FURTHER READINGS ON
The Nonpartisan League

“The history of the League is a compelling chapter in the struggle by farmers throughout our country's history. The dramatic story of the NPL's rapid rise to power and equally rapid decline has long been of interest to historians and other scholars … The League appeals to nonacademic readers as an exciting story of political and social confrontation played out by seemingly larger-than-life characters.”


Morlan's work includes an extensive bibliography of books, government documents, pamphlets, articles, theses and archival documents regarding the history of the League. In 1985 the Minnesota Historical Society Press published an updated bibliography of works about the League, The Nonpartisan League 1915-22: An Annotated Bibliography, by Patrick K. Coleman and Charles R. Lamb. Their bibliography includes works that have become available since Morlan’s book was published.

Another major work is NPL journalist Herber Gaston's The Nonpartisan League (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Howe, 1920); it is totally undocumented, but is the most often cited of the "first generation histories." Other early works include Charles Edward Russell’s The Non-Partisan League (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), and Andrew A. Bruce's Non-Partisan League (New York: Macmillan Co., 1921). Less reliable accounts appear in Bruce Nelson’s Land of the Dacotahs (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1946), and Dale Kramer’s The Wild Jackasses: The American Farmer in Revolt (New York: Hastings House, 1956).


The only full-length, scholarly biography of any NPL leader is Edward C. Blackorby's excellent Prairie Rebel: The Public Life of William Lemke (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963).


Another excellent primary source in documenting the League are North Dakota newspapers, including the *Nonpartisan Leader*, the *Fargo Daily Courier-News* and virtually every other paper that existed in the state during the time period. To get a flavor for the anti-League sentiment in North Dakota read issues of *The Red Flame*, published from November 1919 to October 1920 under the primary sponsorship of Carl Kositzky. It has been described as crude, overkill and visceral; used to feed fear and arouse the passions of the credulous, yet did influence the public perception and support of the League. It too employs extensive use of political cartooning.

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