

The Milwaukee Elections

By ARNE SWABECK.

RUNNING on a platform which contains no plank for the improvement of the conditions of Milwaukee's many thousands of workers, Mayor Daniel W. Hoan, "The Socialist," caters to the voters for another term of office at the city elections on April 1st.

Opposing him stands David S. Rose, "The Democrat," champion of the wide-open town and the interests of the big employers. For the other city offices two slates of the same character as the leading candidates contend for power. Whether Daniel or David wins little is to be gained by the workers.

Hoan points to his record as mayor of Milwaukee for the past eight years as the "Golden Age" of the city's progress. During these eight years Hoan boasts that "Milwaukee has experienced an increase of 100,000 in population. The value of the city's manufactured products have doubled, the building operations tripled, and the city limits expanded by leaps and bounds."

This boast certainly must sound good and will undoubtedly win the whole-hearted approval of Milwaukee big business. However, Hoan says nothing about how this "Golden Age" affected the thousands of workers who toil in the big machine shops, the tin factories, the steel mills or the immense tanneries of the City of Milwaukee, most of whom are completely unorganized and work from nine to ten hours a day for the sum of \$30 a week and less.

Daniel W. Hoan claims that during the period of his administration property value increased at least eight-fold. He forgets the fact that rents increased 100 per cent while many workers have had their wages cut since the war. Of course, this claim shows that Mayor Hoan, and the Milwaukee Socialist Party, champions the interests of the Milwaukee property owners and small businessmen. He lays no claim to particular improvement in the conditions of the workers.

Mayor Hoan enumerates a long list of achievements to strengthen his claim to the period of the "Golden Age", such as: ownership of riparian rights along the waterfront, the best municipal harbor, the finest and most economical street-lighting system, low taxes, the finest and most up-to-date building code and yet he forgets to mention that the Milwaukee building trades workers are amongst the lowest paid of such crafts in any city of the United States. Laborers receive an average of 50c and building mechanics receive from 60c to 85c an hour. He boasts of the fine civic celebrations, honesty in city government, great savings by putting the city on a real business basis and he lays claim to the finest and best police and fire departments of any city in the United States. Mayor Hoan even boasts that no large city has experienced as little labor trouble as Milwaukee and this, while he himself, knows that practically all the large establishments of the city are working on an "Open Shop" basis, with the workers unorganized and utterly unable to take up an aggressive fight against the exploiters. Yet the Mayor and the Socialist Party make no mention of the need of organizing the unorganized and have nothing to offer to strengthen the unions.

The Socialist Party of Milwaukee and Mayor Hoan, from what appears in their campaign platform, are blissfully unaware of the fact that a class struggle goes on in Milwaukee as well as elsewhere in the country. Or rather, they are deliberately ignoring this fact in order to enlist the sympathy of the employers and particularly, the small businessmen. They are following the usual trend of the Socialist Party thruout the country, of refusing to carry on a militant struggle to gain an improvement in the conditions of the toilers. Thus they are betraying the best interests of the working class. The platform advanced by the Socialist Party and Mayor Hoan is a typical example of petty-bourgeois class collaboration schemes with some petty reforms as baits for votes. The platform contains the usual hypocritical phrase of the Socialist Party being for industrial, as well as political democracy and then it goes on to enumerate a number of points as to what the Socialist Party and Mayor Hoan stand for, such as: Honesty in public affairs, rights of workers and liberties of the people, merit system in appointments, clean police department, comprehensive city planning, a dollar in service for a dollar in taxes, development of city public works, etcetera, and even the legalization of beer and light wines.

What does the Socialist Party and Mayor Hoan propose to do to eliminate the injunction weapon from the hands of the employers? What do they propose to do to assist the workers to raise their standard of living? to assist the unions or to assist the unemployed? either thru the municipality, or by compelling the employers in Milwaukee to care for those who are out of work? The number of unemployed in Milwaukee at the present time amounts to about 8,000 and with a serious industrial depression facing the whole country this becomes one of the vital problems on which the workers

should demand a definite answer from the Socialist Party of Milwaukee. What assistance has the Socialist Party of Milwaukee given to the formation of a great national Farmer-Labor Party which could take up on a national scale an aggressive struggle against the encroachments of capitalism? Nothing has been mentioned on these points so vital to the workers, in the platform advanced by the Socialist Party.

Has the Socialist Party of Milwaukee made any demand that the United States recognize Soviet Russia, so that trade relations may be opened up with that country and thus help not only the young Soviet Republic, but the American workers as well? No! On the contrary, Victor Berger, the spokesman of "Milwaukee Socialism," supports the plan of the international bankers for a loan to Germany on the security of the entire German railway system—just another ill-disguised scheme of international capitalism to enslave the German workers.

Yet the present political elections in Milwaukee are of great importance to the workers. Two candidates contend for the mayoralty: Hoan, "The Socialist," and Rose, the candidate of the big employers and "open shoppers."

The Socialist ticket, in this case, is the only ticket which stands in opposition to the capitalist candidates. Therefore, the Milwaukee workers should vote for the Socialist ticket, but in doing so they should demand that the Socialist Party become a party fighting militantly for the emancipation of the workers.

They should demand that the Socialist Party join the great effort being launched to organize a National Farmer-Labor Party which will carry on the struggle of the workers until victory is won.

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