

National Farmers Alliance and Industrial Union.

OFFICERS.

HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

L. L. POLK, PRESIDENT.
B. H. CLOVER, VICE-PRESIDENT.
J. H. TURNER, SECRETARY.
W. H. HICKMAN, TREASURER.
C. W. MACUNE, }
A. WARDALL, } EXECUTIVE BOARD.
J. F. TILLMAN, }

511 NINTH STREET N. W.

OFFICE OF

L. L. POLK,

President.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *July 15* 1890.

Mr Elias Leav

Pres. N. C. State Alliance

Old Sparta, N. C.

My Dear Sir & Bro:

The gravity of the situation at these Headquarters impels me to address you this letter. It is necessitated by a conflict of opinion between the Executive and Judiciary on the matter of the per capita tax imposed by our Constitution. A copy of my rulings on the subject, bearing date Dec 14th was furnished you. These rulings, with my reasons therefor, were duly submitted to the Judiciary for their concurrence. They were based on a communication from Bro. C. W. Macune, Chairman of the Executive Board, in which he asked, as you will remember, for ruling on "the five cents per capita due from the State bodies for the present year," i. e. from Nov 1st 1889. to Nov 1st 1890. I ruled that the per capita tax for the present year was due and payable on the 1st of Nov 1889, & should be based on the estimated membership on the 1st of Oct 1889.

From this ruling the Judiciary, through their Chairman, file their dissenting opinion in the following language: "That the entire five cents per capita tax for 1889. was not to be paid, but that it was only due pro tempore intervening between date of proclamation of Consolidation of Nov. 1889"

our Constitution, the matter is placed "in abeyance"

National Farmers Alliance and Industrial Union.

OFFICERS.

HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

L. L. POLK, PRESIDENT.
B. H. CLOVER, VICE-PRESIDENT.
J. H. TURNER, SECRETARY.
W. H. HICKMAN, TREASURER.
C. W. MACUNE, }
A. WARDALL, } EXECUTIVE BOARD.
J. F. TILLMAN, }

OFFICE OF

L. L. POLK,

President.

511 NINTH STREET N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C., 1890.

2

until the next meeting of the Supreme Council which shall decide the same." I have submitted the fact of disagreement to the Chairman of the Executive Board, which body, under Sec. 15 of the Statutory Laws, is made an Advisory Board of the President & shall represent the Supreme Council during recess."

I fully & truly grant to the Judiciary, all that I claim for myself - a conscientious desire and loyal purpose to observe the law and to promote the best interests of our Order, & I beg, therefore, that you will not construe this letter as an appeal from the opinion of the Judiciary. The law fixes the tribunal & the manner for adjudicating differences of this character & I have not the remotest purpose of diverting it from the prescribed course.

I beg, therefore, to present for your consideration - not the question of disagreement between the Executive & Judicial departments, but the serious & important fact, that through this disagreement I am brought face to face, with conditions of grave & critical ~~serious~~ import to the Order - conditions, over which, under existing circumstances, I can exercise no control.

then, what is the situation? The Supreme Council made direct order for salaries, amounting in the aggregate to \$11,400. It ordered the traveling expenses of the President & Lecturer. It ordered the office expenses of the President & Secretary. It required

National Farmers Alliance and Industrial Union.

OFFICERS.

HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

L. L. POLK, PRESIDENT.
B. H. CLOVER, VICE-PRESIDENT.
J. H. TURNER, SECRETARY.
W. H. HICKMAN, TREASURER.
C. W. MACUNE, }
A. WARDALL, } EXECUTIVE BOARD.
J. F. TILLMAN, }

OFFICE OF

L. L. POLK,

President.

511 NINTH STREET N. W.

3

WASHINGTON, D. C., _____ 1890.

three of these officers to reside in Washington City. It imposed such duties & devised such systems as would strengthen the order & extend its limits. What did the Supreme Council mean by all this? In my judgment it clearly means active, constant, vigorous, persistent, progressive & aggressive work! It meant this, or it meant nothing. Our success as an order means this or it is worse than a failure. Your officers, inspired with the cheering hope of the possible accomplishment of the great & grand work, thus so liberally & auspiciously provided for, came to this city ready, willing & anxious to enter upon the task. What do they find? Applications for commissions & outfits for organizers, ~~for~~ outfits for newly formed organizations, demands for printed matter, coming in daily, with which to work, from earnest, hopeful workers in all parts of the country, and — an empty Treasury. Not a penny with which to pay for printing, to pay office rents, or to buy outfits, or to pay expenses & salary of National Lecturer, who is in the field & needs it, or to pay salaries of other officers, and worst of all, we find ourselves in such position (whether brought about rightfully or erroneously is not now open for discussion) that we cannot collect a penny with which to defray unavoidable & indispensable expenses. And should the status of this position remain unchanged, we must wait until after the next meeting of the Supreme Council. What is to be done? We have had, necessarily, almost a complete National Administration for a year past. &

National Farmers Alliance and Industrial Union.

OFFICERS.

HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

L. L. POLK, PRESIDENT.
B. H. CLOVER, VICE-PRESIDENT.
J. H. TURNER, SECRETARY.
W. H. HICKMAN, TREASURER.
C. W. MACUNE,
A. WARDALL,
J. F. TILLMAN, } EXECUTIVE BOARD.

OFFICE OF

L. L. POLK,

President.

511 NINTH STREET N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C.,

1890.

4
Shall it be prolonged another year? Who could estimate the damage to our Cause from such a course? I cannot believe that the Supreme Council contemplated for a moment, placing itself & the order in ~~such~~ a position so absurdly inconsistent. And in support of this opinion I may cite the fact that the State Alliance of Georgia, recognizing the importance to the order of having this fund at the command of the order, sent its delegates to the St. Louis Meeting prepared, as they stated, to give a check for the full amount of the per capita tax due from that State. Your officers are powerless & it is my duty as your National President, to present to you the situation, faithfully & truthfully.

What should be done? Should we have an extra session of the Supreme Council with its heavy cost? Or, should the States go to work & collect the dues & rentle our hands & let us prosecute the great work which lies so invitingly before us? Something should be done & done quickly, if we would avert a state of things that will be calamitous in the extreme. There is a crying demand for the official proceedings of the St. Louis Meeting, for Constitutions & rituals & the secret works, but we have not a cent with which to supply them.

Trusting that you appreciate the embarrassing & critical situation & that I may have the aid of your valuable & speedy Cooperation in placing this office on a firm basis. I have the honor to be, with sentiments of high regard, yours,
L. L. Polk
Pres. N. F. A. & I. Union.