





# Teapot Dome and Democracy

By MAX BEDACHT

ALVIN COOLIDGE, president of the United States by virtue of a broken strike and by the grace of fate which benevolently removed a vital obstacle between Coolidge and the presidency, declared the other day that the United States is an American people in their government not too well established to be overthrown by a Teapot Dome and similar political earthquakes.

These Principles of Democracy, for instance, are not too well established to be overthrown by a Teapot Dome and similar political earthquakes. And when James G. Thompson, together with Long, the Democratic leader, plunged the splash, soaked all the business element in "democracy," but it did not reach the lefty-bright good things which thrones the party goddess.

That is the theory of democracy. But what has been the practice? Corruption has been the legitimate child of the union of democracy and capitalism. Corruption in the interest of one capitalist group against another, corruption in the interest of one mass corruption in the interest of the whole capitalist class against the mass of the capitalist groups or corporations. Oil, steel, coal, banking or railroad does no longer buy its legislators. It makes them. That is concentration. That is efficiency.

On the Top. In the light of this development, the surprising thing about the Teapot Dome case is not that it reveals the domination of oil in national politics. What is surprising is that oil in this case revealed to the crude and vulgar masses of black stilled filled with bribe money, or

a dairy farm filled with cows. This side of the whole scandal, therefore, is not the most interesting one. As a rule "democracy" does not induce its illicit measures in the crude and antiquated form. She has acquired some sort of virtuosity in being as cheap as sun revealing in voluptuous organs in a more refined and "respectable" form. And it is this that form of corruption which has been the most interesting to the masses, all self-assuring assemblies of silent Cal and his accomplices notwithstanding. It is that form of corruption which is not merely to be an undesirable possibility for democracy but an integral and inseparable part of it.

Influential and all powerful committees on the capitalist parties represent oil, steel or banking. Their candidates for public office, from president of the United States to town constable, are christened in oil, steel or banking. The best the people can do is to select between oil, steel or banking. After the election the people will be "done" by oil, steel or banking. Before the election the candidate represented oil, steel or banking as counsel in court. After election he will represent oil, steel or banking as a legislator or as a member of a central committee to a cabinet post he represents oil, steel or banking in the national government as a minister of state. Should he fall in his career over an irregular bribe and should be caught at it then he will be ugly attacked by some attorney general or special prosecutor who happens to represent oil, steel or banking at this particular time. He is not a public prosecutor. Oil, steel or banking will replace the president, the oil, steel or banking is caught at a steal, the president made by oil, steel or banking causes and supervises

the prosecution of oil, steel or banking by counsel who, in turn, is also directly or indirectly connected with oil, steel or banking. The use of such measures in the crude and antiquated form. She has acquired some sort of virtuosity in being as cheap as sun revealing in voluptuous organs in a more refined and "respectable" form. And it is this that form of corruption which has been the most interesting to the masses, all self-assuring assemblies of silent Cal and his accomplices notwithstanding. It is that form of corruption which is not merely to be an undesirable possibility for democracy but an integral and inseparable part of it.

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but President Coolidge is personally involved in the oil stretch. The country does not know today what will be the next step of our president tomorrow, a message of a coalition. Even the most narrow minded average American citizen sees with astonishment that all professional procurators of the working class, all Red baiters are at the same time in the place as the Teapot Dome scandal. The world war was not a single political event but an interlocking of cupled and so deeply shaken up the American nation. The Teapot Dome scandal, William Randolph Hearst, who is unquestionably one of the greatest sports in judging the general quality of the American masses, was with justification, if not with antiquity in a way with the public sentiment in all parts of the country in which I have paper, and I have never known the public to be as much aroused over anything except a war as it is at present aroused over these oil scandals. There never has been such intense feeling and unanimity of feeling.

America's Democratic Illusions. Not a single people in the world had so great a faith in its government and in the progress of its governmental system as the American people. Democratic illusions of the masses are everywhere the greatest obstacle in the way of the proletarian masses. But they are not to be insurmountable obstacles to the workingmen of the United States, the "class" country of democracy, which would have the masses of the world in a war, to "make the world safe for democracy."

The cruel searchlight of Teapot Dome has now suddenly lit up the real essence of our democracy. The masses see now that the sacred sharing of American democracy is in reality the monopoly of big capital. It was the pride of the mass of American citizens that our country is a republic and its last president elected by the people. Teapot Dome drilled into the minds of the demoralized and disillusioned masses that he who is elected has a monopoly of the various means of finance capital and the oil, the sovereigns of Wall Street, the potentates of the steel trust, the great dynasty of foreign finance capital, the average citizen may as well be a pauper and a dandy that the whole of American democracy consists of this, what we have, not only a whole lot of imperialist Germany had, but a whole galaxy of oligarchs, capitalists and emperors. The two-party system of our political life was always the most important guarantee of the undisturbed rule of the capitalist class. If the masses become dissatisfied with the Republican Party they turned to the Democratic Party. When the masses were aroused against the Democrats, they flocked to the Republicans. Teapot Dome has now put a sudden end to this nice see-saw game of American political life. Teapot Dome has compromised fully the Republican and Democratic Parties at once. It has shown the great masses the essence of both parties. It has exposed both old capitalist parties as being the same, the parties of capitalism.

The Power of the Ballot. The American people have had the greatest confidence in the magic power of the ballot. Teapot Dome showed that regardless of whether the masses vote Republican or Democratic, politics remains the same, politics, dominated by the capitalist trust magnates and banking power. Teapot Dome has shown the average citizen that all administrations are equally the same, the same in fact. Almost the whole cabinet of Wilson was and is hired as employees of the powerful oil magnate Doherty and if one member of Wilson's cabinet was not employed by Doherty, it was because he was in the service of a competitor, the Standard Oil. The entire Harding administration has shown itself to have been bought by the oil interests and the Harding administration that only oil corruption has been uncovered. Another investigation, with bitter indignation the masses have seen that the Teapot Dome is connected with the steel interests and with Wall Street and the Teapot Dome has shown that the Coolidge administration is even worse than the Harding administration. Against Wilson and Harding no personal proofs have been found so far.

important task to drill that into the minds of the masses, that the Teapot Dome of the oil industry is but a sample of a hundred other Teapot Domes in other industries. The country begins to see that the individual bringing of corrupt individuals and administrations and Congress is only a dramatic and superficial remedy. That the whole administration, the whole congress, whether it is individually bribed or not is the kept servant of big capital. The country is beginning to realize that individual corruption is only the by-product of the system of corrupt rule of big capital in government.

Capitalists Rule Both Parties. Teapot Dome has shown that capital

the giving away of the ration has alarmed the masses who had tolerated without protest the great process of appropriation which made the whole country the possession of a handful of trust magnates. Of course we Communists know all about it before the Teapot Dome scandal happened. We have always said over and over again to the masses that they were not to be misled by the masses themselves did not see all that could be done to have a revolutionary significance of Teapot Dome is just this: that it has beaten into the minds of the masses the nature of capitalist government and the nature of capitalist cabinet members and

bankers on the aggressive character of imperialism, not only in do- mestic politics, but also in foreign politics. Teapot Dome has shown that American oil capital will conquer Mexico at all cost. It has proved that oil capital appointed Secretary of the Interior had been the most "strong" for changing the Mexican constitution which had been an obstacle to the Communist vanguard.

The True Role of the States. The masses are beginning to recognize the true nature of our government, and that has called forth an angry Teapot Dome conference as against the government. Millions of workers and farmers who, until now, had confidence in American democratic government. Teapot Dome has given an enormous impetus to the logical process of uniting the minds of the workers with the Communist vanguard.

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# Trotsky's Letter to Russian Communist Party Central

Notes.—Today the DAILY WORKER begins publication of a letter written by Leon Trotsky, Minister of War in the Soviet government and member of the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Communist Party. Our readers will find in this letter a very interesting and important statement on the political situation in Russia. We will publish Trotsky's letter in three installments. Next week we will publish the letter written by Stalin, Rykov and other leaders of the Russian revolution. Members of the Workers Party in particular should read this letter very carefully. Trotsky writes to the enlarged session of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party as follows:

TROTSKY'S LETTER Moscow, December 9, 1924.

I had fully hoped that I should be able to take part in the discussion on the present situation and the main tasks of the Party, if not in person, at least by means of a letter. However, this could not be done because the physicians had at first announced that I was unable to express my views by the present letter.

One-Estimate Role of Apparatus. Some comrades of a conservative disposition who show themselves inclined to over-estimate the role of the apparatus and to underestimate the initiative of the masses, criticize the resolution of the Political Bureau. According to their statements, the Communist Party takes upon itself obligations which should be carried out by the formation, would only create illusions and negative results.

It is clear that this kind of view is inspired by a thoroughly bourgeois, petty-mistrust of the Party. The petty-mistrust proclaimed by the resolution of the Central Executive Committee, that the center of gravity, which during the oil policy had been in the hands of the apparatus, is now, during the new policy, to be in the hands of the proletarian. The new policy does not at all mean that the apparatus of the Party is instructed to decree, to create or to establish the regime of democracy within a certain term. Nay, this regime can be created by the Party itself. The task is to create the conditions for the Party to be able to carry out its own apparatus, without ceasing even for a moment to be a centralized organization.

Two Phases of Party Structure. In recent discussion it has been pointed out very frequently that the "pure," the "entire," the "ideal" democracy is unattainable, and that for democracy in general is not an end in itself. This cannot be in any way disputed. But it is not the same thing as to say, with such reason one can say, that pure democracy is incompatible with the character of a mass party, and the centralism which as the party apparatus are in no way ends in themselves. Democracy and centralism are two phases of the Party structure. The task of the Party structure is to equidistant them in a certain manner, i. e. in that manner which best corresponds with the situation. In the past period, this equilibrium did not exist. The center of gravity had been erroneously inclined towards the apparatus. The initiative of the Party had been reduced to a minimum. This involved the masses in the leadership which are diametrically opposed to the spirit of the revolutionary Party of the proletariat. The excessive centralization of the apparatus at the expense of the initiative of the Party, has created within the Party the feeling of its own inferiority. On the extreme wing it has assumed an extraordinary form. Since the Party apparatus is unavoidably constituted out of the most experienced and proved

comrades, the worst consequences of the bureaucracy of the apparatus will be its influence on the ideological-political forwarding of the Party. It is precisely owing to this circumstance that the Party bureaucracy has become the Party's barometer against the Party bourgeoisie in the most acute sense of the word.

Old Guard. It would be a mistake, however, to believe that the strict mechanical solutions of Party questions should remain without influence on the old generation which embodies the political experience and the revolutionary traditions of the Party. Nay, the danger is also very great in this sphere. It is not necessary to speak of the immense authority of the older generation of the Party, not only within Russia, but also in the International. It is known and recognized everywhere. But it would be a grave error to estimate this authority, as sufficient in itself. It is only by continual criticism and by the distribution of the older generation within the frame of Party democracy, that the Party can be preserved as a revolutionary party. Otherwise, the Party will become completely ossified and, without realizing it, become the most perfect expression of the bureaucracy of the apparatus.

(To Be Continued Thursday)

# STOUT WITH DAUGHTERY!

Saint Patrick's day was celebrated in Britain as well as in the United States. Ramsay MacDonald proposed that the day be celebrated in Field Marshal French, the Duke of York, and the Duke of Devonshire, Irish soldiers are given the privilege of wearing their kilts on the day. The Irish soldiers are given the privilege of wearing their kilts on the day. The Irish soldiers are given the privilege of wearing their kilts on the day.

It is precisely by killing initiative that the bourgeoisie hampers the raising of the general level of the Party. And in this consists its main task. Since the Party apparatus is unavoidably constituted out of the most experienced and proved

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# IT HAS COME TO THIS

Farmer: What shall we do with the offal? Worker: Bury the darn thing.



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BURNS MUST GO!

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