

Racketeering---A Capitalist Government Institution

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THE republicans are none too anxious to proceed with the investigation of the Tammany Hall machine. They know that they are open to attack in their provinces, that corruption is as rife there as in the democratic districts. Therefore in the State legislature, the republican leaders had to maneuver some time before agreement could be obtained among their own forces to put through the bill for the investigation of the City administration of New York.

Walker, knows that the best defense is a counter offensive. Therefore, he announced that an investigation would be made of the Queens County administration—a republican stronghold. Borough President, Harvey, of Queens, immediately declared that he would not tolerate an investigation of his balliwick. The republicans know that whether Manhattan or Queens, both are controlled by the capitalists, that racketeering is a government institution, and that an exposure of the republican regime of Queens at the same time as of the Tammany Hall of New York would arouse resentment of the workers throughout the city, who have been suffering hunger and starvation for more than a year, with hundreds of millions of dollars appropriated for city administration, for raises in salaries of Walker, the borough presidents, the police, etc., and that an administration that tolerates such conditions is rotten to the core, is anti-working class and must be swept away.

Therefore the investigation has no fire behind it. It will not proceed very energetically as far as the republicans are concerned, for when the kettle calls the pot black, when the exposure goes too deep, the whole system is endangered.

The socialists, on the other hand, who see in the situation an opportunity to appear before the public—not the workers—as the cleaners of the stable of capitalism—not to remove the cause, not to destroy the system of capitalism, but to save capitalism and institute "clean government"—these people jump on the scene, in the person of Norman Thomas, and the "City Affairs Committee."

What do these people propose? They propose an investigation with lawyers of their own. What do they charge? They charge Walker with malfeasance of office; that he was aware of the situation in the city of New York; that, if he was not aware of what was going on, he shows his incompetency, and therefore must be removed. And then what? That the system which produces such scores must be destroyed and a working class system, controlled by the workers, should be put in its place? That capitalism is rotten to the core, that no capitalist representative in government can be trusted to provide "clean" government? That a government of the capitalists does not and cannot represent the workers, and that therefore, being founded on capitalist principles and morality, every capitalist government must be a racketeering government?

Nothing of the kind. Norman Thomas and the socialist party see in the present situation the possibility of establishing themselves more openly as the third party of capitalism—as the party that comes forward at a time of Tammany Hall and Hoover republican corruption, to save the face of capitalism. Norman Thomas proposed that the investigation should not be a two-sided affair, of the republicans and democrats alone, but that all three parties should be involved. Norman Thomas saw in this investigation an opportunity to establish himself and his party as the "clean" party of capitalism, as the party which the bosses could trust to conduct their affairs in an "honest" manner, in a manner that would still retain the faith of the workers in capitalism.

Is this a far-fetched conclusion? Look at Germany, where the social-democrats, fellow-socialists of the American socialists, today are the bulwark of the capitalist regime—they are the party on which the Bruening dictatorship depends for its very existence. The government, that has cut the wages of all the workers, has taken hundreds of thousands off the unemployment insurance list, has voted for new cruisers—with the support of the social-democrats—while 5,000,000 workers are unemployed! Look at the British Labor government, fellow socialists of the American socialist party, which has helped to cut the wages of the workers 10 per cent, has denied independence to the Indian Masses, and instead has slaughtered thousands and jailed 10,000 workers and peasants.

From country to country one can proceed in order to demonstrate that the socialists are the third party of capitalism, intent upon establishing more strongly the structure of capitalism which is tottering.

And looking at the socialists at home, with Norman Thomas, Morris Hillquit, as their fascist leaders, what do we find? The clubbing of the unemployed by the Tammany police was approved by Norman Thomas. The jailings of the Unemployed Delegation of March 6th was approved by the socialist party. The clubbing

and jailing of unemployed in Milwaukee and Reading, Pa., takes place at the hands of the socialist administrations. Evictions, starvation and hunger are rampant in these two socialist controlled towns. And in Wisconsin, the socialists have entered into a coalition with the LaFollette administration, for the purpose of strengthening capitalism, with its racketeering, with its starving of the working masses.

Socialist lawyers, Morris Hillquit, Charles Solomon and others, use the capitalist courts to secure injunctions against striking workers. The grafting Tammany Hall judges grant them these injunctions and with the aid of the socialist lawyers send the militant workers to jail. Unions controlled by the social-fascist socialist leaders—the International Ladies Garment Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and building trades locals—work with the racketeering underworld, club and beat up the militant workers. Unity of the socialist party, the underworld and the Tammany Hall police and courts!

And in more recent days, the united front of the socialist party leaders with the police, the fascist Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Russian white guards, to prevent the workers from demonstrating on May Day!

We must judge a party not by its statements alone, but by its actions. The record of the socialist party, through its leaders, is a record identical with that of Tammany Hall and the republican party. It is a third party of capitalism, and in entering into the muckraking business together with the republicans, they hope to establish themselves better in the eyes—not of the workers—but of the capitalists as full supporters and reliable props of the capitalist system.

The exposure of the racketeering Tammany Hall machine will not be a deep-going one. It dare not go deep, for it will only arouse the workers still more against the racketeering system of capitalism, which starves and tries to crush the workers, lets the unemployed and their families be thrown into the streets to die, forces wage cuts and speed-up on the workers in the shops. The workers know today that there is a Communist Party, which is unafraid of the courts, police, the jails and penitentiaries; that organizes them to fight for unemployment insurance and relief; that organizes them into the revolutionary unions of the Trade Union Unity League, to fight not only against the racketeering of the bosses but against their racketeering colleagues in the American Federation of Labor, and the socialist party. **There can be no cleansing of capitalism or of capitalist government.** It is not the capitalist governments alone that are corrupt: capitalism itself is inseparable from corruption and graft. Capitalism spreads the disease of corruption that seeps down to and through the working class. Only by the workers destroying the system of corruption and racketeering, only by rooting it out branch and limb, will it be possible on the basis of working class power and of collective production and distribution for social use, to erect a government, which not only may be controlled by the workers, but which has a foundation that eliminates graft, corruption and racketeering.

The socialist party leaders, Thomas, Hillquit and Company, are of the same class of racketeers as Walker, Tammany Hall and the republican party. The drawing in of Rev. Holmes and Rabbi Wise does not and cannot change the character of the system one bit. On the contrary, their very coming on the scene has the purpose of giving a "holy," "impartial," "clean" aspect to the investigation. **These people are as much a part of the racketeering capitalist system as is the underworld, the gangsters, the fascist socialist party and the A. F. of L. leaders.** It is all capitalism—and capitalism being the cause of present-day mass misery, starvation, and persecution must go and will go when the workers at last see through the lies of capitalist politicians of all types and capitalist parties, when they recognize the methods of struggle and organize under the leadership of the Communist Party to sweep capitalism off the face of the United States and the entire world, and, in revolutionary struggle, establish a Workers' and Farmers' Government in the United States.

The answer of the workers of New York this year to the racketeering system of capitalism, must be to build up the Unemployed Councils and revolutionary unions of the Trade Union Unity League to fight for unemployment relief and insurance, against wage reductions and speed-up, and for the 7-hour day with no wage reductions, against discrimination and jim-crowism of the Negroes, against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union. The May Day demonstration of the United Front May Day Conference with its tremendous outpouring of the workers of New York was the answer of the working class to the racketeering capitalist system with its misery for the workers. We must answer the racketeering Tammany Hall, republican and socialist parties in the coming aldermanic elections by supporting the only party of the working class, the party of the class struggle, the Communist Party.