

«Hoover Brings You Peace and Plenty»

The nursemaid to American capitalism, has delivered his message to Congress and sounded a militant note for the class that put him into office.

Hoover's message was delivered in the face of three outstanding facts: First, the sharpening of the competition between the United States and England for their respective shares of the world market, a struggle which is leading headlong towards war, however thinly the flight is concealed by "disarmament" negotiations. Second, the resounding crash on the stock market which made hundreds of thousands, if not millions, dubious about the fable of perpetual prosperity in the United States, and caused a panic in political and economic circles of the bourgeoisie. Third, Hoover's reputation for being an "efficiency man", one can so well regulate the balance wheels of national economy that all classes are able to live in an idyllic state of peace and well-being.

What Price Kellogg Pact?

The first thing that Hoover's message does is to disabuse the minds of those credulous souls who put two cents worth of faith in the Kellogg Pact cure-all. Since its promulgation, there is no more "peace on earth" than there was before it. Hoover does not place any brighter prospects before us. He brushes aside all the Sunday School sermons of Kellogg and his flock on the new era of peace that was to ensue after that "historic meeting in Paris". He does not even tip his hat politely to the conversations with MacDonald that were to inaugurate an epoch of pacific relations between the Anglo-Saxon powers. His message opens up no vistas of peace, but plenty for a coming war.

In other words, he proposes for the next year's appropriations (fiscal year of 1931) not only a larger budget in general than that of the previous year (an increase of more than \$4,000,000), and not only a maintenance of expenditures for national "defense" (read: imperialist aggression), but a substantial increase for past and future wars. Out of every dollar spent by the government for the coming year, 72 cents will go to cover past and future wars! "National defense" appropriations are increased from the trifling sum of \$692,399,804 to the sum of \$719,089,388. It must further be borne in mind that the appropriations requested by the president are always lower than what is actually expended; sums are always added later on by supplemental appropriations.

U. S. Naval Progress

It is no wonder that this increase, following the Kellogg Pact, the MacDonald conversations, and the proposal for the London Naval Conference next month, have aroused caustic comment in Europe. The French imperialist press positively sneers. The British press, with that tone of injured indignation in which a poorer shopkeeper criticizes the extravagances of a richer neighbor, makes bold enough to point out that the United States is going too far for the British to keep up the pace. The British Navy, for instance, in 1913, had 2,200,000 tons, representing about 32% of the world's total tonnage. Today it has about 1,379,000 tons, representing about 25 per cent of the total world tonnage. The United States navy, on the contrary, had 844,000 tons in 1913, making about 12 per cent of the total. Today it has 1,261,000 tons representing 24.6 per cent of the whole. That is, the United States has increased its war fleet to about the same extent as it has been decreased by Great Britain.

The United States is spending, for "defense" purposes, about 75 percent of the total (\$1,100,000,000) spent by all countries on the European continent, except the Soviet Union; and the population of Europe is some 300,000,000, almost three times that of the United States. Furthermore: England's expenditures on military and associated purposes this year will run to some \$580,000,000, that is, less than 50 percent of America's proposed expenditure.

It is no wonder that the bold hussy of American chauvinism, Liberty, remarks cynically: "A little examination into history reveals that what Mr Hoover would like the British to give up is the power and glory of their empire" Just that and no more!

As for Uriah Heep Hoover's solicitousness over American imperialist troops in Nicaragua, Haiti, China and elsewhere, and his pledges to withdraw them "as soon as possible" not even an idiot can be deceived by them in view of the action he took 2 days after his speech in the Haitian situation. Hoover will withdraw the bayonet from the throat of Wall Street's colonies on the very day when some enormous natural catastrophe sinks them all to the bowels of

By Max Shachtman

the earth. His figures speak louder than his oaths: Appropriations requested for the "administration of territories and dependencies" rise from \$872,785 to \$1,918,693, an increase of more than 100 percent. A tighter and not a looser stranglehold on America's subject peoples is Hoover's program. Imperialist aggression and not retreat is Hoover's program. War, and not peace.

For the Workers at Home

The proposed budget offers nothing better to the working class at home, which faces a bad period presaged by the stock market collapse, the growing unemployment and a severe wage-cutting campaign all along the line.

Compare the planned appropriation of \$2,733,213,283 for wars—past and future—with the magnanimous appropriation for public health: \$20,804,072, a decrease of more than a million dollars since last year. Or for education: \$14,491,938. Compare the appropriation for conserving national resources so that they may be better exploited to the profit of Hoover's class: \$47,798,767, with the appropriation for "aids to labor" (whatever that means) of \$6,510,170! Or the latter figure with that for "aids to industry and trade" (how to get more profit for the capitalist class) \$14,922,044. Or the refunds on taxes, customs, etc., which Hoover presents to the starving coupon clippers amounting to \$162,528,500, ten millions more than last year. These figures bespeak the class character of Hoover's government as well or better than a mountain of abstract argumentation.

What does Hoover propose for the amelioration of the position of the American workers? Just so much tripe! With an admirable coolness he sees nothing "basically wrong."

The consequences of the stock market crash are to be overcome with ease. Growing unemployment is nothing to worry

about. What miraculous measures does Hoover propose to cope with unemployment? What are his pearls of wisdom? Listen, and then wonder at the ease with which windbags acquire a reputation for wisdom and efficiency: "The cure for such storms is action; the cure for unemployment is to find jobs."! That is Hoover's literal contribution to the problem made at the business men's conference in Washington. (New York Times, 12-6-1929). Even the most ignorant worker will now know that the cure for his being without a job is to . . . get a job.

Bull! But How?

How? Through the magic formula: Public works, public construction, public building. But the government itself does not plan any additional public building and works. The new budget calls for an appropriation of \$246,012,061 on public works, about a quarter of a million dollars more than last year's appropriation. That is, there will be a continuation of employment, perhaps, but no increase.

But there is Secretary of Commerce Lamont's announcement to the business men's conference of plans to set into motion a volume of well over \$2,250,000,000 for public works, with more than 600,000 men employed. But where will the capital come from? From those industries where it is now unprofitable, or less profitable than public works. A withdrawal from those industries means lessened employment there. But capital will not be so easily attracted by the prospect of the long turnover offered by public construction in the United States. It will languish for the swifter returns—and more magnificent one—contained in foreign investments. That is where the trend of "unemployed capital" will be, as the well-informed Dr. Max Winkler has recently pointed out in his statement estimating steady increases in foreign investments as well as in foreign corporate purchases by American capitalists. Even assuming the fantastic figures of Lamont (which are universally re-

garded, in the polite terms of the capitalist press, as "experimental") it still remains true that 600,000 by no means covers the mass of unemployed workers in the country which is constantly on the increase.

Other industries, besides public works, offer very dark prospects. The steel industry is wobbly and has been declining for months. Ingot production is about 70 percent of capacity; scrap is having a very dull period; Fabricated steel plate orders for October were 39 percent of capacity as compared with 67.6 percent for last year. The mining industry is notoriously rotten, particularly from the viewpoint of the miners whose wages are scarcer than they've been in years. Copper is hard hit, and it is no "seasonal" depression, either. Production is being cut down radically; one company has announced a 25 percent cut in output; a cut in price is soon expected, to start out with as much as 2 cents. The building trades have been weak for months, and a steady decline is obvious. A survey of the auto industry; conducted by Business Week, calls the three major problems of the industry; a curtailment of production to relieve the flooded market, need for better "relations" with dealers, and continued expansion of foreign sale. The end of this year and the beginning of the next will see lower auto production than the record "lows" of recent months.

Hoover Offers No Solution

This does not yet point to a crisis, but it indicates a growing depression. And Hoover offers no way out for the workers for the simple reason that he cannot solve the multiplying contradictions of capitalism, American capitalism included.

Hoover tries to jolly his hearers into believing that the wage standards will be maintained. But to make this contention is to fly in the face of facts. Commodity prices are becoming generally lower. Lamont warned the business men's conference that the general level of commodity prices was between 4 to 5 points lower than last year. Dun's general index of consumer's commodities shows an average of 188.969 for December 1, 1929 as compared with 193.543 for a year ago. Bradstreet's index showing the decrease in money form, points out that the average for December 1, 1929 was \$12.2367 as compared with \$13.1479 on December 1, 1928. The decrease in the cost of commodities, a process hastened by the rationalization of industry, is inevitably accompanied by a decrease in wages. What the American workers have as a prospect to look forward to is an intense wage cutting campaign in every important industry—Hoover or no Hoover.

But this will only bring about a further narrowing of the diminishing home market, which will do anything but help to increase the output of American industry. The soothsayer of American capitalism has a "solution" for this problem also. He proposes the increase of American exports. "In stimulating our exports we should be mainly interested in development work abroad. . . for we gain in prosperity by a prosperous world, not by displacing others." "Displace others"? Perish the thought! But it is only by "displacing others" that capital and manufactured products exports can be "stimulated," and it is to make sure that the "others" can be "displaced" that Hoover is spending so much money upon military, naval and aerial "defense."

The Struggle For Markets

Where will "we" export? To whom? Is there some Atlantis, some hidden continent or land on the face of the earth that is not already being disputed by the various imperialist buccaneers? An increase of American exports can be accomplished only by cutting into the share of other big powers. American can "overcome" its own depression—and possible crisis—only by feeding on the waning reserves of the European nations. But none of the European countries is as yet so exhausted and feeble that it will lie unresistingly while the American ogre continues to gobble up its markets, its sources of trade—and imperialist life. Hoover was a good chap when he "fed" Europe after the war; he is not so good when he feeds on it.

This rounds out the picture. The mounting resistance of Europe to America's attempts to escape the consequences of its internal difficulties at the Old World's expense, involves an ever more aggressive policy on the part of both contestants. Hoover is not the most stupid representative of Wall Street (after all there have been Coolidges and Hardings in office). He is no seventh son of a seventh son, but he can look into the very near future and see the gathering clouds. He is organizing his master's machinery to meet the situation. His Congressional message indicates that he knows what he is about.

The American workers don't know they must learn. The bitter battles that surely coming will help to teach the

Why We Publish The Militant

The Militant is little more than a year old, and although it began as a semi-monthly, it is now in its third issue as a weekly. The delays occasioned by technical difficulties have been largely overcome and there is every assurance that we will now appear regularly every week as a revolutionary organ of the class struggle.

There are many papers published in this country which lay claim to the title of labor and revolutionary. Why in that case is there a need for another paper? Do not the others suffice? No. It is because we feel the imperative need of The Militant that we have decided to bend all efforts to maintain it and develop its strength. The reasons for our existence as a special paper cannot be better stated than the way in which they were put in a recent letter sent to our French brother organ, La Verite, by comrade Trotsky.

A Rallying Point

"Rejecting the spirit of a literary coterie with its shabby interests and ambitions, Verite must rally around it all the live and genuinely revolutionary elements of the Communist Opposition. It is as necessary for the vanguard of the workers as daily bread.

"The relations of the workers' press with its readers furnish the clearest verification of its political line. The reformists lie deliberately to the reader in the interests of preserving the bourgeois regime. The Centrists cover their hesitation, their lack of assurance, their capitulations and their adventures with their deceit. They have no confidence in themselves, that is why they lack confidence in their readers. They believe that the workers can be won only with their eyes blindfolded. It is this spirit that now imbues the press of the Communist International. It has no confidence in the workers. It takes them under its care like little children. It tells them fantastic stories. When they ask embarrassing questions it shakes its finger at them. That is why apathy is established in the ranks of the Party and the void enlarges around it.

"The mass of workers is not composed of sucklings. It is made up of men having hard experiences. It does not tolerate bureaucratic rule whose severity generally equals its foolishness. The worker does not ask for orders, but for help in his political orientation. For that, we must above all tell him what is what. Not to distort, nor to select tendenciously, not to gloss over, not

to sweeten, but to say honestly what is what.

The policy of Communism can only gain by presenting the truth in all its clarity. Falsehood can serve to save false authority but not to educate the masses. It is truth that the workers need as an instrument of revolutionary action.

"Your weekly calls itself Verite (Truth). This word has been abused a good deal, like so many others. Nevertheless, it is a fine and honest name. Truth is always revolutionary. To present the truth about their situation to the oppressed is to open the road of the revolution to them. To tell the truth about the leaders is to fatally undermine the bases of their power. To tell the truth about the reformist bureaucracy is to ruin them in the minds of the workers. To tell the truth about the Centrists is to help the workers assure a correct leadership in the Communist International.

"There is the task of your weekly. All the forms and manifestations of the labor movement must be loyally clarified. The attentive reader will have to be persuaded that in order to know the truth about the movements of the proletariat in France and the world, he must look for it in Verite.

"And in this way he will accept your point of view because it will present itself to him in the light of facts and figures. Only this current which, together with the workers and at their head, honestly seeks the right orientation, will win to itself conscientious and devoted partisans who will know neither disenchantment nor discouragement."

With the aid of its fellow-fighters in the ranks, this is the course that The Militant will pursue. It is for the reasons so succinctly put by comrade Trotsky that The Militant will continue to appear.

NEW YORK

: A JAMBOREE :

for the benefit of the

WEEKLY "MILITANT"

SATURDAY, December 14, 1929, at 8

at the

MILITANT HALL, 25 Third Ave.

Musical Program : Entertainment

Auspices: New York branch,
Communist League