

Coolidge Message Cheers the Employing Class

By JAY LOVESTONE.

President Coolidge has at last broken his long silence. "The Sphinx" of the White House is no longer a puzzle. After months of reticence Calvin Coolidge has openly proclaimed himself as the champion of the employing class. The President's first message is a reactionary thunderbolt hurled into the arena of national politics.

The spokesmen of the bankers and manufacturers knew what sort of a message was coming from Coolidge, they did not expect the Chief Executive of the country to be so blunt, so frank, so firm in his proclamation of loyalty to the capitalist class.

The President's message is a classic in so far as open defense of employers' interests is concerned. It is the most reactionary message delivered by any president to date. McKinley and Taft were stern capitalist watchdogs in the White House. Yet, neither of them ever delivered an address so outspoken in its disregard of the welfare of the workers and farmers and so plainly devoted to the privileges of the owning class.

Help for the railroad magnates. Advice to the coal barons. A promise to the shipping interests. A guarantee to the bankers that he will do everything within his great power to kill a bonus for ex-soldiers and to reduce the taxes on big incomes. A bigger army and more powerful navy. The registration of foreign-born workers. Denial of recognition to the Soviet government. Continuation of the millionaires' Fordney-McCumber tariff. These are the high spots of the encyclical bull hurled at the masses by President Coolidge, the Pope of the American exploiters.

Stock Exchange Rejoices.

There is no better barometer indicating the satisfaction with which the big interests welcomed Coolidge's message than the stock exchange. Stocks and bonds soared in price as the address was being broadcasted. The vigorous advance was attributed by everybody to the extremely conservative character of the President's proposals and the lack of camouflage in their presentation. It was obvious to the moneyed lords that Coolidge meant business; and the Stock Exchange registered with glee every blow struck by the President in behalf of the ruling class.

Monday, Dec. 3rd, when the business men got first wind of what the message would be, the sale of shares on the New York Stock Exchange rose to 1,098,600. The next day, while the insurgents were locking horns with the reactionaries over the organization of Congress, stocks were marking time. Their sale declined to 835,000. Then the progressives surrendered to the Republican machine in the House and the sale of stocks leaped to 1,010,400.

Dec. 6th, while the presidential message was being delivered the sale of stocks reached the dizzy heights of 1,268,000 shares—a gain of over a quarter of a million in a single day. The stocks of nine leading industrial gained 24 points in twenty-four hours in a sale of 147,000 shares

as a result of the Coolidge message. The New York Central reached the high ground of 105.

How great was the rejoicing of Wall Street at the White House commandments can be seen from the fact that from the day when the tug-of-war in the House was most tense, to the moment of the President's mounting the congressional rostrum the sale of shares of stock increased by almost half a million—actually 434,000.

The Wall Street Journal, boasting of the greatest financial newspaper circulation, pictured this intimacy between the White House and the Stock Exchange in these vivid, forceful words:

"Wall Street's reaction to President Coolidge's first message to Congress was a great feeling of relief over the favorable auspices under which the new session was opened. Stocks mirrored the sweepingly bullish character of the President's attitude in one of the broadest and most buoyant markets of the year. Rails were featured in this demonstration, but virtually every section of the list participated, and the closing prices were at the highest levels of the current upswing. Wall Street rightly regarded President Coolidge's message to Congress as the most constructive document of recent years."

No plainer talking is necessary. No more eloquent and accurate characterization of the class character of the President's message could be made by any one.

Coolidge Caters to Capitalists.

From his first to his last word, Coolidge catered to the capitalists. In speaking of the distress of the ex-soldiers the President displayed his unexampled generosity with an offer of more hospital beds and new hospitals.

"But I do not favor the granting of a bonus," declared the President in relieving the wealthy property owners of their fear that for voting reasons, he might not go the limit in preventing the enactment of this legislation.

Emphatically declaring himself against a bonus to the mass of ex-soldiers, the Chief Executive went out of his way to assure the shipping interests that he was opposed to the government owning the fleet of vessels which cost the country billions of dollars, and that he would do everything to transfer the ships to private hands.

The President came out unreservedly for the continuation of Section 15-a of the Esch-Cummins Act guaranteeing the railroads profit on their investments. Of course, Coolidge refuses to call this a bonus or a guarantee to the railway owners. Politically it is more palatable to label this method of subsidizing the railroad corporations as fixing rates that "should be just and reasonable." But it is rather instructive to note that the President is opposed to anybody proposing legislation tampering with the statute requiring the railroads to return half of their profits in excess of six per cent. Coolidge prefers to rely on the Supreme Court to declare this section of the present railway bonus law unconstitutional than to have some disgruntled congressman from the wheat belt strengthen its provisions against the rail lords.

Naturally, the President does not mince any words in proclaiming his intention to have Congress cut the

taxes of the rich. As the successor to Gamaliel Harding in the Apostleship of Normalcy, Coolidge lets the world know that he is "not in favor of excess profits taxes" because "to reduce war taxes is to give every home a better chance." What is more, "the proposed plan of the Secretary of the Treasury has my unqualified approval," says Coolidge of the scheme to cut the present tax bill in such a way as to put into the pockets of six per cent of the tax payers almost sixty per cent of the sum saved. The present tariff law which has brought \$3,000,000,000 of extra profits to the capitalists is to remain untouched.

Calls on Employers to Unite Against Workers and Farmers.

Calvin Coolidge then goes out of his way to advise the employers to unite against the workers and farmers and build their organizations into more powerful weapons of resistance against the demands of the exploited wage-workers and the suffering rural masses.

Thousands of coal miners are out of work. Thousands are working only part time. The coal operators are making giant profits. Under these circumstances Coolidge puts forward the plea that the solution of the coal problem lies in a "greater unity of ownership," a greater unity amongst the coal bosses so that they might fight the workers more successfully. Worse than that, the President demands that "in case of its (the coal industry's) prospective interruption, the President should have the power to appoint a commission to deal with whatever emergency might arise." Stripped of its legal cloak this plan proposes that the coal operators close their ranks against the miners and assures the coal barons of the full support of the government in case a strike emergency should confront them.

To the railway capitalists the President also appears in the role of the good Samaritan. Coolidge tells them to consolidate and promises them that if they do not get together voluntarily the government itself will take steps to organize them into one big union. This is merely a call to the railroads to get together more closely. To the workers this means that the next time they strike for the right to organize and against intolerable conditions of employment they will be faced by an even more powerfully united enemy than they were in 1922.

Coolidge Tries to Break Workers' Ranks.

As against his policy of unifying the employers, Coolidge advocates rank division for the working class. First of all, he seeks to divide the workers along the lines of nationality thru his proposal of more restrictive immigration laws. In this the President aims to make the native workers believe that their salvation lies in the exclusion of their European brothers rather than in the organization of all workers here regardless of the language they speak or the country in which they happen to have been born. Coolidge is simply pitting one group of workers against another and is thus dividing the ranks of the workingmen.

To make the great advantage that the capitalists would reap from such division even greater, Coolidge proposes to have every foreign-born worker registered as if he were an

enemy of the country. By means of this power the government would have a most damaging strikebreaking weapon in its hands. In any labor dispute, struggle or strike, government agents could break into a trade union office, seize its records, arrest its leaders and imprison some of its best fighters on the plea of seeking to enforce the registration act.

In order to enable the government to enforce these measures in behalf of the capitalists and against the workers, the President demands that the Department of Justice be strengthened. Coolidge wants Daugherty to choose five more Federal judges of the Wilkerson type that issued the infamous injunction against the striking shopmen last year. He also insists that the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, now controlled by William J. Burns, be strengthened thru adding to it a Division of Criminal Identification. In practice this scheme would enable so notorious a labor-hater as Burns to be chief of staff of all anti-strike activities.

Denies Help to Farmers.

The only an empty gesture about child labor is all that Coolidge says of the working class in what is perhaps the longest message delivered by a President up to this day, still less is said by him regarding the relief of the bankrupt farmers.

The farmers must shuffle for themselves. Coolidge attempts to console them with the fact that eleven of their products have risen in the price brought on the market in the last year. But the President fails to say that the farmers were not the gainers by it and that only the big commission men, stock men, and distribution overlords reaped the advantage of the rise in the market price. Coolidge does not say a word about the fact that since 1919 the farmers have gotten less and less for their leading products. To relieve this great suffering our Chief Executive does not propose a single practical measure. And the wheat market tumbled to new low points indicating the effect of the presidential address on the farmers.

Against So-called Russia.

Despite his blatant talk of humanity and friendship, Coolidge is still an enemy of Soviet Russia. He is opposed to Russian recognition. Pretending to be charitable he talks of excusing Russia the payment of the Czarist debts. Yet, he insists that Russia give the American capitalists a pound of flesh in the form of payment of the debts contracted by the Kerensky government for forcing the rule of the capitalists on the workers and peasants. Coolidge wants the Soviet government to repay the American capitalists the money they advanced to Bakhetieff to finance counter-revolutionary movements against the Russian people.

Not until these blood debts are paid and "there appear works mete for repentance" will the Soviet government be recognized by the United States, if Coolidge can help it. The President does not say a word of the repentance that the American government must do in order to atone and pay for the ravages and outrages committed by the American troops invading Russia and the incalculable damage done Russia by the dollars financing Kolchak and other hangmen.

For Militarism and Imperialism.

Militarism and imperialism are wholeheartedly endorsed by Coolidge. The President is against reducing the army, is for more airplanes and for a huge navy. To Coolidge "The army is a guarantee of the security of our citizens at home; the navy is a guarantee of the security of our citizens abroad." Here we have it. The investments of our citizens abroad, the collection of their debts, the maintenance of the law and order of profits at home require stronger military and naval forces. The capitalist class wants the Monroe Doctrine and is against repudiation of the debts owed them by Europe. Coolidge toes the mark one hundred per cent here as everywhere else where the employers' interests demand protection.

Coolidge—Leader of the American Reaction.

This message has definitely established Coolidge as the undisputed leader of the capitalist reaction in this country. His program is the program on which the Republican party will go into battle in the next campaign.

This message has endeared him to the hearts of the financial and industrial kings from Maine to Oregon. The Wall Street Journal calls Coolidge "A leader at last" because of the frankness with which he avowed his championship of the capitalist interests. This organ of high finance goes on to say that "He is not merely the logical candidate. He is the only conceivable candidate. His expression of policy is straightforward, outspoken and incapable of misconception. The republican party cannot repudiate him without repudiating the Presidency." In the Chicago Journal of Commerce the situation appears in this light: "It is good to know that a man of Calvin Coolidge's courage is in the White House."

Judge Gary of Steel Trust fame, George M. Reynolds of the Continental and Commercial Bank of Chicago; the biggest bank west of New York; E. T. Statesbury, of Drexel & Co., one of the leading financial houses in the country; Mortimer L. Schiff, of Kuhn, Loeb & Co.; William E. Frew, president of the Corn Exchange Bank; Chellis A. Austin, president of the Seaboard National Bank; Julius Kruttschnitt, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Southern Pacific, and Alvin W. Krech, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Equitable Trust Co., are amongst the outstanding figures in the business world that have already applauded Coolidge's rise to the leadership of the reactionary forces of American capitalism.

Coolidge's straight-from-the-shoulder blows at the workers and farmers signify a sharpening of the class conflict. The presidential message shows beyond dispute that the capitalists do not propose to compromise with their opponents. The capitalists are planning not to relinquish their offensive. Now, the progressives must either fight or quit. Wall Street will stand for no more shilly-shallying.

In view of the wavering, hesitating, ineffective tactics of the progressives and their vacillating allies, the present circumstances make more imperative than ever the need for a powerful political party of the workers and farmers organized along class line to meet the challenge of the big business interests.