parity. Some because of our fight for peace. The main thing is to get neighbors signed up and the education will follow through the paper and at meetings.

We have found that the best thing is honest, neighborly approach saying that we have lived neighbors and would like to invite you to belong to the Farmers Union. Then proceed to tell them ^{why you} belong in your own words. There is no better organizer in the world than a neighbor asking another neighbor to join the Farmers Union.

Info on F.B.