

Lessons of the Last Election

We shall begin with an analysis of our electorate. Who are the voters? What are the particular social classes and groups that go into the make-up of the heterogeneous political to the make-up of the heterogeneous political States?

First, in order of social influence and political power, comes our ruling class, the big bankers, merchants, and manufacturers. This class, numerically the smallest of all the classes, has at present no single political affiliation. It is neither definitely Republican or Democratic. As a matter of fact, the capitalists of America support and finance both parties. It is only on the of a national election that our ruling class throws in the full weight of its influence upon the scales of either one of the two parties, and in making their choice our capitalists are concerned mainly with who will be the winner. To the prospective winner goes the support of the capitalist class. The apparent differences between the Rep. and Democratic parties matter little. Both of these parties are committed to the defense of the existing order of society. Both of them are ready and willing to stand by capitalism and do its will in all the important matters that concern the political and social life of the United States. If so, then the only considerations that are really decisive for the capitalistic choice of political affiliation are: which of the two parties will pull the largest vote and which of the two will better and more efficiently conduct the political affairs of capitalism. In the last election the capitalists of America chose the Republican Party as the custodian of their political power.

The League of Nations which the Republican and Democratic politicians have been trying to present as the most important problem confronting the United States, and on the merits of which they pretended to disagree, was never in reality an issue for our ruling class. Since the very beginning of the war in 1914 the imperialists of America have viewed the bloody struggle between Germany and the Allies as nothing else but their supreme opportunity for world domination and exploitation. Our masters forced us into the late war for the single purpose of securing for themselves a footing in the imperialistic game of the European Powers. This being so, and since the Wilson League of Nations aimed at precisely the same thing, what real interest was there involved in the partisan struggle over the Peace Treaty? None at all. It was a sham battle staged for the benefit of a bunch of capitalist politicians who had to have an issue to justify the separate existence of their two parties. If there was anything of real importance in this battle, it was the fact that the Republican politicians have shown a better understanding of the needs and interests of American imperialism than did the Democrats. And this was one of the reasons why our ruling class supported the Republican Party in the last elections.

The next social group of our electorate, which identifies its interests with those of capitalism in general, are the small merchants, manufacturers, brokers and investors, officials and managers of corporations, better-paid clerks, salesmen, public officials, professionals, etc. This group is by no means socially homogeneous. Its everyday interests seldom coincide with the interests of the magnates of finance and industry. But as a general rule of the last few years, this middle class of our cities has been looking up to our big capitalists for industrial and political leadership. The reason for this is quite obvious. The exceptional growth of American industries during the war, the increase of exports, and the general extension of American finance-imperialism into the economic life of Europe, China, Central and South America, etc.—all these factors tended to make the business prosperity of the United States dependent upon the resourcefulness, and aggressiveness, and ingenuity of that small social group called Big Capital. It is true, that of all the late prosperity, big capital was getting the lion's share. But the opportunities for enrichment created by the imperialistic adventures of our big capitalists have been so large that the middle classes also profited by them enormously. This fact largely contributed toward increasing the prestige of Big Capital in the middle classes.

Then there is the social revolution in Europe and the growing discontent of the working masses in America. A situation like this should have naturally frightened the middle classes and put them on their guard. And so it was. But from this it did not necessarily follow that our petty-bourgeoisie must entirely lose its head—as it did—and throw itself headlong into the arms of reaction. It was on this assumption that the 'Forty-Eighters' attempted to build a liberal movement. But it failed, as we now know, and for the simple reason, that our big capitalists and their polities still enjoy a great reputation among our middle classes. It is to Gary, Morgan and their kind, that the small merchant, manufacturer, investor, etc., looks for guidance and enlightenment. And because of this, traditional party of Big Capital—the Republican Party—has received the support of the middle classes in the last election.

We now come to the farmers. To the propertied group of our agricultural population.

FINANCIAL REPORT.

CASH STATEMENT, OCT. 1920
CASH RECEIVED.

CASH RECEIVED.		CASH PAID.	
Dues:			
Distr. 1	69.70	Sec. & Tech. Dept.	
" 2	39.00	Sal. (2 x 5 wks.)	450.00
" 4	17.80	Post. & Supplies	47.20
" 5	4.80	Rents	49.00
Fed. Jew. (Aug. Sept. Acct.)	50.00	Prtg.	15.00
Let. Aug. bal. *)	173.00	Misc.	18.25
Sept.	125.20		579.45
Lith. Sept.	1073.60	Edt. Dept.	
Oct. Acct.	300.00	Sal. (2 x 5 wks.)	450.00
Russ. Sept.	992.00	Misc.	11.80
Ukr. Sept.	551.80		461.80
	3396.90		
Day's Pay: Distr. 1	269.38	Distr. Sal.	
" 2	1063.35	1 (5 wks.)	225.00
" 3	655.03	2 (D. O. 5 wks.)	175.00
" 4	596.34	(S. D. 5 wks.)	175.00
" 5	1989.17	(S. D. Back S.)	63.55
" 6	906.58	3 (3-1/3 wks.)	195.00
	5480.15	4 (5-2/3 wks.)	228.33
Org. Fund: Distr. 1	115.50	5 (D. O. 5 wks.)	225.00
" 2	133.05	(S. D. Temp.)	30.55
" 3	25.50	6 (5 wks.)	225.00
" 4	78.15		1542.43
" 5	497.55	Distr. Trav. 1	19.77
	849.75	" 2	147.22
Defense F.: Lith. Fed.	300.00	" 3	68.55
Pol. Fed.	14.25	" 4	143.38
Distr. 5	500.77	" 5	60.14
Distr. 6	500.00	" 6	44.14
	1315.02		481.20
Communist: Distr. 1	20.35	Distr. Misc. 1	33.06
" 2	146.90	" 2	58.53
" 3	4.10	" 3	24.25
" 4	15.75	" 4	43.75
" 5	97.85	" 5	52.76
" 6	71.55	" 6	42.46
	356.50		254.81
Leaflets: Distr. 1	45.50	Int'l Del. Sal.	275.00
	45.50	Nat'l Org. Sal. 1 wk.	45.00
Lit.: Russ. S. D. N. Y.	5.00	C. E. C. Mtg. Exp.	146.14
Distr. 1	78.00	Communist: Prtg.	516.60
" 2	42.15	Misc.	73.31
" 3	98.75		589.91
" 4	29.10	Leaf. N. O. Prtg.	137.25
" 5	46.40	Misc.	30.00
	239.40	D. 1 Prtg.	266.00
Init. Fees: Distr. 2	14.00	D. 2 & 3 Prtg.	222.75
" 3	1.00	D. 3, Dellv.	21.75
" 4	28.00	D. 4, Prtg.	270.00
" 5	26.00	Dellv.	24.96
" 6	4.50	D. 5 & 6, Prtg.	455.00
	73.50	Misc.	35.45
Conv. Assess. Distr. 2	20.00		1463.15
" 3	.50	Lit.: Prtg.	482.70
" 4	47.00	Misc.	32.55
" 5	1.50		515.25
" 6	1.00	Defense: B's Case	1000.00
	70.00	Chic.	494.02
Loans Pay.: Ukr. Fed.	250.00		1494.02
Distr. 4 Def.	150.00	Loans Rec.: Jew. F.	200.00
	400.00	F. & F. D. 1 Twr.	14.00
Ret. Check made good	100.00	D. 1 Mimio.	28.00
Old Conn. State Bal.	80.00	D. 6 Twr.	32.00
Old Lit. Acct. D. 2	14.83		74.00
Conting. Ret. by Def. 2	50.00		
Distr. Reducing Bal.	50.00		
Distr. 2	65.50	Distr. Incr. Bal. 1	224.60
" 4	224.23	" 2	287.64
	289.73	" 3	207.26
Total Rec. in Oct.	12821.28	" 5	161.12
Bal. from Sept.	1357.53	" 6	170.33
	14178.81		1150.95
		Total Pd. in Oct	9273.12
		Bal. to Nov.	4905.69
			14178.81

*) In Sept. statement Lett. dues — \$60.80 was only for Distr. 1 and 2.

G. Dobin Exec. Sec.

Here we certainly notice a strong movement of revolt against the economic domination of Big Capital and the political domination of the two capitalist parties. Lately, this movement has been intensified by the financial anti-farmer policy of the Federal Reserve Board.

But for the present, and as far as the last election was concerned, the farmers' discontent was ineffective. It found very little political expression. The vote polled by the Farmer-Labor Party is negligible, and only a little better are the local successes of the Non-Partisan League. This much we must realize, that we are on the eve of a great farmer movement against big capital, which will have far-reaching social and political consequences.

Last on the social ladder is the working class. And here we are confronted with the fact that only a small part of the working class is included the electors. The capitalists and their servants explain this fact away easily. They tell us about there being 'citizens' and 'aliens', the last group not being qualified to vote. But this explanation does not do away with the fact that there are millions upon millions of workers in the United States, not all of them "aliens", who are for all practical purposes disfranchised. There are large masses of American-born workers, so-called migratory workers, who can never qualify for citizenship and consequently, are out of the electorate. Then what about the negroes of the South, most of them workers, who are practically deprived of all their political rights? In short, it is a well-established fact that the largest part of the agricultural and industrial proletariat of the United States, as well as a considerable portion of the poorer farming population, do not possess the right to vote.

Now, what does this mean with respect

to the results of any particular election? It means that the make up of the political institutions of this country does not reflect the moods and consciousness of the American working class, and that it is futile to look upon the results of an election as an indicator of what is really transpiring among the working masses in the United States. Keeping this in mind—many of us somehow lose sight of it, we shall not be worried very much with the Republican landslide in the last election. We shall know that this election, as all the others, indicate nothing more than a re-alignment of forces within the family of propertied elements alone. The fact that the electorate contains also a few millions of workers, makes very little difference for the bulk of the working class, its real proletarian elements, are out of it.

As to the workers who do possess the right to vote, the magnitude of the combined vote of the Socialists and the Farmer-Labor parties would tend to indicate among those workers, a growing tendency to the left. Small as it is, the vote polled by Debs probably represents very large percentage of the total vote possessed by the workers of America. If this is so, then our criticism directed against the opportunistic and social-patriotic tactics of the Socialist Party should find a sympathetic response even among the better-paid workers in the United States.

To summarize: The results of the last election present us, on the one hand, with a solid and united front of nearly all the propertied elements of the United States under the leadership of the Big Capital, the only exception being the partial defection of the farmers; and on the other hand, with a growing tendency to the left, among the 'citizenship elements' of the working class.