



8-11-1931

Speech Delivered by William Langer over KFJR Radio, August 11, 1931

William Langer

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/langer-papers>

Recommended Citation

Langer, William, "Speech Delivered by William Langer over KFJR Radio, August 11, 1931" (1931). *William Langer Papers*. 82.

<https://commons.und.edu/langer-papers/82>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in William Langer Papers by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact und.common@library.und.edu.

Speech by Mr. Langer over KFYP, August 11, 1931.

*upon invitation of
Gov. Mackenzie*

I greatly appreciate this opportunity to speak to you this evening on the Farmers Union weekly program over KFYP. I welcome the opportunity especially to speak to my farmer friends throughout North Dakota on the value of your organization. Although I myself am a land owner and producer and personally supervise several farms I prefer talking to you as a professional man and give you an idea of how other professions view your organization.

I have watched the progress of the Farmers Union for some years, hoping that as it gained momentum and perfected its organization that it would soon weld together in one great cooperative organization all the producers in our country, and especially those of the Mississippi river valley. If such an organization had been consummated ten or fifteen years ago, we could have almost entirely prevented this terrible crisis that we are facing with hundreds and thousands of farmers facing bankruptcy, and banks and business of all kinds following in the wake of a destroyed agriculture. To my mind this is one of the saddest sites I have ever witnessed to travel throughout the country and see the number of deserted farm homes. Each of these homes tell us a story of vanished hopes, dissipated ambitions, severed family ties and broken hearts. They tell us of young men and women, pioneers twenty or thirty years ago, answering the call and encouragement of their own government to pioneer this prairie land and to build up new homes. Then after giving the very best years of their lives serving society by the production of new wealth, they find themselves, through no fault of their own, bankrupted, with no spot to call their own and no roof over their heads, as old age comes creeping on.

If the majority of our farmers had organized into a great cooperative group like your Farmers Union, this terrible condition could have been averted. It is too late to save thousands of farm homes, but there are other thousands that can yet be saved. In the last few years you farmers have perfected the greatest cooperative grain sales agency in the United States, the Farmers Union Terminal Association. It is owned and controlled entirely by you farmers, some fifteen thousand of you being stock holders. Each one of you has but one vote and no small selfish group can possibly gain control. It is yours and yours to keep and instead of fifteen thousand stock holders in those Northwest States every grain producer in the territory tributary to St. Paul and Minneapolis should be a stock holder, and an active patron. Your status is not materially changed by the recent sale of your facilities to the Farmers National Grain Corporation, except that you have just made a step forward and upward in the cooperative movement, and it is the job now of the Farmers National to take the burden of financing and selling your grain in a bigger, broader and more comprehensive manner than could ever have been accomplished without this amalgamation. An important feature of this transaction is the fact that you yourselves are the biggest stockholders in the Farmers National with thirty per cent of its stock you can well feature the consternation of the old grain trade, with

all their ammunition in the form of propoganda, half truths, insinuations and innuendos, together with their influence on commerce towards you, and greatest of all their absolutely unfair and unjust discriminatory competition, they had gathered and stored, and then out of the blue sky comes the deluge that renders their ammunition useless they have to retrench and adopt new tactics, and I am confident that by the time they can accumulate an entirely new set of propoganda, the farmers will have been sufficiently educated and committed to the cooperative ideals, that they will be completely rain soaked and useless. Your own organization belonging to you has every facility that a private concern has for the handling of your grain and it has far greater facilities than most private concerns now have. In fact I cannot feature at the present time any of the old line companies having anywhere near the great terminal facilities that your own organization has. It has been built up from nothing within the last few years to be the greatest grain cooperative in the United States. This has been made possible by the loyalty and the patronage of its members. Its profits, which are yours, and are growing fast is your money. A small part of it has been used in paying patronage dividends. I believe the amount was only \$35,000.00, but it was the first patronage grain dividend from a terminal organization that had been paid in the history of our country. I rejoice in the fact that its profits have been used to build a greater organization for the service of farmers, rather than have them dissipated in patronage dividends. I have the pleasure of a close acquaintance with many of your Farmers Union Leaders, and I must say that leaders with honesty, integrity and ability are necessary in carrying on the great work. You have chosen leaders that have all these virtues. That is why your progress has been rapid in spite of all discouragement, such as propoganda of the most vicious nature and the most detestable, unfair tactics practiced against you by the old grain trade who have begun to vision themselves put on the shelf and out of business.

I had a personal acquaintance with that great man, George Loftus, who pioneered cooperative grain marketing. Your present officers, Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Knutson, and your other directors, as well as your general manager, M. W. Thatcher, are men of the highest type and are certainly trustworthy leaders in the carrying on of the work initiated by George Loftus.

Friends, I want to say to you that the time has come when every bushel of your marketed grain and every hoof of your marketed livestock should be marketed through your own cooperative channels. Any producer who does not avail himself of the service that your cooperative farmers are giving all producers, is in reality unworthy of being classed an American Producer, and I sincerely trust that the time is not far distant when all of your products are going to be marketed through cooperative channels.

Again assuring you of my appreciation for the opportunity of talking to my farmers friends throughout North Dakota, I wish you,

Good Night.