

VIEWS and REVIEWS

by
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"It is very sad, but did it ever occur to you that all the people who live in these houses and all those who run this complicated machine are going to die? Just as sure as death the job is yours. And there are opportunities in every inch of it."

THESSE words could well have been uttered at some convention of undertakers. But they were not. They were part of a speech delivered last Saturday to the Young Republicans League of Colorado by none other than Herbert Hoover. With these words this learned scholar and great engineer proved to his own satisfaction at least, that America is still the land of golden opportunity for youth. So once again Herbie walks away with the booby prize.

While it is easy to laugh away the gross stupidity of our ex-president, it is not so easy to laugh away the gruesome reality it reveals. For Hoover, in his attempt to defend capitalism, has unwittingly let the cat out of the bag. The only prospect he offers the millions of jobless youth is to wait until death removes some older person from shop, office or profession. This is his conception of opportunity.

Waiting for Death

AT THE recent national conference of our League a young worker from one of the coal-fields spoke with bitter irony of this state of affairs. In his locality the miners' union has established the following system of seniority. Jobs can only be handed from father to son. When a miner dies his job and union standing are automatically transferred to his son. If there is more than one son in the family, the others are simply out of the picture. The lucky one gets his "opportunity" on the death or retirement of his own father, if, of course, the mine is still operating and new machinery has not eliminated the job entirely.

So it is necessary to wish for death in order to get a chance to live. What a tragic farce!

That American youth are resentful towards this kind of opportunity, can be seen in the growing support for the American Youth Act. This Act, at present before both houses of congress, has received support from trade unions, Y's, settlement houses, church youth organizations, student groups and prominent individuals. It is the united-front answer of America's young people to both the Hoover and Roosevelt youth programs.

An Opportunity to Work

WHAT does the American Youth Act offer young people?

If enacted, it would immediately establish a system of vocational training and employment on public projects for all youth between 16 and 25 years of age. Wages on such projects would in no case be less than \$15 a week. Needy students would also receive enough money to continue their studies.

Thus the American Youth Act means to every young person the chance of a **JOB** or an **EDUCATION**.

The Act further provides that all necessary funds be obtained thru increased taxation of the rich and not thru sales taxes aimed at the masses of people.

Raise Your Voices

FOR all of the above reasons and for many others, the American Youth Act should receive the unanimous whole-hearted support of the labor movement. There is more than enough wealth in this country with which to give jobs and aid to the young. But such jobs and aid will not be forthcoming unless youth raise their voices and insist on their elementary rights to a livelihood.

On March 19, 20 and 21, Senate hearings will be held in Washington on the Youth Act. Telegrams and letters should pour in to Senator Walsh, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Labor. It would be good if open hearings of unemployed youth were organized for these three days in as many cities as possible. These hearings could adopt resolutions and wire their findings to the Senate committee.

LET US remember that the Youth Act will not be adopted by congress unless the maximum pressure is applied. The Roosevelt Administration with its "breathing spell" policy is opposed to the bill. The Republican Party of Hoover is certainly out to kill it. Thus, only a mighty united front movement of millions of youth and adults can force its adoption. Let us make the fight for the American Youth Act echo thruout the length and breadth of the land. Let us place it before every organization of youth and labor.

This will be the best answer to Mr. Hoover and his Liberty League friends.