North Dakota Non-partisan League and the state newspapers; recent activity of the League as reflected by representative papers

Irene Vadnais
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THE NORTH DAKOTA NONPARTISAN LEAGUE

and the

STATE NEWSPAPERS

Recent Activity of the League as
Reflected by Representative Papers

by

Irene Vednais

Presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of
Master of Arts.

State University of Montana

1958

Approved:

[Signature]
Chairman of Examining Committee

[Signature]
Chairman of Graduate Committee
FOREWORD

Many consider the Nonpartisan League as past history; many dismiss it as a flake of radical socialism. A study of the newspapers of the recent period reveal that though not a national power as its original leaders had hoped, the Nonpartisan League is a very live organization, that it has a hold in North Dakota which may never be loosed, that in the 1932 elections--though nationally North Dakota went Democratic--the League won its most complete victory since its first triumph more than a decade ago.

In order to interpret the events of the past nine months and the possible effect these events may have on the future, this thesis has been divided into three distinct parts: the history of the League from its inception in 1916 to its status in 1932; the detailed activities of the League in 1932 as reflected by the state newspapers; the activities of the 1933 legislature and the results of the legislation as mirrored in and translated by the newspapers.
The state newspapers, both daily and weekly, have had--through opposition, through partial acceptance and support, and even through apathy toward the organization--an important part in the activities of the League.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Acknowledgement is made to Dean Arthur L. Stone and Professor Robert L. Fournier for their helpful suggestions in the preparation of this thesis, to Mrs. Florence H. Davis for her aid in selecting source material, and to the Extension Division of the University of North Dakota for the use of newspaper clippings.
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INTRODUCTION

Many of the principles embraced in the Nonpartisan League platform, though considered radical, were not new. Farm movements since the formation of these United States have sought in one form or another the same or similar reforms.

Thomas Jefferson was the first leader of an American agrarian movement. Newspaper reports and private letters show that Jefferson's election followed a battle between the financial and commercial interests against agrarianism and the propertyless.

Jefferson was considered the spokesman of this agrarian movement; through him the party condemned the excise laws, the increase in the public debt and the official robbery of public funds, and the direct tax. Jefferson's antagonism to the Federalist administration grew out of his belief that it was being used to advance the interests of financiers and manufacturers. The Louisiana purchase was the development of Jefferson's widely diffused land ownership.

2. Ibid., pp. 573-574
3. Ibid., p. 428.
The next agrarian movement, from the eastern portion of the Mississippi valley, resulted in the election of Andrew Jackson and later in that of William Henry Harrison to the presidency. The demands of the leaders of these farm movements included universal suffrage, development of new roads and canals, opposition to federal ownership of banks, rapid opening of public lands, and easy sale terms of land. Through the insistence of the people on the frontier many internal improvements and some railroad legislation was begun; a protective tariff was established. The land policy of the United States in the disposal of public lands was framed under frontier influences. Thus, the nationalizing tendency of the West transformed the democracy of Jefferson into the democracy of Andrew Jackson. Under Jackson and William Henry Harrison, "Westerners", democracy became an effective force in the nation.

Newspapers of the period, such as the Richmond En-

10. Ibid., pp. 30, 326.
11. Ibid., p. 31.
quirer, the New York Evening Post, the Washington Globe, the Cincinnati Republican and the Washington National Intelligencer, revealed through editorials all the activities of Jackson's and Harrison's administrations, analyzing and interpreting the effect on the country.

During the Civil War period the chief former movement was centered around the slavery question.

The South wanted free trade. The Southern states also tried unsuccessfully to have a railroad built at national expense and by liberal land grants from one point on the lower Mississippi to San Francisco. The promotion of a Central Pacific railroad with Chicago as its eastern terminus defeated this plan.

Anti-slavery legislation prevented the importation of many slaves from Africa. The Southern planters realized that the increase in population in the Northern states because of immigration would leave the South far behind in white population. Thus, railroad legislation, immigration and slavery were the vital

12. Turner, op. cit., p. 89.
questions in this agrarian movement, which resulted in the Civil War. Most of these issues were discussed in the newspapers, which, like those of today, not only mirrored and reflected events but translated and analyzed them. The disposition of public lands and the establishment of land grants for colleges received the approval of the newspapers.

These early agrarian movements, rising from each successive frontier, have indicated the strong individualism typical of frontiersmen. Democratic tendencies developed rapidly in the frontier. With the close of the Civil War, individualism began to give way to co-operation and governmental activity.

The first of several farm organizations after the Civil War was the Patrons of Husbandry, popularly known as the Granges. This order was formed as a result of

14. Stevens, 2d. ill., pp. 185, 186, 190, 195, 200, 211, 212.
19. Stevens, 2d. ill., p. 80.
10. Ibid., p. 207.
the financial condition of the country, the large private debts of the farmers, the depreciation and fluctuation of the currency, dissatisfaction with high and discriminatory railroad rates, the high prices charged by the middlemen and the heavy burden of taxation.

Although the original purpose of the Grange was the social and intellectual improvement of the farmers, the desire of the farmers themselves led the Grange to attempt to secure cheaper transportation and to promote several schemes for co-operative dealings.

The economic analysis of the farmers' grievances made by the Grange and other farmer movements in the eighties and nineties did not have lasting results, because the Grange program did not consider the factors which affected farm prices and which were international in their operation and not national. The Chicago Weekly Tribune, in 1894, declared that the Grange was not a failure and that it offered an opportunity to all who sought reform in public administration to accomplish something for the benefit of the country.

21. Ibid., p. 68.
22. Louise M. Bache and Benjamin B. Kendrick, The United States Since 1845, (New York, 1932), p. 120.
The most important farm movement, the Populist party, was an outgrowth of the Farmers' Alliance and the Knights of Labor in 1880. The first formal platform of the Populist party in 1892 included the three major planks of financial reform, government ownership of railroads and telegraphy, and the elimination of corporate and foreign ownership in land. In 1896 the Populists supported Bryan for the presidency and the Alliance finally spent itself in that campaign. The successes of the period devoted, perhaps, more space to the Populist party as a political organization than to its activities on the development of an agrarian movement, although both phases were portrayed in their columns.

Farm movements since the Populist revivals are the American Society of Equity, the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union, the Granitian League, the Farm Bloc and the American Farm Bureau Federation. The purpose of all has been to alleviate the farmers' distress. The majority of these movements contained the basic problems of co-operatives, extended form...

27. Evins, op. cit., pp. 415, 482, 483.
credit, transportation and marketing. The newspapers discussed these movements, pointing out the good and bad effects of legislation brought about through the efforts of the leaders of the farm groups.

Agrarian agitation since the Civil War has been, perhaps, the greatest single influence in effecting the following national legislation:

**Railroad Control**
- State Granger Legislation
- Interstate Commerce Act of 1887

**Agricultural Education and Research**
- Land grant act of 1862; its additions and amendments
- Hatch Act of 1887
- The creation of the Department of Agriculture with its subsidiary bureaus

**Financial Legislation**
- Nationalization of greenbacks
- bland-allison Act of 1878; Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890
- Federal Reserve Act of 1913
- Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916
- The Co-operative Marketing Act of 1929 and 50 other post-war agricultural legislation.

Thus, even though the program sponsored by the Populist League—the methods of promoting its plans—make it a distinct entity, this program was founded on the basic principles of previous farm movements.

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HISTORY OF THE NONPARTISAN LEAGUE

The Nonpartisan League was originated by A. C. Dowley; its rapid growth and development was due to the platform correction (supposedly) grievances of the farmers. These grievances of the farmers in many instances were undoubtedly justified. The major complaints centered about the handling of wheat, especially the manner in which it was graded. Farmers complained of unfair treatment in the selection of their grain for dust, foul odor, inferior and foreign grain. They insisted that more wheat of a higher grade was chipped by the elevators than was purchased. Experiments conducted by Professor A. F. Ladd of the North Dakota Agricultural College, Fargo, showed that regardless of the grade of wheat, there was no difference in the milling quality, and that all grades make equally good flour.

32. Ibid., p. 25.
35. Bruce, pp. 618., pp. 57, 58.
36. Ibid., p. 38.
Relative to the unfair grading of grain, the farmers complained that the elevators were unjust. In 1906 a committee of the North Dakota Farmers' association made the following report on a Duluth elevator:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade of Grain</th>
<th>Bu. Received</th>
<th>Bu. Shipped</th>
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<tr>
<td>No. 1 Northern</td>
<td>66,711.60</td>
<td>166,283.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 2</td>
<td>163,005.10</td>
<td>297,704.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 3</td>
<td>272,637.50</td>
<td>310,659.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 4</td>
<td>201,257.50</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Grade</td>
<td>110,021.10</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>60,742.50</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
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Total 890,845.10 = 977,512.00
On hand, estimated 12,769.10
690,265.10

This and similar cases proved a crystallization of the farmers' beliefs of their wrong and consequently formed a tangible foundation for their complaints.

The farmers' agency, the Equity Cooperative Exchange, started in 1908 (the results of a farmers' minor uprising in 1909) had established a terminal elevator at St. Paul. The Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade denied this organization a seat on its floors. It had been charged that this Board of Trade threatened the eastern grain buyers that they could buy no more grain through its members if they patronized the Exchange.

35, Bruce, op. cit., p. 30.
36. Ibid., pp. 52, 60.
The Society of Equity and Equity Selling Exchange attempted to get the North Dakota legislature to appropriate money for the building of a state-owned terminal elevator. In 1913 an amendment to the constitution was passed authorizing the legislative assembly "to provide by law for the erection, purchasing or leasing and operation of one or more terminal grain elevators in the states of Minnesota or Wisconsin, or both, to be maintained and operated in such manner as the legislative assembly shall prescribe, and provide for inspection, weighing and grading of all grain received in such elevator or elevators". A tax of one-eighth of a mill was imposed by the legislature on every dollar of the assessed valuation of all taxable property for 1914, 1915 and 1916, to be used as the erection of a sinking fund for the erection of such building or buildings. Another amendment in 1914 permitted the erection of a similar elevator within the borders of the state. The abandonment of this measure because of a political change was the pretext for a new organization—the Nonpartisan League.

League leaders have protested against the terms 'Socialism and Socialistic' being applied to the League.
One authority, however, definitely links Socialist leaders with the Nonpartisan League and its program. Perhaps the strongest argument of the league leaders to prove that theirs is a non-Communist organization is the fact that at no time has the League advocated state ownership of land. On the other hand, the League specifically includes in its program planks which are decidedly socialistic.

The League program, as it was first stated, included:

- State ownership of terminal elevators, and flour mills, packing houses, and cold storage plants.
- State inspection of grain and grain elevators.
- Exemption of farm improvements from taxation.
- Rural credit banks operated at cost.

This plan later included state loans to home-builders and land-purchasers.

The inauguration of the League was unique. Probably a greater proportion of its success is due to its initial organization than most people realize. Tornley with the assistance of Fred and Howard Wood started the selling of his idea—the League organization. The League demanded a paid membership of $10 a biennium. For the most part, Tornley and his...
assistants were successful in obtaining members.
The organizers procured by Townley and other League leaders were paid at first $2, for each each membership and later, $6, for each membership and $3.50 for those members who paid with post-dated checks.
Bruce calls this paid membership "perhaps the most brilliant of the ideas of those leaders". Garton states that "no sales organization ever worked more carefully and intensively with its men than Townley worked with his crew of organizers". The movement grew rapidly; by autumn, 1915, 20,000 members were enrolled. The League established an official organ, "The Non-Partisan Leader", in September, 1915.

Catch phrases, or slogans, were aptly applied to many of the interests which the League opposed;
thus, "Big Biz", "Tainted News" and the "kept press" became familiar terms.

The League leaders considered the protest to its organization by the opposition press an essential factor in keeping alive during the first winter of its existence the loyalty to the League.

43. Garton, op. cit., pp. 70, 71.  
44. Bruce, op. cit., p. 72.  
45. Garton, op. cit., p. 63.  
47. Ibid., p. 74. cit., p. 72.  
49. Garton, op. cit., p. 90.  
50. Ibid., pp. 90, 91.
In 1916, as the result of a state convention, the League presented its first ticket headed by Lynn J. Preston for governor. The following veteran office holders were endorsed: Thomas Hall for secretary of state; William Langor for attorney-general; Carl Resitsy for state auditor and Dell Macdonald for state superintendent of schools. Other candidates not skilled in politics were: P. H. Casey for state treasurer; C. A. Ollens for state insurance commissioner; John A. Bogan for commissioner of agriculture and labor; E. P. Johnson, Charles Bleick and Sam Aamodt for railroad commissioners. For three vacancies on the supreme court bench the League endorsed Luther Birdsell, Richard E. Grace and J. E. Robinson. The League won a complete victory in this election.

At the next legislative session the League inaugurated the secret caucus for the organization of its members in the legislature and for the incorporation of its plans. It has used the caucus ever since.

In 1917, the League launched the Consumers' United Store company. The organization if carried out would have been a true consumers' co-operative. Each member paid $1.00. More than one million, one hundred thousand

62. Ibid., p. 122.
63. Ibid., p. 241.
dollars were collected and turned into the League treasury for this co-operative enterprise. Some stores were established, but funds collected for this co-operative venture were used for the political organization, with the result that the Consumers' United Stores company was finally closed, after a loss of more than one million dollars to North Dakota farmers.

The outcome of the elections in 1916 gave the League complete control of the state government. The

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54. J. W. Brinton, DEBT and POLITICAL (Minneapolis, 1901): p. 36.
55. Ibid., pp. 39, 43, 44, 85.
56. Brinton, op. cit., p. 36.
57. Charles A. Golden, PERSISTENCE and Fraud of the Non-Partisan League, the New York Times, January 4, 1920: "It was in the special session of the Legislature in December, 1913, that the League clinched these things and reduced practically the vanishing point all opportunity for its own punishment by the enactment of a group of bills which bring about a situation that the I. W. W.'s and their like may have dreamed of in their wildest moments, but which they have never had the plan or power or the organization to produce. . . . In North Dakota, where there is no industry other than farming, the League got itself going by promising the farmers public ownership of practically everything but land. . . . The League owns and controls a daily or weekly newspaper in nearly every one of the fifty-two counties of North Dakota and that practically all other newspapers.
1910 legislature passed overwhelmingly those measures which strengthened the foothold of the League in the state and which have undoubtedly been the major factors in keeping the League a vital part of North Dakota politics between 1921 and 1930. These measures are briefly:

1. Exemption of farm improvements from taxation; broad exceptions in personal property from taxation.
2. The establishment of the Bank of North Dakota.
3. State hail insurance act. (This levied a flat tax of three cents an acre on all tillable land in the state and all farmers were considered subject to the act unless they gave an official notice of withdrawal.)
4. The creation of a state industrial commission, which would control all state industries and industrial establishments.
5. An amendment to the grain inspection law of 1917, broadening the powers of the State Grain inspector.
6. A soldiers' compensation law.
8. An eight-hour day for women in industry, not on the farms.
9. A minimum wage for women in industry, not on the farms.
10. The inspection of coal mines.
11. A law directed against the use of injunctions in labor disputes.
12. A full train crew law and a law requiring proper shelter and protection for railway repair men.

58. (continued)
have been driven out of existence by taking away from them the official State and county advertising which previously furnished the part of their incomes which covered the margin between paying expenses and not paying them.
15. A state income tax which attempted to make a distinction between earned and unearned income.

16. A home-building association to advance funds for the building of term homes and the acquiring of farms by those who could furnish 30 per cent of the cost.

17. A law establishing minimum railroad rates based on distance.

18. A law reducing the number of papers in which official printing could be published from three or more to one in each county; the official paper to be first selected by the state industrial commission, and after 1909 by a vote of the people of the county at each regular election.

19. An absent voters' law.

20. An act which authorized the seizure of mines and necessary industries even in time of peace.

21. An act creating the office of State Sheriff under which the newly-created officer "is given all the powers of other sheriffs".

22. An act providing for the operation by the industrial commission of state-owned grain warehouses and elevators and state-owned flour mills.

To finance the enactment of these outlined measures, bond issues of $17,000,000 were authorized in addition to appropriations for the launching of the 80 proposed state industries.

The industrial commission, created by this legislature, published these important laws in pamphlet form called "The New Day in North Dakota".

Just when the first rumblings of discontent within the ranks of the League started, it is difficult to say...
definitely. Perhaps much of the strife was the result of the Nonpartisan Leaders' treatment of opposition to their plans. The leaders "steam-rollered" all dissension. Thus, when Attorney-General William Langer, State Auditor Carl Kositzky and Secretary of State Thomas Hall refused to follow the leaders, many of the powers of their offices were eliminated by legislative action and the appropriations for the offices of the attorney-general and of the state auditor were greatly reduced.

The Scandinavian-American Bank case crystallized much of the opposition to the League. In September, 1920, William Langer (attorney-general) became suspicious of the assets of this bank. The deputy bank examiner, in charge of the examination, reported that this bank had some $75,000 in post-dated checks among its assets, had exceeded its authorized loaning limit and was totally insolvent. The bank was closed on

60. Bruce, op. cit., p. 166.
61. Ibid., p. 185: "The State Board of Bank Examiners was composed of the Governor, Lynn J. Franier; the Attorney-General, William Langer and the Secretary of State, Thomas Hall."
62. Ibid., p. 186: "According to the report of Deputy Bank Examiner F. S. Halldorson, which was made in April, 1910, the bank's excess loans amounted to $410,190.76, and among these loans were $11,500.00 to Tenney's so-called Florida Biscuit Trust, $75,317.78 to the Nonpartisan League, and $150,000.00 to the Consumers' United Stores Company, which was a Nonpartisan subsidiary organization."
October, 1919. The supreme court, however, dismissed the receiver and enjoined the attorney-general and the banking board from interfering with the bank. The case was decided on ex parte affidavits which were produced by the League and by the bank. The bank was declared solvent and the post-dated checks were called "good bank collateral." The League officials were themselves compelled to close this bank in February, 1921.

This revolt against the League, started by Langer, Kositsky and Hall, was also crystallised by these three men, who organised the conservative element (Independent Voters' Association) in opposition to the regular League candidates. Langer, Kositsky

63. Bruce, op. cit., pp. 188, 189: "There can be no question of the insolvency of the bank or of its violation of the banking laws. It was closed on October 2, 1919. The combined capital and surplus was $60,000. The report of the Deputy Bank Examiner which was made at that time showed liabilities of $1,000,047 of which $700,000 were for individual deposits and more than $300,000 for money due to other banks. It showed excess loans of $784,132.82 of which $433,856.00 were made to the National Nonpartisan League and to its affiliated organisations. In some instances the only security for these loans was post-dated checks and notes given by farmers and used as collateral for a series of accommodation notes signed by various organisations and officials of the League's various subsidiary organisations."

64. Ibid., p. 291.
and Hall were candidates for the offices of governor, state auditor and attorney-general, respectively, in the 1920 primaries; longer failed to get the nomination, but the conservatives carried practically all of the eastern part of the state. Hositsky was nominated state auditor and Hall, secretary of state; the conservative candidates for the supreme court and state superintendent of public instruction were nominated also. The conservatives, who had joined forces with the Democrat, were generally successful in the final elections that year, even though Lynn Frazier, Non-partisan candidate, won the gubernatorial election.

The outstanding factor in this revolt and its later development was that the conservatives endorsed the League's program; the revolt was directed against the League leadership, autocracy, excessive taxation and mismanagement. The initiated measures, extending and modifying many of the laws passed by the 1919 legislature, were approved.

The beginnings of the 1931 depression were also affecting the farmers, and perhaps made them more fully aware of the manner in which the present administration was disposing of public funds. Because they held their

69. Bruce, op. cit., pp. 212, 213, 216, 220.
wheat too long in hopes of higher prices, many farmers had difficulty in selling it later; in November, 1920, almost eighty per cent of the wheat crop of 1920 still remained in the farmers' bins, country mills and elevators. This resulted in the failure of many banks because they were unable to make collections and depositors were rapidly withdrawing their funds to meet current obligations. The packing house of the Society of Equity at Fargo faced a deficit of $700,000; construction of the terminal elevator and mill at Grand Forks was discontinued as were the operations of the home building association and the rural credit board. Even the Bank of North Dakota became seriously embarrassed and could not dispose of its $2,000,000 bond issue. Only $80,000 of the $2,000,000 bond issue for the construction of the terminal elevator had been sold. It was estimated that the small mill at Drake had been operated at an annual loss of $80,000 and its manager, J. A. McGovern, stating that the mill had not been and could not be made profitable, resigned.

67. F. W. Cather, "Banking in North Dakota", Williams County Farmer's Press, (Williston, May 11, 1923): "It was not until November 15, 1920 that the first bank failure occurred in North Dakota. From then on banks tumbled rapidly, a total of 265 closing their doors. Thirty-three re-opened."
68. Bruce, op. cit., p. 225.
The Bank of North Dakota reported in December, 1920, assets totaling $16,650,000 and liabilities of $16,650,000. Of these assets, however, $8,589,000 was in thirty-year farm loans; $1,961,450 in the unsold state bonds which had been authorized for the capitalization of the bank; $649,304.50 in deposits or loans to some thirty small banks which the recent financial stringency had forced to suspend operations; $650,000 in loans to the state-owned mill and elevator at Grand Forks which was unable to carry on its building operations on account of its inability to float its bonds; and $223,000 in loans to the home building association which also was unable to float its securities and had also suspended operations. None were liquid assets.

Thus, the Bank of North Dakota was the center of the political maelstrom in 1921. The repeal of the law making it compulsory to deposit all public funds in the Bank of North Dakota (November, 1920) caused many withdrawals of funds. Oliver S. Norris, editor of the Non-Partisan Leader (Minneapolis), stated: "The effect of this law and the refusal of the big financial interests to take North Dakota bonds, coupled with the financial stringency of the after-the-war deflation period felt

69. Bruce, op. cit., pp. 228, 229.
in all States, ruinous prices for farm products and repeated crop failures in North Dakota, has been to put the State face to face with a financial and political crisis for which few if any parallel can be found."

In an article re-printed in the Literary Digest, the editor of the Non-Partisan Leader brought out the following facts:

"A number of banks which had made loans on the basis of $2.50 and $3. wheat had to close because they could not make collections. Because public money was about to be received the Bank of North Dakota was unable to help these banks by re-depositing public funds with them. The Bank of North Dakota even found it necessary to try to collect the $8,000,000 re-deposited with local banks. Private bankers declared that such collection would mean the failure of 100 more banks. Negotiations were made with Minneapolis and St. Paul bankers for the purchase of enough North Dakota state bonds to make immediate collections of re-deposits unnecessary, but these and other efforts for the sale of bonds proved unsuccessful, chiefly through political complications.

"By February thirty-six banks had been closed in North Dakota. The Bank of North Dakota is solvent if it can collect its re-deposits, payable on demand. But such collection might mean suspension of 100 small banks with disastrous effect on business. Non-Partisan League State officials say they will use every effort to meet the situation without enforcing hardship upon anybody. And the Non-Partisan Leader declares that the anti-League politicians of North Dakota who first blocked the sale of the bonds in 1919 and blocked it again last week will be held res-

90. Oliver S. Morris, "What is Happening in North Dakota", The Nation, March 9, 1921.
possible for whatever harshness may be inflicted upon the State of North Dakota!"

On July 1 of that same year (1931) a report of the Bank of North Dakota showed that the amount of registered checks (checks the Bank was unable to pay) had increased to $215,610.60 from $72,673.66 on June 15. To balance these frozen assets, the Bank of North Dakota had nearly $6,000,000 re-deposited in small banks and had been able to collect only $170,813.60 of this amount. In defence of their situation bank officials declared that to insist on the collection of this money would mean the failure of many of the smaller banks and to avoid bank failures it adopted the policy of registering checks drawn on the bank until such a time as the private banks could pay.

Such was the condition of the state in the summer before the recall election. The recall was limited to the governor, Lynn J. Frazier, the attorney-general, William Laska, and the commissioner of agriculture and labor, John H. Hagan. Initiated measures, sponsored by the Independents, restricting such of the Nonpartisan state program were also at issue.

71. "North Dakota's Financial Crisis", The Literary Digest, March 5, 1931.
72. The Literary Digest, March 5, 1931.
73. The North Dakota Leader, (Fargo), July 20, 1931.
74. Bruce, op. cit., p. 264.
Interest was high in the recall election, the first of its kind in the United States. The Nonpartisan paper, the North Dakota Leader (Fargo) opposed the recall vigorously, but the Grand Forks Herald (Grand Forks) supported it just as vigorously. Other papers were just as partisan as those two. Replies to a questionnaire showed the press almost two to one against the League administration.

Less than a month before the election a firm of Toledo brokers took in one block the entire outstanding issue of the state's real estate bonds.

Both the League and the I. V. A. (Independent Voters' Association) claimed a victory in the recall election. The League's claim was based on the defeat of the initiated measures, sponsored by the Independents, which embodied that group's principles. It was a technical victory of the conservative element, for though Governor Frazier, Attorney-General Lemke and Commissioner of Agriculture and Labor Hagan were recalled, the Independent candidates were compelled (because of the defeat of their initiated measures) to carry out the League program. The Minneapolis

74. The North Dakota Leader, (Fargo), July 30, 1921.
75. Grand Forks Herald, (Grand Forks), Sept. 27, 1921.
76. "North Dakota's Political Pointer", The Literary Digest, October 28, 1921.
Tribune (Minneapolis) stated:

"The defeat of the debt limit amendment and the initiated laws, proposed and sponsored by the Independent Voters' Association, has made the mandate of the next administration vague and contradictory, and Independent leaders predict that the opposition is going to make the most of it as a tool of cleavage against the Independent ranks.

"Smashed in the recall election, the Non-Partisan League miserably is still the strongest faction in North Dakota politics, and an the initiated measure calling for a non-partisan ballot in State elections did not receive a majority of the votes cast on the proposition, the Non-Partisan League has good prospects of regaining control of administration affairs at the June primaries next year."

Nonpartisan leaders were also quick to see their advantage, and the Non-Partisan Leader of Minneapolis, chief organ of the League, stated:

"The test of permanency of a political program is its ability to become established in the laws and constitution and to remain to be carried out regardless of changes in State administration.

"The Non-Partisan League program has stood this test. It is unfortunate that Governor Frasier and his associates in State offices were recalled, but at the same time by mandate of the people the Bank of North Dakota stands. So does the State Mill and Elevator program. The Independent Voters' Association officials must proceed with what the Non-Partisan League administration started. Even though the new State officials are not friendly to the Farmers' program, they can not seriously hamper or delay it. They will be in office only a few months before the people again speak at the State-wide
primaries next June. The State has not repudiated the League program as the newspapers in general have sought to show. The emphatic opposite is the truth." 78a

R. A. Hector was the successful I. V. A. gubernatorial candidate in the recall election. He was re-elected in 1922. In the 1922 elections, however, Lynn J. Frazier, who had lost the governorship in the 1921 recall election, was the successful candidate for the United States senatorship, an office he still holds today. William Lenger, present Non-partisan governor, was an unsuccessful candidate for the I. V. A. nomination as governor in this election.

Soon after the installation of the new officials, investigations of the various state industries were instituted. The report of the industrial commission in 1920, re-printed in full by some of the state papers, gave an accurate view of the condition of affairs: lack of organization; false theories; lack of training on the part of those named as managers; the naivete of the work; ill-defined duties; wide powers under the laws and lack of rational interpretation; but mainly, official incompetency and a failure on the part

78a. Literary Digest, op. cit., November 19, 1921.
79. Howard Y. Burke, "Bankrupt North Dakota; Governor Hector and Reconstruction": The Outlook, September 12, 1923.
of the former commission to exercise adequate supervision. This report, largely directed against the state mills, revealed that approximately $1,300,000 more would be required to complete the flour mill and grain elevator project at Grand Forks; that $1,101,462.66 had already been expended on this work; that the net loss of the state mill purchased at Drake was $76,376.12—a loss at the rate of more than $1.50 per barrel of flour produced since the state had purchased this mill.

A creamery enterprise which had been tried had resulted in a loss of $15,000 after eight months of operation. The Bank of North Dakota had shown distinct favoritism in placing its re-deposits and making loans; 51 League banks had received $94,000 each, while 500 independent banks had received only $8,000 each. Likewise the Farm Loan department had been equally partial.

Governor Henes successfully induced a financier to buy a block of 500,000 hail warrants at 97 per cent, thus giving immediate temporary relief to many farmers. Through negotiations with a Minnesota loan company those were selling at 50 within six months. Before these

87. Fargo Forum, (Fargo), February 11, 1928.
88. Iola, February 11, 1928.
negotiations took place, these bail warrants were being discounted from 30 to 50 per cent. All unsold state bond issues were withdrawn and offered at a lower rate of interest with the 8 per cent discount offered by Governor Prazier removed. The bonds were sold at a reduction of 1 to 1½ per cent in rates.

Although the League leaders had been defeated in the recall election, they clung tenaciously to the foothold gained by the endorsement of the League program in that election. They used the state industries as an opening wedge in subsequent elections. In the campaign of 1924 many of the earlier allegations against the League by the I. W. W. and vice versa were repeated through the media of newspapers and speakers. Neither side could claim a total victory in the final elections. In the house, the Nonpartisans had a margin of nine votes but in the senate, the Independents had a majority of one vote; Nonpartisan leaders presided over each house. A. C. Corliss, Nonpartisan, was governor, but the re-election of Attorney-General George F. Shafer and Commissioner of Agriculture and Labor Joseph A. Kitchen gave the Independents a majority.

63. The Outlook, op. cit., September 19, 1925.
64. Williams County Farmers' Prose, October 20, 1924.
Faroo Korain, February 9, 1924.
on the industrial commission. This majority was offset
by the veto power of the governor over the other two mem-
bers of the commission. The Nonpartisans controlled the
bank board and the auditing board (which audits bills for
the expenses of the various departments) but the state
board of auditors (which audits the Bank of North Dakota,
the state mill and elevator) was under I. V. A. officials.

Until 1932, the elections fluctuated between the
Nonpartisan League and the Independent Voters' Association.
In 1928 the League opposed Sorlie, though it had support-
ed him previously. The Independents on the whole were
successful. Two years later the League again tried
veinly to obtain control of the administration. As in
previous elections the main difference between the two
factions of the Republican party was that the League ad-
vocated expansion of the state industrial program and
the Independents urged at least the same number of re-
strictions which already existed. The Independents had
a majority on the industrial commission and controlled

65. Grand Forks Herald, November 9, 1928.
Williams County Farmers' Press, June 2, Nov. 11, 1928.
Stanley Sun, (Stanley), June 26, 1928.
Nonpartisan Political Sheet, 1928.
67. Mora County Tribune (Rugby), June 5, 1928.
the house; the nonpartisans retained control of the
senate and re-elected Lynn J. Frazier as United States
senator.

Although the next biennial elections resulted
again in a split victory—League and Independent can-
didates sharing honors—the League had begun its re-
organization for this election in 1929. Much of the
old fervor instilled by Townley in the League's in-
auguration was re-captured by the new leaders—the
defeated League candidates in 1929. Slogans such as
"A Challenge to Tricholism and Boss Rule" and "We'll
Stick, We'll Win" were utilized. The membership fee
was placed at $10, a biennium instead of the former
$1.50.

As stated before, the major difference in the
divisions of the Republican party (the Nonpartisan
League and the Independent Veterans' Association) was
in the attitude toward the state industries. Per-
haps the greatest aids to the League leaders and their
rally for the 1930 elections were the more favorable

68. Non-Partisan Leader, (Minneapolis, Minn.),
November 9, 1929.
69. Ford County Independent (Minot), Sept. 26, 1929,
Minot News, September 27, 1929.
reports made by the auditors of the industries. The newspapers, even those opposed to the League, disseminated widely the information contained in the auditors' reports.

Losses to the state from these sources prior to 1924 and 1925 have already been enumerated. The industrial commission's annual report for the calendar year 1924 listed the deficits of the industries as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Deficit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand Forks Mill</td>
<td>$627,258.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drake Mill</td>
<td>$93,169.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of North Dakota</td>
<td>$70,712.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Builders' Association</td>
<td>$16,445.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total $1,280,394.39

The following tabulation of known direct expense of the industrial program to that date (according to the industrial commission's report) was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Losses as of December 31, 1924</td>
<td>$1,280,394.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Commission Expense</td>
<td>$924,936.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminal Elevator Fund Used</td>
<td>$130,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing Bonds</td>
<td>$16,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Cropery</td>
<td>$16,736.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve for losses, Bank of N.D.</td>
<td>$2,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax levies, interest on bonds</td>
<td>$1,382,396.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Builders' appropriations</td>
<td>$115,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total $5,165,664.78

92. Grand Forks Herald, April 4, 1925.
This report indicated that the expense of the state industrial program was more than the enumerated figures, but as these items of taxes on property, cost of legal services and legislative investigations were not separated from general state expenses, they could only be roughly estimated.

O. B. Lund, accountant for the state board of auditors in 1925, set the losses for the Bank of North Dakota at $8,672,388.54, classified under the following headings:

- Operating losses to Oct. 15, 1924: $423,028.04
- Operating losses from Oct. 16, 1924 to September 10, 1925: $35,074.34
- Estimated losses on Bank's assets: $1,606,389.96

The Bank had not paid all the interest on its bonds ($2,000,000 issued for its initial capital) and was indebted to the state for such interest $450,000. to December 31, 1925. Taxes levied to cover this interest amounted to $597,559.99 besides $230,000 to apply on the principal.

The farm loan business, intended to be self-supporting, conducted by the Bank of North Dakota, is segregated from the regular bank business.

92. Grand Forks Herald, April 4, 1925.
of borrowers to meet their payments resulted in 
$960,455.60 of tax money being used to make the pay-
ment on those bonds between 1921 and 1925. Up to 
December 31, 1925, the Bank had foreclosed on 374 mort-
gages and thus, 95,360 acres of land (involving a 
total investment in principal and interest of 
$1,715,140.89) reverted to the state.

At this same time the League supporters were 
claiming a profit for the Bank of North Dakota. 
They failed to consider many of the losses enumerated 
in the accountant’s report. A profit of $110,000 for 
the state mill for 1925 was also claimed by the League. 
Again they failed to consider interest on bonds, pay-
ment of the principal and depreciation, which had to 
be taken care of by tax levies. State newspapers 
published the report of C. B. Lund, auditor, listing 
the deficit of the mill and elevator from January 1 
to December 31, 1925, as $183,403.05.

93. The Gando Herald (Gando), June 10, 1926.
94. A. H. Young, "A Bit of North Dakota's History; 
A Conflict", The Stanley Sun, June 26, 1926.
95. Ibid.
96. Grand Forks Herald, October 6, 1927.
The newspapers also printed in full the report of the Senate Fact-Finding committee to Governor Earl B in 1927 on the state mill and elevator. The causes listed for operating losses to this association were:

1. The cost of wheat milled, as compared to average prices of wheat purchased in any other large market is too high to permit the mill to compete reasonably with other large mills on a cost-milled basis.

2. The policy of selling flour in large quantities for less than the cost of the bare materials and transportation to the sales destination, without any manufacturing cost added, is indefensible.

3. Utter lack of co-ordination between the buying and sales departments resulted in much waste.

In substantiation of these statements the committee gave the following information:

For 1926 all wheat purchased by the Grand Forks elevator cost 6 1/10 per cent more than the No. 1 Dark Northern at Minneapolis. Of the total amount of wheat purchased only 4 per cent was from individual farmers; the remainder was purchased from commission companies. Large amounts of wheat bought from the Midland Grain company averaged approximately four cents a bushel more than the price paid to any other elevator or commission
company for the same grade and protein content on the same date. Another charge against the wheat purchasing department was based on the grain bought in excess of what the mill could handle and without considering the amount of wheat on hand.

Ancet the sales department, the committee found that flour was sold in North Dakota and neighboring territory at a profit of 50 cents a barrel, but on the eastern seaboard at a loss of a dollar or more a barrel.

The Lund report corroborates these losses listed in the sales to "foreign" markets in giving the following figures:

The mill received almost $40,000 less than the cost of raw materials alone in the sale of 242,000 barrels of flour to the Seaboard Flour Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts; the total loss in this instance amounted to more than $356,000.

A loss of more than $37,000 was due to the excess price paid for wheat purchased from the Midland Grain company.

A third principal source of direct loss was the contract with the I. S. Joseph company for the sale of

11,300 tons of mill feed from two to three dollars less than the price current at Minneapolis when the delivery was made.

In regard to the profit made in North Dakota, Lund stated that the "only conclusion that can be had is that the trouble has mostly been in the tradeings". He also listed other causes of loss as poor management and, due to the nature of the business, political favoritism.

The total deficit for the year ending December 31, 1929 was $422,147.51

Newspapers called attention to the fact that the state not only lost money on the Grand Forks mill and elevator, but the Drake mill, which was operated for only a short time, had an operation loss of $120,616.70 exclusive of the disrepair of machinery and equipment and the increasing depreciation.

All of the state industrial program was not a loss. During the first ten years of its operation the average annual cost of state hail insurance was 94 cents an acre as compared to 75 cents to $3 an acre in 1919 prior to the establishment of state hail insurance. The state insurance fund in 1929 had piled up a reserve of

95. Grand Forks Herald, October 6, 1937. 
96. Walsh County Record (Grafton), April 19, 1929.
$4,600,000. The state bonding department had made a profit of $256,000 in its first nine years of existence.

In a defense of the mill and elevator, T. H. Thoresen, Nonpartisan gubernatorial candidate in 1932, stated that the chief function of the mill and elevator was to advertise the state. Mr. Thoresen lost the Nonpartisan nomination for the governorship in 1932.

The newspapers again discussed the Senate Fact-Finding committee's report to the legislature for the mill and elevator during 1928, which was much more favorable than the report made in 1926. It reported marked improvement in the co-ordination between the purchasing and sales department, the basis on which eastern flour sales were made and the methods used in purchasing wheat.

The state mill and elevator still had a deficit. C. B. Lund's report for the calendar year 1929 showed that this industry had an operating gain of more than $155,000 but that net loss after deducting overhead charges of interest on borrowed capital, land and de-

100. Stanley Sun, May 31, 1930.
102. Milton News (Milton), March 4, 1930.
preparation was $100,000. During this period the mill and elevator operated at about forty per cent capacity. Lund also condemned the policy of political management.

During the six-month period from October 1, 1928 to March 31, 1929, O. B. Lund's audit of the Bank of North Dakota showed net earnings of $148,138.67. This sum remained after the bond interest and all expenses had been deducted. Estimates in September and October, 1929, (based on the record of the year to date) indicated that the state mill and elevator at Grand Forks had the best year of its existence.

The report in 1930 showed that the condition of the mill was even better than in the previous year—the net loss was more than $5,000 less than in 1929, which had been the best year to that time.

These favorable reports on the state's industrial program then it still continued in the main to be under Independent control proved to be a big selling feature for the Nonpartisan League in its comeback. It furnished to the League leaders a strong argument based as follows: This is that the industries have accomplished

104. Mandan Pioneer (Mandan), February 1, 1929.
106. Fargo Forum, September 15, 1929.
under management avowedly opposed to them. What could they have done under sympathetic operation? The earlier history of the industrial program under League administration was forgotten. As a result in the 1932 primaries the League carried the state by overwhelming majority.

Before considering the League's activities in 1938 and part of 1939, a brief summary of the foregoing particulars will make clearer the League's position.

The Nonpartisan League was originated by a former Socialist---its basic principles can be summed up in the short phrase "Help the Farmers". The farmers had a sound foundation for their grievances---the League utilised these grievances to good advantage, worked out a strong organization and before many were aware of such a faction boasted thousands of members. Control of the state's administration was the next logical step---and the League program, embracing state ownership of industries vital to farmers, was adopted. The League had a vital year in 1919---it had complete control of the state's executive and legislative offices. Large amounts of money, either in the form of bonds or increased taxes, were appropriated by the legislature to promote the state industrial program. A mill was
purchased at Drake; a mill and elevator were started at Grand Forks; a creamery was purchased at Fergus, but the greatest achievement was the establishment of the Bank of North Dakota. All public money was required to be deposited in this Bank.

Then came the re-action. Unwise re-depositing of funds by the state bank, the deflation period following the World War, the sharp curtailment of loans by banks, the low prices for agricultural products resulted in acute economic distress in the state. Revolt within the League by some of its own leaders was crystallized. The electorate saw that the League had not given and could not give the promised relief. Economic conditions of the nation and world were not considered; the League received most of the blame for the state's economic ills, and so, in 1920, by initiated measures, many of the laws passed by the 1919 legislature were amended and modified. Thus it was no longer mandatory to deposit public money in the Bank of North Dakota. The withdrawal of this money meant a calling in by the Bank of North Dakota many of its re-deposits, which ultimately resulted in several bank failures.

The recall election, the dropping of Townley by League leaders and the repudiation of Nonpartisan
leaders by other former Nonpartisans left the League powerless to accomplish anything. The opposition
(Independent Voters' Association) was hampered by the refusal of the electorate to reject the League program;
consequently the Independents found themselves in control of the administration, forced to support and de
velop industries which they had condemned and continued to oppose. In order to protect themselves they could
do nothing but make the best showing possible.

The decade saw a gradual improvement in the state industries; a gradual but firm recovery of the Non
partisan League as a political power with different leaders, the return to the League of Lange, chief
leader in the revolt of 1919, and the cautious but enthusiastic bid for public favor. Careful campaigning
began in 1928 by the League for control of the state's administration, steady gains in legislative seats,
victories for some state candidates and the improvement of the state industries, the admitted profit of
the Bank of North Dakota, the success of the state hail, fire and tornado insurance were the local factors
resulting in a Nonpartisan victory in 1932.

Economic factors also proved beneficial to the League. As long as the electorate becomes restless under
adverse conditions and frequently, regardless of the true causes of ills, blames the current administration and wants a change, the party in power is almost helpless. Economic troubles, both national and state, which contributed to the restlessness were the worldwide depression, the drought of 1931, extremely low prices for wheat, high taxes, increased bonded indebtedness of the state.

News stories, containing the salient points of important reports of the state committees and auditors on the financial condition of the League program, and editorials, analyzing the situation, were presented by the newspapers as the need arose. The newspapers, then, effectively gave to the people information concerning the activities of the League and the development of the state industries. Through the mirrored translation and interpretation by the state newspapers, the electorate was kept informed of the general course of the events in the League's history.
THE LEAGUE IN 1932

The League leaders and candidates in 1932 were some of the original Nonpartisans—those who had aided in its inauguration, had kept it before the public during its "dark years" and had been instrumental in staging its comeback in 1928. The newspapers related all the factors affecting the League in 1932 and the League's activities.

William Lenker, who had formerly been elected attorney-general on a Nonpartisan ticket in 1916, had later been one of the instigators of the revolt against the League leaders in 1919, 1920 and 1921 and had been the unsuccessful contender for the I. V. A. gubernatorial nomination in 1920 and 1922, won the Nonpartisan endorsement for governor in one of the closest competitions in League history.

William Lenker, also one of the original leaders of the League, was a Nonpartisan candidate for con-
gressman. Lynn J. Froster, former League governor and present United States senator; Gerald Nye, Nonpartisan United States senator, and Congressman J. H.

106. Bruce, op. cit., p. 281.
110. Bismarck Tribune (Bismarck), June 17, 1932.
Sinclair, Nonpartisan, supported the League ticket strongly. Competition for legislative seats was great, with the League and I. V. A. factions contesting for 113 seats in the state house of representatives and 118 for 28 of the 49 senatorial positions.

The complete Nonpartisan ticket in the primary elections was: United States senator, Gerald F. Nye; congressmen, William Leman and J. H. Sinclair; governor, William Leager; lieutenant-governor, O. H. Olsen; secretary of state, Robert Byrne; state auditor, Serta E. Baker; attorney-general, A. J. Grenna; commissioner of insurance, C. A. Olsenaa; commissioner of agriculture and labor, John Rushy; railroad commissioner, Ben C. Larkin; treasurer, Alfred A. Balco.

Seven initiated measures were also up for vote in the primary elections. These, briefly, were:

1. Reducing the assessed valuations of property from 75 per cent to 50 per cent.
2. Prohibiting corporation farming (exclusive of co-operative corporations composed of farmers).
3. Reducing and fixing allowances for mileage and travel expenses of county officials and their deputies.
4. Reducing, equalizing and fixing allowances for mileage and travel expense of state officials, elective and appointive, their deputies, assistants, clerks and other state employees.

111. Bismarck Tribune, June 26, 1933.
112. Ibid., June 3, 1933.
113. Ibid., June 1, 1933.
6. A five-year moratorium on all existing indebtedness, including taxes and debts due by individuals to the state, county or other political subdivisions.
7. Outlawing mortgages on growing and unharvested crops.
8. Reducing and fixing salaries of certain county officials, elective and appointive (including auditor, treasurer, sheriff, superintendent of schools, register of deeds, county judge, state’s attorney and clerk of district court).

Primary elections were held June 29. The Nonpartisan’s entire slate of candidates was successful.

Typical headlines of the newspapers were: "Kyu, Longest Win in Landslide---Entire Nonpartisan Slate Sweeps To Win Over Rivals"; "Nonpartisans Score Complete Victory in Republican Races---All Candidates Forge Ahead in Primary Returns" and "N. P. L. Sweeps State in June Primary". The League also gained control of the state house and senate, winning 20 senatorial and 21 house nominations.

All initiated measures were passed except the five-year moratorium which was decisively defeated.

114. North Dakota Publicity Pamphlet, edited by Robert Byrne, secretary of state; (Bismarck, North Dakota, May, 1932).
117. Columbus Reporter, June 30, 1932; (Columbus).
118. Bismarck Tribune, July 1, 2, 1932.
Minot Daily News, July 1, 2, 1932.
Some of the newspapers were quick to see the opportunities which the league had gained by the primary election—indications of the fall election. The Bismarck Tribune in an article "New Situation Is Created by Voters" gave this partial estimate of the results:

"Temporarily, at least, the only political rivalries in the state will be between the Nonpartisan wing of the Republican party and the Democrats."

"The business people of the state, many of whom cast off allegiance to the I. V. A. Wednesday feel that the Nonpartisans have a wonderful opportunity to do constructive things and will watch their activities with interest."

"New men will control the state industrial commission, last I. V. A. stronghold. This may mean revisions of policy for the Bank of North Dakota."

"The newcomers will control every state board and political organization, if not immediately, then a short time after taking office. Included among these is the state board of administration, which rules the state's educational, charitable and penal institutions."

"The political plums will be distributed to members of whatever group comes to power in

119. The Nonpartisan League had attempted when it was first established to be listed as a distinct party on the ballots; when it failed in this attempt, it was organized as the radical wing of the Republican party. As a counter-action, the "Real" Republicans established the Independent Voters' Association. For many years the Nonpartisans were not accorded the prestige of being a part of the Republican party, but in the last election they were called the "Regular" Republicans as opposed to the "Real" Republicans.
November.

"Nepotism in state government will be thrust into the discard."

There was also the probability that the Independents would unite forces with the Democrats in the fall election to defeat the Nonpartisans, as had partially happened in previous elections.

Most of the daily papers were strongly Independent, yet they viewed the results calmly and even hopefully. Editorial comment of typical papers follows:

"No political faction in power so long as the Independents have been in a position of responsibility, could escape the natural workings of that law of politics which decrees a change from time to time. . .

"The Nonpartisan League has had one experience in the matter of radicalism. Perhaps, if it comes into complete power again, with the certainty that its legislative program will not be directed this time by the hordes of outside professional radicals who dominated in 1910, we will find a League group setting itself to the problem in hand with a far different attitude than that one evident a dozen years ago."

120. Bismarck Tribune, July 2, 1932.
121. Interview, Mrs. Florence E. Davis, Librarian, State Historical Library, Bismarck, North Dakota, July 2, 1932.
122. Fargo Forum, July 1, 1932.

Author's note: The Fargo Forum has been one of the most consistent opponents of the Nonpartisans; it is located in the county seat of L. L. Twichell, recognized political boss of the state I. V. A., and the largest city in the state. This tolerant view of the Nonpartisan League by the largest daily in North Dakota was typical of the changing attitude towards the League, which gained in prestige and influence by this sympathetic treatment.
"It was not a political test but rather one predicated on economics. The sound trouncing accorded the proposed five-year moratorium initiated measure is heartening to those who appreciate the value of a state's good name. Leaguers and Independents alike joined in defeating this bill."

"It is to be hoped that the final count of the ballots will reveal that the league has obtained complete control of the state including the legislature. It is well sometimes to shift responsibility, for the electorate is apt to discover that economic laws cannot be changed, that human nature is about the same. . . We wish no bad luck to the element which has again risen to power."

The Ward County Independent stated tersely: "The result of Wednesday's election can be interpreted as a protest of a people, dependent largely on the success of agriculture, against existing conditions. It is difficult to legislate prosperity. No election ever settled many of our economic ills."


Author's note: The only daily paper in the state to support the Nonpartisan League when it was established was the Bismarck Tribune, which later went over to the opposition. A League leader once remarked that "no daily paper supported the League, except perhaps the Tribune, and at that, the Tribune only tolerated the League." (Letter from Mrs. Florence E. Davis, Librarian, State Historical Library, Bismarck, North Dakota, October 17, 1932.) Thus, the statement of the Mandan Pioneer that "we wish no bad luck to the element which has again risen to power" tends to show the trend in the acceptance of the League as a wing of an established conservative party.

125. Ward County Independent, July 1, 1932.
In commenting on the initiated measures the Bismarck Tribune emphasized: "The vote was a protest and from a tax-burdened electorate which believes that public officials have not gone as far as they might in the curtailment of public expenditures. . . Passage of these measures at the primary is an emphatic mandate to every public official for drastic tax reduction...", and later: "Then the people of North Dakota spoke loudly and clearly in favor of tax reduction at the primary election last Wednesday, they imposed a serious obligation upon those bodies which levy taxes in the various districts of the state. . . They (the people) insist that the tax burden come down."

Initiated measures passed (unless specified otherwise in the measure) become effective 30 days after the election at which they were approved. Thus the initiated measures passed in the primary became effective July 29.

Despite the overwhelming majorities of the League in the June primary election, it was offered much opposition in the November election. The campaign continued throughout the summer and autumn with both the Democrats and the Nonpartisans scheduled for many rallies, speeches.

All did not progress smoothly in the Nonpartisan campaign. It must be remembered that Langer had been instrumental in ousting Lemark (candidate for United States representative in 1922) from the attorney-generalship in the recall election; that Langer had won the Nonpartisan nomination in the state conventions only after a bitter fight with F. H. Chorocco (Nonpartisan candidate for governor in 1923); that Langer had also ousted Frazier as governor in the recall election and that Frazier the following year was elected United States senator, (he was re-elected in 1923); that because of Langer's aid to the Independents in 1921 and then his renouncing them two or three years later, he was viewed with suspicion by both Nonpartisans and Independents. So, when Langer proposed several initiated measures to be submitted in November, the Nonpartisan executive committee rejected them by a vote of 42 to 31. These proposals provided for the elimination of the board of administration, higher tax on larger incomes, a sales tax and other tax legislation.

Some of the state papers printed in full the texts of the platforms of the two Republican factions end of

the Democratic party. The papers not only published these various platforms, but they translated and analyzed the political programs presented.

The "Real" Republicans (Independents) in stating their platform were noticeably silent on state issues, devoting all their planks to an endorsement of the national party. The Democratic platform condemned the policy of "wholesale submission at a general election of initiated measures"; advocated the reduction of state government activities; advised less regulation and supervision of the state government with more duties detailed to county and municipal officers; advocated the re-distribution of the tax burden and heartily supported the national Democratic party. The "Regular" Republicans' (Nonpartisans) platform dealt almost entirely with state issues; it advocated a continuation of state industries, expansion of the activities of the Bank of North Dakota, recommended a careful analysis of taxes and state expenditures; although it re-affirmed its allegiance to the principles of the Republican party, it mildly deplored the actions of some national Republican leaders—neither endorsing nor condemning Hoover—obviously omitting any names.

130. Bismarck Tribune, August 6, 1932.
130. Divide County Journal (Crosby), August 12, 1932.
Despite the careful avoidance of state issues in its platform, the Independent Voters' Association concentrated most of its energy to prevent the Nonpartisan from gaining two-thirds control of the legislature—a strong possibility indicated in the primary election. The Democrats had shown themselves unwilling to commit themselves to an alliance with the Independents; the Independents, likewise, were dubious of the wisdom of an union with the Democrats because of the national election and because they hoped for a rift in the Nonpartisan ranks. This last probability was not far-fetched—many leaders regarded Lang as almost an interloper; they resented his disposition to "run everything" shown by his inclination to sponsor various measures not advocated in the League platform.

Further friction was caused within the "regular" Republican ranks by the indecision of its leaders as to whom they would support in the national election. The statement of their platform gave no strong support to the Hoover administration. William Lomax, Republican (Nonpartisan) candidate for Congress, endorsed Franklin Roosevelt for the presidency. John Nystul, Nonpar-

133. Ibid., September 10, 1932.
134. Ibid., September 16, 1932.
tican state executive committee chairman, stated the
League would operate for Republican state candidates
alone and would not "be tossed into the presidential
fight" while G. E. Erickson, chairman of the Nonpartisan-
controlled Republican state central committee, pledged
support to Hoover. United States Senator Lynn J.
Frazier made the statement that he would not support
Hoover. Later Frazier announced that he would not
support Franklin D. Roosevelt for the presidency,
making no positive assertion in support of either
candidate. At first, United States Senator Gerald
Nye (candidate for re-election) refused to publicly
endorse either Hoover or Roosevelt.

Newspapers realizing the probable effect of this
"dilly-dallying" by Nonpartisan leaders, discussed all
angles of the situation. The Nonpartisans began to
fear the effect of not endorsing Hoover on the state
ticket, believing that if the voters started on the
Democratic side of the ballot for Roosevelt they might
easily continue down that column voting for the Demo-

137. Fargo Forum, October 7, 1932.
138. Ibid.
cratic candidates for state offices. Thus, Senator
Nye hedged in stating his decision, saying "there are
for more important things in North Dakota" and that it
would be foolish for "Republican state nominees to
announce themselves for Roosevelt". Such was the
inchoate ice support state Republicans gave the
national ticket. Ben Larkin, Republican state candidate
for railroad commissioner, was the only Nonpartisan to
urge the re-election of Hoover.

The League leaders continued to have difficulty
because of dissension within their ranks. Longer
was prone to make hasty promises and—so it appeared—to speak of things he could have done or would do on
the spur of the moment, disregarding the League's views.
When he spoke of an embargo on wheat to obtain a dollar
a bushel for it, of calling on the state militia to
enforce such an act; when he condemned the aid to the
American Legion given by the state—Nonpartisans pro-
tested vigorously. Longer, under pressure exerted,
modified and amended his statements; said the press

139. Fargo Forum, October 9, 1932.
140. Bisnarok Tribune, October 25, 1932.
142. Fargo Forum, Oct. 2, 1932; Minot Daily News,
     Oct. 1, 1932; Bisnarok Tribune, Sept. 28, Oct. 8,
     15, 1932.
143. Bisnarok Tribune, September 6, 25, 1932.
reports were garbled, but when he was confronted with the fact that the Associated Press reports of his speeches had been taken down in shorthand, he did not deny making the statements. He was also scheduled with A. J. Grona, attorney-general candidate, for speeches and rallies. Grona, an ex-service man, is a staunch American Legion supporter and holds an office in the local group at Williston.

Despite this internal strife, the League retained much of the electorate's favor because of their economy plans in administration. Langer was especially tolerable in his promises of reducing the expenses of the state government. If the League could be successful in obtaining a majority in the legislature as well as placing its candidates in state offices, then it would have a splendid opportunity to affect its pre-election proposals. H. B. Paulson, political writer, in speaking of probable discussion between legislature and the governor (providing the non-partisans were elected) stated that inside friction might not be continued because the governor has an opportunity to give many "political plums" and the legislators have many friends.

who would want jobs. The Minot Daily News commented in an editorial about Langer: "In the present campaign he (Langer) has raced from one end of the state to the other making this promise and that. Never has Mr. Langer stopped to consider how such promises were to be met. To him North Dakota is a land of promise and this is a campaign of promises." The Fargo Forum and the Bismarck Tribune likewise opposed Langer, although the Tribune supported other Nonpartisans.

Langer was perhaps the most colorful candidate in the campaign; consequently, much of the opposition centered about him.

It was Langer who was first elected attorney-general on the Nonpartisan ticket in 1916, who was one of the ring leaders against League "autocracy" in 1920, 1921, who published a pamphlet in 1920 denouncing the League, who tried unsuccessfully to get the Independent nomination for governor in 1920; who returned to the Nonpartisan wing of the Republican party in 1923; helped stage its comeback in 1926 and in the

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145. Fargo Forum, October 23, 1926.
147. Fargo Forum, November 5, 1926.
148. Bismarck Tribune, Oct. 8, 13, Nov. 6, 1926.
149. Bismarck Tribune, Sept. 9, Oct. 6, 15, 22, 29, 1926.
150. Prunee vs. Performanee, I. V. A., publicity pamphlet, (Fargo, North Dakota, 1932); p. 6.
following year which resulted in the victory in 1922, the year in which the Republican candidate for attorney-general in 1922 won T. H. Throes won for governor, who won the Republican gubernatorial nomination by only two votes more than Throes in 1922.

Some of the promises made by Langor in his campaign were: to eliminate all new experiments and frills, to use all his authority granted by law and have the legislature (if it would) give him power, not relegated to the governor at that time, to get rid of scores of bureaus, boards and commissions which "are eating up the taxpayers' money", to rid the state payroll of a "host" of inspectors and have eight, nine or 10 non—"just enough so they can cover all the toots in the state", "to keep North Dakota money at home".

Late in July, as mentioned previously, members of the Republican League and that party's executive committee rejected a proposal by Langor that 15 initiated measures be submitted to the voters in November. William Lasko opposed these strongly, saying that some of them seemed to much of "peanuts and pork barrel".

100. Minn. Daily News, July 9, 1922.
101. Minn., July 9, 1922.
Langer's main idea of these proposed measures was to eliminate the board of administration and to place its affairs in the hands of the industrial commission; others were to require all political subdivisions to deposit their funds with the Bank of North Dakota (the 1920 legislature, nonpartisan-controlled, passed this law; it was repealed by the electorate in the 1920 elections), to increase the income tax, to tax chain stores, to initiate a corporation income tax, to replace the present three-man highway commission with a one-man highway commission, appointed by the governor, to abolish government nepotism, to change the qualifications of the adjutant-general and other officers of the National Guard, to limit the amount to be raised for city sinking funds to four mills, to abolish the commissioner of immigration, to assess the cost of investigation by the railroad commission against public utility including railroads.

Other prominent League leaders who opposed these proposals were Senators Lynn J. Drayton and Gerald F. Lyo; C. E. Olson, lieutenant-governor nominee; John Bubly, nominee for commissioner of agriculture and labor, and H. F. Isett, prospective speaker of the house of representatives. Most of the arguments ad-
vended by these men were on the grounds of political expediency.

John Nyotul, chairman of the Nonpartisan executive committee, stated that the committee's rejection of these proposals was based on the facts that the legislature would meet in January and would have ample time to study the measures, that the electorate already faced six initiated measures; that an initiated law requires a two-thirds legislative vote to amend it and thus an initiated measure, which becomes obsolete, is difficult to amend. (The League legislature passed the law establishing the initiative in its present form in 1917.) Nyotul also brought out the fact that the committee believed it was "acting in accordance with the wishes of the rank and file of the Nonpartisan League in the June primary".

Langor's declaration of an embargo on wheat has already been mentioned. Experts familiar with the grain laws expressed the opinion that there were no provisions in the state laws for placing such an embargo on wheat or other commodities; that the railroads were permitted under the Interstate Commerce

Footnotes 151.
not to declare an embargo on farm commodities when congeation existed; the consensus was that the grain laws of the state do not permit any state official to declare an embargo. Later, Langer in defense of his intention to declare an embargo on wheat said that he had stated he would follow the lead of Governor Olson of Minnesota who favored an agreement by six or seven governors of hard-wheat states to declare an embargo on wheat shipments; and he expressed the belief that such a step would bring the price of wheat at least to the price of wheat in Winnipeg, plus the tariff, as the millers would have to have the wheat from the

Langer also promised that he would reduce by $2.50 per cent the personnel in each state office, that he would recommend to the state legislature a compulsory bail insurance law (also a measure formerly passed by a League legislature, later repealed), that he would try to raise the minimum wages of women workers. He emphasized his promises by stating: "The law gives us (state officials) a tremendous amount of

153. Siyumak Tribune, September 6, 1932.
power. We can do as much as the constitution permits, and we will not hide behind the word 'unconstitutional.'"

One of Langer's promises which resulted in many arguments was that there would be no state appropriations to take American Legion state bands to the national conventions if he were elected governor. His exact statement was: "If I am elected governor these fellows are not going to have a band at state cost." The newspapers brought out the fact that the appropriation for the Legion band had been introduced in the 1930 legislature by Senator D. E. Hamilton of Colfax county, one of the Nonpartisan leaders, and one of the men largely responsible for the nomination of Langer by the League's state convention in February. In a later speech Langer praised the American Legion and stated that he had only friendly feelings towards its band, that he had merely "mentioned the Legion band as an example of activity that might be questioned from the standpoint of institutions deserving special legislative appropriations in enumerating the various items of state ex-

Bismarck Tribune, September 6, 1932.
Northwest Advertiser (Greaty), September 9, 1932.
156. Fargo Forum, October 9, 1932.
Divide County Journal, October 9, 1932.
Minot Daily News, October 9, 1932.
penditures that might be eliminated to effect savings in our state government.

Langer charged the administration with extravagance, stating that the proposed budget was $500,000 short of being balanced, yet the state board of equalization had made a cut of some 15 millions of dollars in railroad valuations. He promised, if elected, to effect a reduction in state expenditures of "at least a million dollars." (The proposed initiated measures sponsored by the Taxpayers' Association would reduce, if passed, salaries of state officials one million dollars.) At the same time, he promised an equalization of the tax burden, better regulation of public utilities, "a new deal for state banks," the elimination of all receivers of closed banks, elimination of the office of immigration.

In October, the Bismarck Tribune published a full page "not story" of a suit started against Langer. The plaintiff charged that Langer had failed to earn a $200 fee she paid him to get her son out of prison.

158. Bismarck Tribune, October 18, 1932.
159. Bismarck Daily Record, October 21, 1932.
160. Divide County Journal, October 27, 1932.
When formal notice was served on Langer, he issued a statement through his campaign headquarters to the effect that it was "a last minute piece of political propaganda", that "this political frame-up clearly proved the opposition's bankruptcy of issues which has driven them to concoct this piece of maliciousness to discredit me" and that "I have nothing to fear in a matter in which I have sought only to do my duty to a client". The case continued through the elections (in which Langer was elected) and the hearing was set for December 31. During the first day of the hearing, the plaintiff came forward with a motion that the case be dismissed, saying that she had been wrongfully influenced by Langer's political enemies and that an injustice had been done him; the court dismissed the case.

Hickerson Tribune, November 2, 1932.

Hickerson Tribune, November 26, 29, 30, December 14, 16, 20, 21, 1932.  
*Divide County Journal*, Dec. 2, 9, 10, 23, 1932.  
*Easton Miner*, (Easton), December 9, 29, 1932.  
*Columbus Reporter*, December 26, 1932.  
*Williams County Home* & Friends, December 15, 1932.
Langer made his final campaign speech at Bismarck the night before elections. The Bismarck Tribune's account of his speech stated that Langer "impugned the integrity of a man who sat on the platform with him" and that Langer "traded the character of his opponent for the Nonpartisan gubernatorial endorsement at the convention."

The newspapers portrayed the Democratic campaign as completely as they had the League's. In the Democratic campaign there was no outstanding "colorful candidate". The Democrats presented a much more united front than the "Regular" Republicans. The Democratic platform has already been summarized; the party's candidates adhered to it strictly. H. C. DeFuy, candidate for governor, outlined his program in which the outstanding points were the curtailment of government activities and the

162. Bismarck Tribune, November 8, 1932. This man referred to by Langer was Ben C. Larkin, railroad commissioner nominee. Langer condemned the amount of money paid for state printing, implying that there was some graft. Larkin and Robert Byrne, secretary of state nominee for re-election, were on the state printing commission; both have always been staunch Nonpartisans.

163. Bismarck Tribune, November 8, 1932. This was T. H. Thoresen, Nonpartisan gubernatorial candidate in 1929, who has done much to build up the prestige and influence of the League. Through influence, Langer aligned Thoresen with the "big interests".
enactment of legislation to assist agriculture. In speaking of the former, DoFuy maintained that the limitation of government activities to purely governmental functions would eliminate practically all the boards and bureaus, and thus effect a great saving to the taxpayers.

He attacked the Nonpartisan program of state industries indirectly when he said "we would get back to simple government to be run by statesmen and which does not require the services of highly-skilled technicians who know nothing and care less for the problems and expense of government". Later he enlarged upon this, making a sharp line between his stand on current issues and that of "my Republican opponent". (He did not differentiate between the Nonpartisan and Independent factions of the Republican party.) He expressed opposition to Langer's proposal to use the militia in enforcing an embargo on wheat. He opposed also the sales tax recommended by Langer. He emphasized his disapproval of further extensions of experiment in government, and pointed out that since the administration of North Dakota's last Democratic governor (John Burke, 1906-12)

164. Bismarck Tribune, August 10, 1933.
the bonded indebtedness of the state and the taxes had increased enormously, under Republican administrations.

He frustrated the hopes of I. V. A. leaders in his firm declaration that the Democrats had no understanding or dealing with any faction or individual of any party and that there would be none. However, I. V. A. leaders probably found some comfort in the emphasis DeFay placed on the contraction rather than expansion of such enterprises as the mill and elevator and the Bank of North Dakota. Although he clearly stated the problem was to divorce these activities from the political field and insure continuity of sound management, he outlined no method by which to obtain this result.

DeFay also criticized Langer's inconsistencies, citing as an example that Langer wanted to abolish the immigration department, but that this department had been established when Langer, as attorney-general, was a member of the industrial commission in 1919. DeFay later re-affirmed his emphatic statement that the Democrat wanted to "get away from politics and run the administration in purely governmental ways".

166. Bismarck Tribune, September 12, 1932.
166. Bismarck Tribune, September 16, 1932.
Through the remainder of the campaign Doluy continued on much the same lines; most of his speeches were limited to the declamation of contraction of government activities and attacking mildly some of Loner’s proposals; he never took the offensive.

The only other very active Democratic candidate was D. U. Lienier, who was a candidate for the United States senatorship. His part in the state campaign was ineffectual; the only tangible point in most of his speeches was, at first, criticism of the stand Gerald F. Hye, Republican candidate for re-election for United States senator, took on the presidency, and later a charge that Hye was “riding on the fence”. Otherwise, Lienier contented himself with expressing his attitude on the Democratic and Republican national issues, making no statements relevant to the state program.

The Democratic candidates concluded their campaign by pointing to the records of the opposing candidates, concentrating mostly on those of Doluy and Loner.

160. [Source], Sept. 22, October 1, 1932.
161. [Source], October 1, 11, 1932.
162. [Source], September 21, October 4, 1932.
170. [Source], September 26, 1932.
171. [Source], October 16, 1932.
172. [Source], October 25, November 3, 1932.
173. [Source], November 7, 1932.
A retaliation was made against Langor's statement that the suit brought against him was a "political frame-up". In this, too, the Democrats took the offensive, stating that they viewed Langor "would be more specific" in stating who was responsible for the frame-up and implying that the "Real" Republicans (Independents) should have been directly accused.

Through the newspapers voters were informed of the initiated measures. State papers printed the text of each measure in full and translated the measures in the news and editorial columns. The November elections were complicated by the number of these initiated measures presented. There were eight initiated laws and one constitutional amendment in this election. The amendment was for the repeal of the prohibition clause in the state constitution. The initiated measures were:

1. To establish a three-year partial moratorium on delinquent taxes and debts.
2. To permit the mortgaging of crops.
3. To reduce the fees paid newspapers for the publication of legal notices and proceedings provided by law.
4. To reduce by 20 per cent state officials' salaries and salaries of state employees.

173. Fargo Forum, November 9, 1932.
5. To reduce the salaries of district judges.
6. To eliminate the district tax supervisor.
7. To shorten the period of notices of real estate sales for delinquent taxes.
8. To effect economic changes in legal printing by the elimination of the delinquent tax list and the substitution of posted notices in the county auditor's office and in four other public places.

The latter six were submitted by the North Dakota Taxpayers' Association. The mortgaging of crops was sponsored by a group of northwestern North Dakota farmers. (This measure if passed would supersede the initiated measure outlawing crop mortgagee passed in the June primary.) The North Dakota Farmers' Union sponsored the three-year partial moratorium existing indebtedness including taxes and debt. A similar measure providing for a five-year moratorium sponsored by the Farmers' Union had been defeated in the June election.

174. North Dakota Publicity Pamphlet; issued by Robert Hyne, secretary of state, (Bismarck, August, 1932) pp. 2-4, 6, 8-10.
Bismarck Tribune, July 6, 10, Aug. 5, 9, 10, 11, October 22, 31, 1932.
Divide County Journal, August 12, 1932.
Fargo Forum, October 20, 26, 1932.
Minot Daily News, August 11, 1932.
176. Ibid.
177. Bismarck Tribune, August 6, 10, 1932.
178. Bismarck Tribune, August 6, 10, 1932.
The most strenuous opposition to any of those measures was directed at the moratorium, while most support was given the one repealing the crop mortgage law passed in June. Many of the state papers gave complete reports containing both pro and con arguments about the proposed moratorium. The arguments advanced against the moratorium proposal were that the credit of the state would be ruined, that state bonds were already unmarketable because of the proposed law, that many schools would be forced to close, that land values would collapse, that the Bank of North Dakota was unable to sell its bonds pending the outcome of the measure and as a result the Farm Loan Department had ceased functioning, that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation had refused an application for farm loans stating that it was waiting to get the final action on the moratorium, that the Regional Agricultural Credit Corporation had also refused to furnish an emergency livestock loan until the outcome was known, that private credit would be impaired as well as public credit, that current taxes would be increased and the burden shifted from personal property

179. Fargo Forum, October 6, 1932.
to real estate, that this law would not free debtors of liabilities for interest, but would rather leave more to pay at the end of the moratorium, that the settler influx was threatened, that insurance policies would be invalidated, that farm homes would be lost, and furthermore, that the law was unconstitutional.

The arguments for the measure as advanced by its sponsors, the North Dakota Farmers' Union, were that Congress had done nothing for the relief of agriculture and that this measure would relieve the people from a great burden of pressing debts and allow them to pay current bills and taxes as they came due and thus would improve the credit of the state.

The Democrats and Republicans (both the Nonpartisans and the I. V. A.'s) opposed the moratorium but they did not unite forces to go so. Although the Democrats charged that the Republican administration was responsible for the moratorium measure, mainly because of the example

180. Fargo Forum, Oct. 8, 10, 15, 19, 21, 26, 27, 28, 31, November 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 1932.
Minot Daily News, October 17, 18, 22, 23, 29, 31,
November 1, 3, 4, 5, 1932.
Bismarck Tribune, October 17, 18, 22, 23, 29, 31,
November 1, 3, 4, 5, 1932.
Stutsman County Record (Jamestown), October 31, 1932.

Fargo Forum, October 21, November 1, 1932.
prominent Republicans opposed the measure more vigorously than did the Democrats. Among the "real" Republicans who took an active part in fighting the moratorium were Iver A. Ackor, state tax commissioner, and George F. Shafer, governor. S. A. Olmstead, state insurance commissioner, F. F. Cather, former manager of the Bank of North Dakota under Nonpartisan administration, and H. F. Scott, Nonpartisan legislator, were some of the "Regular" Republicans who opposed the moratorium.

The Greater North Dakota Association, the Citizens' Protective League, and various groups of educators were also active in opposing the moratorium.

None of the other measures met with such concentrated opposition, though the various educators of the state and the North Dakota Federation of Labor opposed the measure reducing the salaries of state

183. Bismarck Tribune, October 17, 1932.
Minot Forum, October 18, 24, 1932.
Bismarck Tribune, November 7, 1932.
Minot Forum, October 21, November 2, 1932.
Minot Forum, Oct. 8, 10, 15, 26, 28, Nov. 1, 1932.
officials and employees. The State Press Association opposed all measures except the repeal of the crop mortgage ban on the plane of “leave the law-making to a specialized body—the legislature.” The North Dakota Taxpayers’ Association defended the six measures which it had been instrumental in initiating on the grounds that the present economic conditions warranted the reductions in state expenditures included in these measures, that others had taken cuts and state employees should also have them, that if these economies were left for legislative action they would be postponed two years because under the constitution no salary of a public official can be diminished during his term of office.

The repeal of the law barring crop mortgages, passed in June, received practically no opposition. The State Press Association and individual groups favored this measure. The amendment to the constitution removing the prohibition clause was considered a minor issue. Nine-
teen counties were also voting to decide whether or not the county agents should be retained.

The race between the Democrats and the "Regular" Republicans intensified by the personalities of the various candidates, the proposed initiated measures, and the fact that it was also a presidential election year—all tended to make interest in the November elections great. Complete reports of the final results of the election published in the newspapers showed that all the Nonpartisans were victorious. Gerald P. Nye in the United States senatorship race had the largest majority; Langer, governor-elect, had the smallest. Those elected were: United States senator, Gerald P. Nye; United States congressmen, J. H. Sinclair, William Lenzko; governor, William Langer; lieutenant-governor, C. H. Olsen; secretary of state, Robert Byrne; state auditor, Berta B. Baker; state treasurer, Alfred S. Dale; attorney-general, A. J. Gronna; commissioner of insurance, S. A. Glesness; commissioner of agriculture and labor, John Husby; railroad commissioner, Ben C. Larkin.


In the whole, the Democratic candidates expended the greater amount in the campaign; their expenses totaled $6,636, while the expenses of the Nonpartisans were $8,883. In speaking of the Democratic defeat in the state, P. G. Landon, unsuccessful candidate for the United States senatorship, called on members of his party to "stand by and carry on." He emphasized that there was "no feeling of animosity or bitterness toward any of the progressives (Nonpartisans) of the state of North Dakota".

All the initiated measures except two were passed; these two were the three-year partial moratorium and the repeal of the crop mortgage law passed in the primary election. The amendment deleting the prohibition clause from the state constitution also was passed.

The Nonpartisans failed by four members to get a two-thirds majority in the state senate though they

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163. (Con't): Nov. 10, Dec. 9; William County Herald, Nov. 10, Dec. 9; Coleman Register, Nov. 10; Divide County Journal, Nov. 11, Dec. 9, 1932.
164. Bismarck Tribune, Nov. 12, 1932.
controlled that body and had a two-thirds majority in the house.

The initiated law reducing salaries was the object of much controversy after the election. In addition to the provision that all state employees' salaries be reduced 25 per cent, one section of the law provided that no appointive official should receive a salary larger than that of members of the board which appointed him; this meant a limitation of $2400 a year (the salary of the members of the board of administration) to all state-appointed educators—-affecting mainly the presidents and deans of the various normal schools, the state college and the state university. By this law salaries were reduced $1,000,000. Attorney-General James Kerris held the law constitutional and effective. In February, 1932, the state supreme court

196. Forum Forum, Nov. 9, 12, 14; Minot Daily News, Nov. 12, 14; Bismarck Tribune, Nov. 12; Williams County Ferrare's Press, Nov. 17, 1932.

Author's note: A two-thirds majority is necessary to amend or repeal initiated measures; thus, the Nonpartisan felt that such a majority might facilitate some of their legislation.


Williams County Ferrare's Press, Dec. 22, 1932.
held that that part of the law dealing with appointive offices was unconstitutional and that only the elective offices would be affected by the 20 per cent reduction.

Although the prohibition clause of the constitution was repealed, all state laws pertinent to prohibition and its enforcement were unaffected by this measure. (The state supreme court gave this decision in a test case in 1933.) Legislative action, it was hoped, would remove state prohibition laws. Attorney-General Morris and Attorney-General-elect A. J. Cronna both promised enforcement of the existing dry laws. The measure eliminating the publication of the tax delinquency list raised the question whether it went into effect soon enough to prevent the publication of tax delinquencies for 1932. Court ruling was that those lists for 1932 must be published. Ten of the 10

199. Fargo Forum, April 28, 1933.
Bismarck Tribune, November 12, 17, 1932.
Fargo Forum, November 17, 20, 1932.
Divide County Journal, November 18, 1932.
201. Fargo Forum, November 22, 29, 30, 1932.
Bismarck Tribune, November 25, 26, 1932.
Minot Daily News, November 17, 1932.
Williams County Farmers’ Press, Nov. 17, 24, 1932.
Adams County Record (Hothinger), November 17, 1932.
counties voted to retain their county agents.

Because of the sharp decrease in state income which would result from the initiated measure passed in June reducing the taxable valuation of property from 75 to 50 per cent, a movement was started to have this law amended by the legislature. The North Dakota Taxpayers' Association, responsible for this initiated measure and later ones dealing with the reduction of state expenditures, stated that the battle for tax reduction had just started and that it intended to carry the fight to the legislature.

One major result from the presentation of so many initiative measures to the electorate (fifteen were presented, including those in the June primary) was the widespread discussion of the use of the initiative and the advisability of making more stringent requirements pertinent to this law. The newspapers pointed to the overuse of the initiative and discussed the possibility that the legislature might take action on this statute.

204. Fargo Forum, Nov. 16; Bismarck Tribune, Nov. 11;
Noor Main, Dec. 12; Divide County Journal, Nov. 10; Adams County Record, Nov. 17, 1932.
Bismarck Tribune, December 1, 31, 1932.
The governor-elect's views on several issues aroused much curiosity. His pre-election speeches on farm loans, state educational institutions, salaries of all state employees (including educators), main banks, bank receivership, railroads and appointive offices resulted in much speculation as to what his course of action would be. The situation was further complicated by the fact that although Langer had promised a "complete housecleaning" if he were elected, not very many appointments would be under his direct authority.

The demand of the Nonpartisan state executive committee (based on the statement that before the League supported any candidate's nomination a promise of conferring about all appointments to be made had been given by Langer) that this committee be permitted to approve or disapprove all major appointments did not clarify matters; Langer never overtly stated his acceptance of this decree. The committee was substantiated in its stand by A. J. Gronne, attorney-general-elect, who received its approval of the appointments to his department, even though one deputy named was an I. V. A.

207. Fargo Forum, November 27, 1932.
carried over from the incumbent's forces. The Divide County Republican executive committee censured the state committee's action in asking to pass on appointments.

Late in November, Lange, speaking of a district which had not supported him, berated the voters, stating that "they have made their bed and will have to sleep in it"; and "how they will be cradling around for favors". Naturally this aroused much comment by the press of the state, which criticized Lange severely for "playing a game of reprisal", using "robbery-scouring tactics", indulging in "lust for revenge", though a Republican paper defended him as "maybe rash—but honest".

State newspapers interpreted the action of the Republican executive committee to be not only a method to discipline its successful candidates, but also a pronounced movement to produce a clean, successful administration which would reflect credit upon the Republican
an organization. Consequently, more than immediate problems motivated League leaders in their course of action during the legislative session of 1933.
THE 1963 LEGISLATURE

The future plans of the League for continued control of the state government were an underlying current of the legislative session; the financial condition of the state, the interest of the taxpayers' in economies gave to tax reduction a prominent position in all considerations of the incoming officials.

To recapitulate briefly: The Democrats in their campaign had condemned the Republicans for increasing the bonded indebtedness of the state immensely; the initiated measures materially reducing the state income necessitated drastic reductions in the state budget; new sources of income were needed, but the Nonpartisan organization had rejected Langer's proposals for several initiated measures which would have given more income, notably a sales tax, increased income tax, and the elimination of some state offices. A resume of the state's financial condition will aid in the interpretation of the activities of the 1963 legislature.

The bonded indebtedness of the state had increased from $468,000 on January 1, 1917 to $60,667,200 on
July 1, 1931. In 1917 the state had $230,000 set aside to partially pay the indigent claims. On January 1, 1920, the bonded indebtedness of the state was $43,000,000. Since 1919 the bonded indebtedness of the state has increased approximately $5,000,000 a year. The population in this same period increased slightly more than 210,000. This great increase in the bonded indebtedness was largely due to the state industrial program. The total cost of erecting the industrial program in 1919 was $7,000,000; the state soldiers' bonus cost the state almost $8,000,000. The Fargo Forum in a series of articles gave a careful analysis of the state's financial condition at that time. Largely because of laws passed by the first two League legislatures, North Dakota public officials have jurisdiction over funds and investments totaling approximately $200,000,000. These are distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bank of North Dakota</th>
<th>$21,000,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Lands</td>
<td>$28,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Loan Department Loans</td>
<td>$32,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill and Elevator</td>
<td>$4,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and Tornado</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Bonding</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Worksman's Compensation--------$ 2,400,000
Mail department------------------ 4,600,000
Teachers' Retirement------------- 1,240,000 219

The total tax levies for the state interest and
sinking fund since 1819 have been $3,640,260.70. Ex-
cept for $318,168.86 which was for general govern-
ment bonds, all of this has been levied for the state in-
dustries and rural credits.

The interest paid by the state in 1932 was more
than the entire state tax bill in 1916. In the tax
bill due December 31, 1932, there was included for
the payment of interest on state bonds a sum of
$1,600,000. In the year 1916, the whole property tax
for maintenance of every branch and activity of the
state government not supported by special income was
$20
$1,400,000. The maximum levy permitted by the
state constitution is four mills for all purposes ex-
cept interest on the public debt. The present levy
for all state purposes and payment of interest was
fixed at 6.63 mills by the state board of equalization
last year. This means that a mill levy of 2.85, or a
sum almost equal to 75 per cent of that needed for all

general purposes, was fixed for payment of interest. 
In 1931, the total levy was 3.78 mills. (The sharp in-
crease was due to the passage of an initiated law in 
June reducing the tax base on general property one 
third (from a 75 to a 50 per cent valuation basis.) 
In 1931, the general property tax furnished more than 
25 per cent of the state's income for general state 
purposes. The decrease in state income resulting from 
the reduced tax basic made a reduction in state govern-
ment expenditures imperative.

Extensive state farm loans had also resulted in the 
removal of approximately one half million acres of farm 
land from the tax rolls because of foreclosures, while 
pending foreclosures indicated that soon 500,000 acres 
more would be added to the delinquent list. Of 
these loans, only one-fifth had all the interest pay-
ments and principal installments paid; the state had 
$5,460,000 tied up in the lands on which it had fore-
closed mortgages; the state had sustained an actual 
loss of $1,052,776 in the conduct of the farm loan 
department, exclusive of further possible losses when

223. Farm Forum, December 9, 1932.
the lands acquired are liquidated and sold; about eight
millions of the resources of the Bank of North Dakota
were tied up in farm loan bonds and in advances to the
state to pay interest on the bonds. Because of the
amount of money tied up by foreclosures, the state is
short about $350,000 a year on interest alone on farm
bonds. More than sixteen millions of the state's public
funds are tied up in state bonds that have gone directly
into real estate loans. Fifty-eight per cent of the
resources of the Bank of North Dakota is in bonds and
obligations of the State of North Dakota or in obligations
of its public subdivisions. These are carried at par
in the bank statement, though their actual value at
present is below par.

The tax commissioner in the last biennial report
gave the following comprehensive summary of the prob-
lems facing the state:

"Government in North Dakota includes 4,281
separate tax levying and spending agencies with
expenditures aggregating approximately $40,000,000
a year.

"Each tax levying and spending agency is
assigned definite jurisdiction with authority to
perform certain governmental functions, with both
the functions and jurisdictions overlapping.

"The total population of the state increased
20.1 per cent from 1910 to 1932 while taxes in-
creased 248.2 per cent.

224. Fargo Forum, November 26, 1933."
"For the five years, 1934 to 1939, the average tax burden was 12.8 per cent of the gross income of the state from crop and livestock production; in 1931, the tax burden was 44.9 per cent of that gross income.

"The present burden of taxation is grossly in excess of the ability of the state to bear.

"The problem of reducing the tax burden to the level justified by the reduced purchasing power of the dollar without decreasing many present activities of government, the problem of reducing taxes to the basis justified by the reduced purchasing power of the farm is an impossible problem."

Because of these facts, the state budget board in December recommended appropriations for operating the state government and institutions of $6,450,699.83 for the present biennium; a reduction of $3,096,970.59 as compared with the appropriations for the last biennium.

Governor Langer, who took office January 1, 1933, recommended an additional slash in the state budget of $1,071,434 from the state's general fund, making the appropriation in the general fund $3,979,962 less than that for the preceding two years. As an accompaniment to his recommendation, the Governor suggested to the legislature several economies which might be effected, and advocated the passage of new taxes including a

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   Bismarck Forum, December 10, 1932.
   Bismarck Tribune, December 10, 1932.
   Bismarck Forum, January 5, 1933.
tax on chain stores and a tennage tax on all lignite
(open or strip) mines.

The Tax Survey commission appointed by former
Governor Shafer last year made the following suggested
revisions of the North Dakota tax system:

1. Reduction of the general property tax should
   be in proportion to the revenue obtained from sales,
   severance taxes, if these should be inaugurated.

2. Increased gasoline tax with the elimination of
   local levies for road and bridge purposes. Closer
   scrutiny of gasoline tax refunds.

3. Abandonment of the present assessor system
   and inauguration of the county assessor plan.

4. Increased vote percentage should be necessary
   for issuing of public bonds.

5. Issuance of certificates of indebtedness
   against unpaid taxes should not be permitted until
   taxes are actually due.

6. Elimination of thousands of local officials
   such as most elective local assessors and township
   officers to reduce the total tax bill for all govern-
   mental purposes by millions of dollars annually.

All of these factors—political affairs, initiated
laws, financial condition of the state—contributed to
making the 1933 legislative session one of the most com-
plicated and important sessions ever held in the state.

In addition to cutting $2,500,000 from the budget
for the biennium, the legislature was faced with the

Harrison Tribune, January 3, 1933.
problem of balancing the current budget. In November, tax collections for 1930, 1931 and 1932 were $830,000 below normal; $820,000 would have gone to the general fund. The North Dakota Taxpayers' Association listed several economies which it would present to the legislature. These suggestions included the elimination of nine state departments (state securities commission, livestock sanitary board, commissioner of immigration—also proposed by Langor prior to his election—minimum wage department, state seed department, grain storage commissioner, motor vehicle operating and auto theft departments, state regulatory department), the abolition of the office of county judge, consolidation of the Wahpeton science school with the North Dakota agricultural college and the elimination of the Mayville normal school. The newspapers echoed this sentiment of state economy through the enumeration of the numerous boards and bureaus connected with the government and stating that "the problem still remains as to how the end is to be attained" and that "he (the taxpayer) is going to be rather insistent upon first class tax cutting when the legislators get together in Bismarck".

Mrs. Minnie D. Craig was elected speaker of the house, the first woman in the state to hold this office. She had previously been elected by the Nonpartisan League caucus. N. F. Scott, a candidate for the office, was opposed in the League caucus by members of the Farmers' Union because he opposed the moratorium measure, sponsored by their organization. Mr. Scott, as majority leader, supported Mrs. Craig in the house sessions.

The outgoing governor, George F. Shafer, in a message to the legislature listed the bonded indebtedness of the state as $48,698,200; these bonds had been issued for the Bank of North Dakota, for the construction of the mill and elevator, for mill and elevator milling purposes and real estate (for farm loan purposes). In the Bank's sinking fund there was the money to retire its outstanding bonds ($1,000,000) maturing on July 1, 1934. Almost one-third of this sum had been collected by taxation. From tax levies and proceeds of the mill there was sufficient money in the sinking fund to retire the mill and elevator operating bonds maturing July 1, 1939. No mill construction bonds would come due until 1937, by which time, Shafer thought, there would be

234. Fargo Forum, January 1, 1933.
254. Bismarck Tribune, January 6, 1933.
money in the sinking fund from the mill sufficient to meet the payment without levying any taxes to retire the mill and elevator construction bonds. There was also sufficient money in the real estate bond sinking fund to retire those real estate bond series issued for farm loans maturing in 1936 and 1935, but as Shafer pointed out, unless payments on farm mortgages improved considerably by 1935 large tax levies would be necessary to maintain the solvency of the real estate bond sinking fund.

Governor Langer in his message to the legislature recommended further reductions in various state departments, and recommended the passage of taxes on chain stores, reduction in mileage allowance to state employees, reduction in fees for leasing of school lands, use of the one-cent gasoline tax going to counties for poor relief, a decrease in the interest rate, the abolition of deputy game wardens, inspectors, the consolidation of several boards, consolidation of the state bank receiver's office with that of the state bank examiner. He recommended also the making of auto licenses and coffins for burial of paupers at the state penitent-

inary, a reduction in the number of legislative bills printed, the consolidation of the presidential primary election with the state primary. Many of these recommendations are similar to the measures which Langer proposed to have submitted in the November elections, but which the Nonpartisan organization refused to sponsor. Complete copies of both Langer's and Shafer's messages were printed by the newspapers, as well as detailed analyses of them.

Early in the year, at a caucus, the Nonpartisans selected William Leake (United States congressman elected in November) as their legal advisor. The state papers pointed significantly to the fact that the Nonpartisan caucus had always employed legal advisors in the past. The selection of Leake as legal advisor made it apparent that the organization intended to proceed with the caucus idea for major or party legislation.

Langer made further recommendations for reducing the appropriations about two weeks after the legislative

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236. Bismarck Tribune, January 3, 1933.
237. Bismarck Record, January 8, 1933.

In a column giving sidelights on legislative activity, The Bismarck Tribune (January 3, 1933) included this short paragraph: "The members of the house called Wednesday as Herbert P. Swett, Nonpartisan floor leader, made his 'usual' announcement. He said, 'There will be the usual caucus tonight at the usual time and place.'"
had started. His recommendations enlarged upon these economies mentioned in his first message. State Treasurer Alfred E. Dale in a message outlining the state's financial message suggested the adoption of a bill permitting "scrip" to be furnished for state use.

As a result of Langer's recommendations and requests several bills embodying his proposals were presented in the legislature. Bills abolishing the state immigration department and creating a one-man highway commission (both carrying the emergency clause to put them into effect upon the signature of the governor) were passed. The governor signed the one-man highway bill a few days later.

Langer's entire program, if enacted, would concentrate broad powers in the hands of the chief executive. The daily papers emphasized the salient features of Langer's program; they pointed to the significance of greater centralization of governmental activity and brought out the fact that such centralization in an unwise administration would probably be turned against the party in power.

239. Ibid.
240. Bismarck Tribune, February 6, 16, 1933.
The main features of Langor's proposal were the creation of centralized control over inspections of all sorts, the governor appointing the chief inspector and all deputies; establishment of full power over the industrial commission with other members powerless to act affirmatively except with gubernatorial approval (the industrial commission consists of the governor, attorney-general and commissioner of agriculture and labor); complete control over the state mill and elevator by abolishing the commission governing it and giving the industrial commission the power to direct it; complete authority over the highway department by the one-man plan, a highway chief, who would be removable for "neglect of duty", the governor to judge each neglect (this was passed); full authority over the workmen's compensation department, by making commissioners removable at "the will" of the governor; complete authority over the bank examining department, by re-writing the law that established such a department and making the examiner removable at "the will" of the governor.

Late in February Langor appeared before the party caucus for the first time urging the passage of these

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Sad. Fargo Forum, February 13, 1925.
laws (already introduced in the legislature) which
would enact his proposals. Mr. Cinnamon, non-
partisan senator from Steele county, attacked Longor
and his recommendations in an open letter to the new-
papers. In conclusion, Mr. Cinnamon said, "Longor's
pet bills are not administration measures. His pipe
dreams are not endorsed by the platform of the Non-
partisan League. This distinction should be made now.
... To date, he has been shooting at fly specks and
putting his political canister".

The legislature passed two tax relief bills pro-
viding for temporary delay in taking of tax deeds by
execution and non-final redemption of real estate sold or
forfeited to the county for 1931 or prior years when
the property is still held by the county, with lesser
penalties and interest. The governor signed these
bills.

The last day of the legislature came with still
many important measures to be considered. The high-
light of the day was Governor Longor's message read
before the house and comto regarding the passage of the
sales tax bill. In his message he stated that it

243. Des Moines Register, February 26, 1933.
244. Des Moines Tribune, February 26, 1933.
was most imperative that "tax legislation be passed
which will produce real money to meet every state legis-
lation", and he threatened to call a special session if
"you fail in your duty in this respect". The sales
tax bill had previously been passed in the senate, but
indefinitely postponed in the house. After heated de-
bate as to the constitutionality of the manner in which
the bill was passed, Twitchell, minority house leader
and chief objector to this measure, referred to the roll
call was completed and the bill declared passed
assumed Scott, majority house leader, of a breach of
faith in not permitting proper consideration of the
amendments, concluding his argument with the remark,
"I knew the ship has been cracked".

Almost three hundred bills were passed by the
legislature and sent to the governor for approval. The
governor approved the majority of these bills. The
outstanding ones amended the initiated law abolishing
mortgages on growing and unharvested crops; permitted
the governor to declare an embargo on agricultural
products when prices became confiscatory; partial con-
cancellation of tax penalties; authorized the board of
administration to eliminate the duplication of courses in state educational institutions; placed the state mill and elevator under the industrial commission control; provided for the payment of taxes by installments at the option of the taxpayer; gave the governor power to remove the workers' compensation commissioners without cause; created a state centralized regulatory department under a regulatory chief to be named by the governor; made possible consolidation of counties; established a state scrip plan, taking effect July 1 (called a modified sales tax; the amendment to the bill stating that it was an "emergency" measure and would take effect immediately failed to be passed by the legislature); transferred the powers of the state capital building commission to the board of administration; remodeled the income tax; fixed the legal rate of interest at 6 per cent; provided for a bond issue for the creation of a "revolving fund" and appropriated $10,000 for expenses incurred; reduced salaries of state officials.

Larger, acting under authority of the governor's

267. Elizabethtown Tribune, March 8, 1933.
William County Farmer's Record, March 9, 1933.
268. Elizabethtown Tribune, March 11, 1933.
269. Elizabethtown Tribune, March 16, 1933.
vote, reduced the appropriations made by the state legislature more than a half million dollars.

Thus, by action of the legislature, Governor Langer received much of the power and authority which he wanted. Again the newspapers pointed out that those increased powers gave to the chief executive more authority than ever before in the history of the state. Langer's partially vetoing appropriations and arbitrarily listing the appropriations for the state government and institutions were likewise innovations; Attorney-General A. J. Gronna held that the chief executive had the power to reduce as well as to veto in full the items of appropriation bills.

Governor Langer claimed that he had kept his campaign promises of reducing the state budget, stating that the appropriation cuts made by the legislature and his vetoes amounted to a 50 per cent reduction. He praised the work of newly-appointed officials. The governor also emphasized that the mill and elevator at Grand Forks would be kept in operation, and that he could make a success of them.

Many of the state newspapers criticized his actions.

Representative comments were "A Nonpartisan League governor

250. Forum Forum, March 10, 1933.
251. Bismarck Tribune, March 10, 1933.
has voted more measures passed by a Nonpartisan legislature than has been done since that organization

started upon its belligerent career"; "The governor is merely talking through his well-known but when he talks about his sales tax providing funds for governmental operations. . . . The Administration would find a much healthier attitude towards the sales tax if it cleared the decks of suspicion that it is only awaiting the moment that it can rush headlong into the market with new bond issues. That's asking a lot, however, because it is so easy"; "Most of this hot air (about the mill and elevator) is largely for political consumption and is not generally substantiated by facts and figures. . . . The People are looking for action and not for hot air"; "Judging from the grumbling at the meeting of the Farmers' Union at Jamestown, the people are seeing through some of the sham and sophistry on Capitol Hill at Bismarck"; "Can a leopard change its spots? Ordinarily we would say nay, nay, Pauline, but if it comes down to our governor we would say that the change might come about if some artist or politician had the job of

253. Bismarck Tribune, March 27, 1933.
254. Fargo Forum, April 6, 1933.
255. Valley City Times-Record (Valley City), April 5, 1933.
256. Bismarck Tribune, April 3, 1933.
"Reading in his newspaper that Professor J. W. Gillette has refused the presidency of the North Dakota university, offered to him by Governor William Langor, one wonders what has become of law observance in North Dakota... But now we are told the governor has ignored the law and has, himself, offered the post to Dr. Gillette."
CONCLUSION

Before stating the general conclusions concerning
the Nonpartisan League as reflected by representative
state papers during recent months a brief resume of
the history of the League will show clearly present
circumstances.

The Nonpartisan League following its growth as
reflected by papers and other sources was originated
by A. C. Townley, former Socialist, in 1916. Griev-
ances of the farmers against existing economical and
agricultural conditions, mainly the grading of short
by the elevators and rural credit facilities were
the bases for its founding. The growth of the Non-
partisan League was rapid. In 1916 the League was
successful in placing some of its candidates in state
offices; in 1916, it obtained control of the state ad-
ministrational offices and of the legislature. The
1919 legislature wrote in practically all of the
League's program into the state laws. The main features
of the program included a Bank of North Dakota, state
mills and elevators, a state homebuilders' association

559. Alvin S. Testtche, The Bank of North Dakota: An
Experiment in Agrarian Banking; New York, 1934,
pp. 101-125.
and a state creamery. Bonds were issued to finance the building of a state mill and terminal elevator at Grand Forks, to obtain capital for the Bank of North Dakota and to launch the homesteaders' association. Money was appropriated to buy a mill at Drako and a creamery at Souris. Earlier methods for initiating measures by the voters, the referendum and recall were established.

The recall of 1921 in which, for the first time in the United States, a governor was recalled, the control of the administration by political opponents of the League, resulted in a period of inactivity in state political offices for the League. The daily newspapers of the state were in favor of the recall election, affecting the governor, the attorney-general and the commissioner of agriculture and labor. (These three officials compose the industrial commission which supervises the state industries and appoints the managers of the state mill and elevator and of the Bank of North Dakota.)

The daily newspapers urged the passage of these measures, also under consideration in the recall election, eliminating and restricting the state industries. The weekly newspapers, League-influenced, opposed the recall election as well as the initiated measures. The
three officials, Governor Frasier, Attorney-General Lomko and Commissioner of Agriculture and Labor Engan, were recalled; the initiated measures were defeated.

This refusal by the electorate to reject the League program as it was embodied in the state government, however, gave to the Nonpartisan organization a firm hold on state affairs. Between 1930 and 1932 the daily newspapers, so the state industries were better managed, supported them, to some extent, pointing out that these industries could be beneficial to the state. Using this support of state industries as an opening wedge the Nonpartisans again obtained control of the state administration.

The newspapers did not offer such vigorous opposition to the League in 1932 as in previous years; these papers had already partially accepted the state industrial program and consequently directed most of their opposition to the individual candidates of the League. The 1932 elections resulted in a victory for the Nonpartisans. The daily papers, during 1932, changed from the bitter opposition of previous years to a partial approval of the state industries. Although these papers partially approved the state industries, they actively opposed the present governor.

The state newspapers have had and do have an im-
important part in the activities of the Nonpartisan League: first, through the opposition of the daily papers to the original "professional" organizers of the League, and to the League's program; second, through the support of those weekly papers started by Nonpartisans and of those papers selected by a Nonpartisan-controlled industrial commission to have the contracts for official printing (prior to 1919 all papers in a county did the county printing; in 1919 the legislature passed a law providing that only one paper could do the county printing, this paper was to be selected by the industrial commission, and after 1920, by vote of the people at the regular elections); and third, through the daily newspapers' acceptance of the state industries, which had started to prosper under I. V. A. supervision and which were becoming of use to the farmers.

Thus, in the past year, the newspapers have shown a definite trend toward partial acceptance of the state industrial program (which will probably never be discarded). The 1933 legislature enacted some wise laws, such as the payment of taxes by installments and the consolidation of several boards and bureaus. The newspapers of the state have pointed out that these laws centralizing power in the hands of the chief executive
(these laws were also passed by the last legislature)
such as the power to remove at will some state officials,
as well as broad appointive powers, might very easily
be turned against the organization if an unscrupulous
person were elected to the governor's office. The
newspapers also say that the transference of the control
of the state mill and elevator from an independent
commission back to the industrial commission, a political
body (subject to vote every two years) might be dis-
astrous for these industries.

The papers have shown that the governor's office
is one which involves many routine affairs and that in-
creasing the duties of that office, some of the powers
connected with those added duties will necessarily be
subject to inadequate supervision. Too, some newspaper
feel there is an opportunity in the appointive offices
to be treated as political footballs as they have in the
past. The paper's opposition was not directed against
the broad appointive powers granted the governor by the
legislature but against the present governor and his ad-
ministration. The papers, particularly the Fargo Forum
and the Bismarck Tribune, pointed to the significant
fact that the managership of the state mill and elevator
and that of the Bank of North Dakota remained political
appointive offices.

The newspapers have not forgotten that the League had a bitter lesson once (recall election, 1921) but, as shown previously, because of the close check on the Nonpartisan officials by the Nonpartisan executive committee, have seen that the League is obviously building for a more permanent political machine than it had then first established.

The daily newspapers vicariously oppose the further issuance of bond measures; they have printed the official reports and discussed editorially the bonded indebtedness of the state, now more than $129,800,000. Consequently, though the papers evidenced their willingness to support the League program, they opposed the recent inc of the legislature providing for another bond issue, and oppose vigorously the Governor's plan of floating this bond issue. Governor Langer is resent by the daily papers of the state; his actions are criticized severely; all the former bitterness expressed in the papers against the Nonpartisan League organization is centered against Langer; yet, as mentioned above, those papers have acquiesced in some of the acts of the League; they have opposed not the

200. Fargo Forum, April 30, 1925.
powers given to the chief executive office but the chief executive in office at this time.

These, then, have been crucial months for the Nonpartisan League in its relation to the state newspapers. The daily newspapers have shown in the past few months that they are convinced of the good which can accrue to the state through careful management of the state industries, that they are amenable to a League truly representative of the state and not controlled by outside professional political organizers. The newspapers have, thus, challenged the League to effect a wise administration, and have indirectly pledged their support to the organization if it is successful.
APPENDIX A
Representative State Newspapers

Each of the daily papers selected for reference material in this thesis supplies a different section of the state and, thus, furnishes a cross section of the varying attitude of the electorate in the different parts of North Dakota.

The Fargo Forum, Fargo, North Dakota, has close contact with conditions of the states east of North Dakota and is considered one of the most accurate in state financial and legal news. Fargo is the largest city in North Dakota; it is the home town of L. L. Twitchell, political boss of the I. V. A. and representative to the legislature from Cass county. The state agricultural college is located in Fargo, which is on the Red river of the North, the eastern boundary of the state.

The Grand Forks Herald, Grand Forks, also serves the eastern portion of the state. Grand Forks is the site of the state mill and terminal elevator, of the state university.

The Bismarck Tribune, is the daily paper of the state capital. Bismarck is in Burleigh county, on the
Missouri river, in the southwestern part of the state. It has a population of less than 10,000. The London
Lioness (London is almost directly west of Bismarck, separated from the capital city by the Missouri river) and the Bismarck Tribune reach the southwestern territory.

The Minot Daily Sun is in the key city of northwestern North Dakota reaching a large territory. Minot is the center of a large agricultural district and also of the large lima bean area. The only other large town west of Minot is Williston, which is smaller than Bismarck.

Devils Lake, the county seat of Ramsey, is in the northeastern corner of the state; Valley City is in the southeastern part of North Dakota. The papers in these two towns are the intermediaries between Grand Forks and Minot, Fargo and Bismarck, though both the Fargo Forum and the Grand Forks Herald have fairly wide circulation in western North Dakota.

Nearly all of the weekly papers used as reference material are located in the county seats; though the territories which these papers reach are much smaller than those reached by the daily papers, the weeklies have closer contact with the farmers and furnish an
index to his reactions to the various political movements in the state.

The Divide County Journal and the Northwest Advertiser (Crosby), the Williams County Farmers' Forum (Winton), the Stanley Sun (Stanley), the Adams County Record (Hettlagers) and the Columbus Reporter (Columbus) are all located in the western portion of the state, ranging from Divide county on the northern boundary to Adams county on the southern border.

The Golden Herald (Golden), the Cavalier Chronicle (Cavalier) and the Richland County Record (Crofton) are representative of the papers in the central and eastern parts of the state.

The Bismarck Tribune was formerly the only daily in the state to support the League; in the past year, though the Tribune has backed the Nonpartisan in some of their programs, it has consistently opposed longer, Nonpartisan governor. During the past year too, the other dailies have given partial support to some of the League proposals, but have not supported all of the Nonpartisan state officials.

Because of the varied location and the different political viewpoints of these papers, both dailies and
weeklies, it is possible—through them—to get the varying currents in the different parts of the state and to obtain a fairly accurate cross-section of the political sentiment.
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