

Hoover and Smith—Mouthpieces of Big Business—Accept the Nomination

By BENJAMIN GITLOW

THERE are no fundamental differences between the Republican and Democratic parties. Both are today the parties of the big bourgeoisie, of finance capital, of the super-trusts, in other words, of Wall Street. On every major question, they are in agreement. Even on those questions where there seem to be some differences, a careful examination of the facts will reveal that there is actually agreement.

The acceptance speeches of Hoover and Smith show how few points of difference there are between the two parties. Both candidates pledge themselves to Big Business. Both candidates ignore the problems confronting the workers. Both candidates offer some will-o'-the-wisp relief to the farmers.

Hoover paints a picture of "all's-well-with-the-United States." "We have prosperity, happy homes, no distress from unemployment. A bad situation in textile, coal and agriculture; that, however, will be overcome. The main stress, he places upon the statement that conditions are good, the people are happy, everybody is working and participating in the enormous increase in the national income.

Smith disputes Hoover's statement on unemployment, gives the facts which Hoover avoids mentioning—that there are 4,000,000 unemployed—and attacks the Republican Party for corruption in government.

The workers will be harangued in the coming elections to the effect that the real difference between the two parties is on the question of prohibition. Mr. Hoover will be presented as a dry. Mr. Smith as a wet. Mr. Hoover will argue against the changing of the Volstead act. Mr. Smith will argue for its modification.

But both Mr. Hoover and Mr. Smith stand for law enforcement, for the strict carrying out of the constitution and laws of the country. Mr. Smith reiterates this in his acceptance speech saying that as president of the United States, he reserves the right to recommend to Congress certain changes within the law. However, since Big Business recognizes that the speed-up system requires prohibition to

insure steady, sober workers, whose mechanical precision and speed should not be impaired by the excessive use of alcohol, Congress can be expected to have a safe majority of Republicans and Democrats for the maintenance of prohibition.

HOOVER'S SPEECH

Mr. Hoover, in his acceptance speech, raises the following points:
Says Mr. Hoover:

"During this less than eight years our population has increased by 8%, yet our national income has increased by over \$30,000,000,000 per year or more than 45%. Our production and therefore our consumption of goods has increased by over 25%."

This is a frank statement of the enormous surplus made by the capitalists of the United States. It shows how American imperialism serves the capitalist interests and particularly the big capitalist interests.

Governor Smith, finding it necessary to refute Republican prosperity, gives out the correct statement that in the year 1926 the latest available figures show that one-fourth of one per cent of all the 430,000 corporations in the United States earned two-thirds of the profits of all the corporations. It means that the super-trusts—General Motors, Standard Oil, U. S. Steel, etc., were the corporations that took the major slice of profits from the \$30,000,000,000 increase of income. With an average wage for all workers in America about \$22.00 per week, and 4,000,000 unemployed, it shows to what extent imperialism, with its mass production and enormous profits is further impoverishing the workers in the United States.

Hoover further states:

"One of the oldest and perhaps the noblest of human aspirations has been the abolition of poverty. By poverty I mean the grinding by under-nourishment, cold, and ignorance and fear of old age of those who have the will to work. We in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land. The poorhouse is vanishing from among us. We have not yet reached the goal, but, given a chance to go forward with the policies of the last eight years, we shall soon, with the help of God, be in sight of the day when poverty will be banished from this nation. There is no guarantee against poverty equal to a job for every man. That is the primary purpose of the economic policies we advocate."

Hoover expects the elimination of poverty with the help of God.

He mentions under-nourishment, fear of old age, lack of work, etc., but proposes no remedies, offers no program for social insurance. His proposal is to let the conditions that make for poverty prevail, and leave to God the finding of a solution.

Another Hoover gem. Says Hoover:

"During my term as Secretary of Commerce, I have steadily endeavored to build up a system of cooperation between government and business."

In other words, it is not cooperation that is proposed. The business interests have been the government in the Coolidge administration. The engineer Hoover will, if elected, be elected by the funds of Wall Street and his administration will be of, by and for Wall Street. The cooperation Hoover speaks of has always been cooperation in the interest of Big Business.

A real contribution was made by Hoover in his acceptance speech when he dealt with labor. He made some confessions and some analyses which fully substantiate whatever charges the Communists have made against the reactionary labor leaders who dominate the American trade-union movement. Says Mr. Hoover:

"It has been my good fortune during the past twelve years to have received the cooperation of labor in many directions and in the promotion of many public purposes."

Mr. Hoover has been one of the outstanding men in the Government furthering the interests of American imperialism. In these matters he confesses that he has had the cooperation of labor, that is, the reactionary labor bureaucrats. No one can point to a single act by Hoover in the last twelve years in the interests of the trade-union movement.

Here is Hoover's analysis of the trade-union movement of the United States:

"The trade-union movement has maintained two departments from such movements in all other countries. They have been staunch supporters of American individualism and American institutions. They have steadfastly opposed subversive doctrines from abroad. Our freedom from foreign social and economic diseases is in large degree due to this resistance by our own labor. Our trade unions, with few exceptions, have welcomed all basic improvements in industrial methods. This largeness of mind has contributed to the advancing standards of living of the whole of our people."

First, the reactionary trade-union leaders have been staunch supporters of American institutions. These are many: the open shop,

government by injunction, speed-up, government strike-breaking, wage-cuts, unemployment, government by Wall Street, military intervention in Latin America, China, Nicaragua, etc.

Second, they (the reactionary leaders) have steadily opposed subversive doctrines from abroad. What is the full import of this statement? It means that Hoover recognizes the valuable, treacherous services the reactionary American labor movement can render in the class struggle. That it is a force against militancy and revolutionary action on the part of the workers. Says Hoover: The fact that the United States does not experience the battles between capital and labor which Hoover terms foreign social and economic diseases, is due he says, in large measure to the resistance by our own labor. Hoover doesn't mince words in letting us know the role the labor bureaucrats are playing.

Third, Hoover confesses that "our trade unions, with few exceptions, have welcomed all basic improvements in industrial methods." In other words, the reactionary labor leaders have approved the policy of the capitalists in industry. Rationalization, with its speed-up, increased exploitation, wage reductions, elimination of hundreds of thousands of workers, has proceeded with the approval, sanction and aid of the reactionary trade-union officials.

As Communists we could not have stated it more plainly. Hoover's labor program is to continue this. The real problems confronting labor he ignores completely. On injunctions he says, not that the government strike-breaking-injunction policy should be abolished, but that the Republicans stand pledged to the curtailment of the excessive use of injunctions in labor disputes. Injunctions, however, will be used in the future as in the past, and even more so during a Hoover administration.

Hoover's firm belief in capitalism is expressed thus:

"No one can rightly deny the fundamental correctness of our economic system."

How Big Business is becoming more and more an integral part of the U. S. Government is expressed by Hoover as follows:

"The relations of Government and business are multiplying daily. They are yearly more dependent upon each other."

Hoover expresses his total subservience to Big Business. His loyalty pledge to Wall Street is as follows:

"Business is practical, but it is founded upon faith—faith among our people in the integrity of business men, and faith that it will

receive fair play from the Government. It is the duty of Government to maintain that faith. . . ."

It is the duty of Government, says Hoover, to maintain the faith of business. No wonder Wall Street doesn't fear Hoover.

Hoover's concern for Big Business, for Wall Street, for the imperialists is expressed in the following quotations from his speech:

"The Government can be of invaluable aid in the promotion of business."

"By economy in expenditures, wise taxation, and sound fiscal finance it can relieve the burdens upon sound business."

"By promotion of foreign trade it can expand the markets of our manufacturers."

"Both small and large business have their full place."

That both the Republicans and Democrats are grafters, Hoover puts as follows:

"In the past years there has been corruption participated in by individual officials and members of both parties in national, state and municipal affairs."

Hoover ends his speech by supporting the imperialist foreign policy of the United States, with a plea for the maintenance of the navy and merchant marine in the strength and efficiency that will assure national "safety" and with full praise to the Coolidge strike-breaking administration.

SMITH'S SPEECH

Mr. Smith's acceptance speech avoids even touching on those matters that Hoover raised. He, however, wants no one to mistake his loyalty to Big Business. So in the beginning of his speech he makes the following pertinent remarks:

"It is a fallacy that there is inconsistency between progressive measures protecting the rights of the people, including the poor and the weak, and a just regard for the rights of legitimate business great or small." (Hoover used almost the same term when he said both big and small business have their full place). "Therefore while I emphasize my belief that *legitimate business promotes the public welfare*. . . ."

Mr. Smith reiterates his interest in Big Business and that the Democratic Party favors Big Business and will serve it loyally when he states the following:

"The Democratic Party does not and under my leadership will not advocate any sudden or drastic revolution in our economic sys-

tem, which might cause business upheavals and popular distress. The Democratic Party stands squarely for the maintenance of legitimate business. . . ."

Smith favors capitalism, no doubt about it. In this respect he agrees with Hoover. Hoover is for sound business. Smith for legitimate business. Neither is for the workers and poor farmers.

Smith favors the imperialist policy of the United States, but he does criticize the Republican administration for the Nicaraguan intervention. However, he is careful not to couple his criticism with a demand for the withdrawal of American military forces from Nicaragua.

The Monroe Doctrine, which is now a weapon in the hands of American imperialism for aggression and aggrandizement in Latin America, Smith favors 100 per cent. Smith as president, will not end intervention in Nicaragua but will continue the aggressive military intervention policy of the "democrat," Woodrow Wilson, who invaded Haiti and Santo Domingo, sent troops against Soviet Russia, etc.

On agriculture, Hoover promises the farmers, after election, a special department that will cost a few hundred million dollars. Smith promises them "a non-partisan conference of farmers, farm leaders, economists, finance and business, to work out a plan for farm relief." In other words, the poor farmers, faced with bankruptcy and the loss of their land, are promised "investigations," conferences and departments, not relief.

AND THE WORKERS?

On labor, Mr. Smith declares for collective bargaining. So does Hoover. On the question of injunctions against labor, Smith does not demand the end of government by injunction, but that some legislation must be framed to meet just causes for complaint in regard to the unwarranted issuance of injunctions.

Mr. Smith, if elected, would continue Woodrow Wilson's policies towards labor. The anti-labor policies of Woodrow Wilson need no elaboration. The brutal way in which he smashed the steel strike is a sample. The anti-labor record of the Tammany police and Tammany injunction-issuing judges is well known. The Democratic Attorney General, Palmer, and his raids upon the militant workers, mark a period of the most ferocious attacks upon the workers. This is what Smith pledges labor, what he has in store for it.

Mr. Hoover and Mr. Smith have not one word to say about the recognition of the Soviet Union. In this respect both reflect the

hostility of American imperialism towards the first Workers' Republic in the world. Mr. Hoover and Mr. Smith will support the policy of American imperialism towards the Soviet Union 100% even to the extent of making war upon her.

Both candidates favor American imperialism's military policy and stand ready to plunge the country into an imperialist world struggle in the interest of Wall Street's desire for world domination.

The two acceptance speeches, Hoover's and Smith's, are speeches that are reactionary and that agree in the main questions raised. They are the speeches of candidates of Big Business and of American imperialism. The workers are promised nothing, offered nothing, in an attempt to gain their votes. The election of either one will mark a decided victory for Wall Street, a continuation of imperialist strike-breaking policy.

What the workers will get is demonstrated in the textile strikes of New Bedford and Fall River. Jailing of hundreds of workers, suppression of freedom of speech, breaking up of picket lines, brutal clubbing and assault of strikers, use of militia and bayonet charge against workers. In New Bedford we have a Democratic Al Smith administration. In Fall River a Republican Hoover administration. Any difference for the workers? None whatsoever!

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ERRATA: In the article "Marx, Lenin and the Commune," which appeared in *The Communist* for March, 1928, on page 138, line 9, "The Commune should have recognized" should read: "The Commune had to recognize." On the same page, line 11, "state power" should read "state apparatus."