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THE NEW ORDER

More than a hundred years ago, Thomas Paine wrote: "The opinions of men with respect to government are changing fast in all countries. The revolutions of America and France have thrown a beam of light over the world, which reaches into man. The enormous expense of governments have provoked people to think by making them feel; and when once the veil begins to rend, it admits not of repair. Ignorance is of a peculiar nature: once dispelled, it is impossible to re-establish it. It is not originally a thing of itself, but is only the absence of knowledge; and though man may be kept ignorant, he cannot be made ignorant."

Those words might have been written today. Nothing could show more clearly than the recent election that men's opinions of government are changing fast, not of official government, merely, but of that invisible government of privilege that dictates the policies of office. It is not the President and Congressmen, alone, that have been repudiated, but the interests that they befriended.

The power to control the affairs of men does not ordinarily lie with the greatest number. The larger the "mob," the more difficulty it has in organizing, and the more varied are its desires and purposes, for it is, after all, made up of individuals. It is comparatively easy for smaller groups to gain the upper hand and, through subtle and cunning methods of education, keep the mass of people in ignorance of what is really happening. To this power, the people themselves, some consciously, some unwittingly, contribute by yielding to it, by keeping silent when they do understand its abuses—because they want it to help them, because it has the fat jobs to give, the inside tips, the opportunities for social, political, financial advancement. No man would try to rise to a position of wealth and influence and at the same time oppose, either actively or passively, the great corporations and public utilities, the trusts and monopolies. Those who see the danger and cry out against it, attempting to warn

the people of inevitable disaster, are laughed at, dubbed cranks and radicals, sometimes thrown into jail.

As these powers become stronger and more firmly entrenched, they become more and more oppressive until even the dull and indifferent are, as Paine says, provoked to think by being made to feel. We may shrug our shoulders and say, "Too bad" when we are told that men are out of work and their families suffering for the bare necessities of life. We are sorry for them and subscribe to the charity fund—and go on about our own affairs. But when *our* job is gone, when *our* family is suffering, we want something done about it, not in the sweet bye and bye, but now. That is when revolutions are born—when a sufficient number of people have felt the oppression of the privileged class.

The Los Angeles Record had some pertinent paragraphs on "Marching Men" and said in part: "Students of history know what it means when men start to march . . . And they are marching today; they will be marching next month in greater numbers—an ever growing army, tramp, tramp, tramping . . . The thing for the whole world to remember is that these marching men represent an effect, and not a cause." There is always a threat to existing government when men begin to march. There comes a time when popular feeling and opinion turns against the aristocracy. Those who have chosen to side with privilege, not because privilege is right, but because it is powerful and will take them where they want to go, find that they have climbed up on the wrong wagon.

There is no doubt that many men who fawned on the French aristocracy despised it in their hearts, and those who succumbed to the lure of honors and riches just as the tide of revolution was rising, soon found to their sorrow that they had chosen to side with the wrong power, but they were just as dead when the guillotine finished with them as if they had honestly believed

all they professed. The same thing is true of Russia. The time came when it was *not* safe to side with the czar and his party.

The Russian revolution was less violent than that of France, and in America it is not necessary to resort to the physical force and strategy of war. For several generations, the ballot box has been waiting for voters to register their protest against unfair policies and unjust conditions. The election of November 8th that swept out of office so many of the old guard may prove a revolution "gone modern." Whether the worm has actually turned, or merely wimpled, time will tell. We have yet to learn the full significance of the election. No doubt there are many people who are as blind to its deeper meaning as President Hoover. Such an overwhelming defeat ought to convince any man and his party of the dire necessity of changing their policies, yet in his first post-election address, Mr. Hoover contents himself with the usual formalities that promise support to the following administration and puts his greatest emphasis on his exhortation to his party for renewed strength and activity *as a party*. "Republicans of the country should not be discouraged by defeat." Said Mr. Hoover. "Rather they should at once strengthen all forms of national, State, county and precinct organization for absolutely militant action."

The election of November 8th indicates that something far more serious and fundamental than party lethargy brought defeat to the Republicans. It is generally recognized that many of the votes cast for the Socialist ticket were protests against the policies of both of the major parties.

A resolution passed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars at their national convention in Kansas City last month, declared that "utmost desperation and chaos exists in the social and economic life of the nation because of a system of exploitation of the people carried on by bankers and privileged groups under cover of vicious laws." The Veterans of Foreign Wars are asking the cooperation of the American Federation of Labor "in launching a national movement looking toward a peaceful change in the economic structure of society."

If the Republican party will turn its attention to the study of the fundamental principles governing social welfare, and will assist in bringing about a "peaceful change in the economic structure of society" it will have a far better chance of survival than if it stubbornly continues its present policies which the great mass of people have interpreted as "a system of exploitation of the people carried on by bankers and privileged groups under cover of vicious laws."

Like some unhappy Frenchmen of the Eighteenth century, Mr. Hoover chose to ally himself with the privileged groups just at the moment

when those groups were becoming unpopular, when political heads were due to fall by the ballot box guillotine. When Gov. Roosevelt said: "Judge me by the enemies I have made," and named the power trust, the tribe of Insull and other "big interests" he showed that he understood which way the pendulum was swinging. We were frequently told that this depression was good for us, that we were learning from our experience. What we learned and how much was a great surprise to the Republicans.

After enjoying power and privilege for so many years, the Republican party is not going to lie down and quit; and the Democratic party, elated with its overwhelming victory, is not going to yield without a struggle. The next four or eight years will see a battle royal between these major parties. If the recent vote truly indicates a modern revolution, the winning party at the next election will be the one that heeds the signs of the times and takes sides *against* the privileged interests.

As Thomas Paine said, when ignorance is once dispelled, it is impossible to re-establish it. A new order of political policies must follow the new order of thought. "Man did not enter into society to become *worse* than he was before, but to have those rights (the civil rights of men better secured."

THROUGH THE YEAR

"What has destroyed every previous civilization has been the tendency to the unequal distribution of wealth and power. This same tendency, operating with increased force, is observable in our civilization today, showing itself in every progressive community, and with greater intensity the more progressive the community. Wages and interest tend constantly to fall, rent to rise, the rich to become very much richer, the poor to become more helpless and hopeless, and the middle class to be swept away. . . . Equality of political rights will not compensate for the denial of the equal right to the bounty of nature. Political liberty, when the equal right to the land is denied, becomes, as population increases and invention goes on, merely the liberty to compete for employment at starvation wages. This is the truth that we have ignored."

What more fitting title could friend or foe have bestowed on Henry George than that given him by the Duke of Argyll when he called that great economist the Prophet of San Francisco? Henry George saw and understood the *cause* of social injustice. He explained the cause and its remedy in one of the most inspired books of the human race, Progress and Poverty. He prophesied exactly what has come to pass, "the increasing intensity of the struggle to live, the increasing necessity for straining every nerve to prevent