

# The British "Pilgrims and Jumpers"

By JOHN PEPPER.

The Labor Party in Great Britain is on the threshold of government.

The capitalist class in Great Britain and in many other countries as well is discussing with fear the possibility of a labor government.

Ramsay MacDonald the leader of the British Labor Party is trying to pacify the capitalists. In his Royal Albert Hall speech he made the declaration "We are not going to jump to our goal, we are on a pilgrimage." True, the capitalists are pleased with his promises, but they don't exactly have faith in him. The Evening News compares MacDonald to Kerensky and says: "He might be surprised, if he were to divide his party into pilgrims and jumpers, at the strength of the latter, and numbers apart, it is the jumpers who have the punch."

The New York Times reports from London, that the English capitalist press is greatly pleased with MacDonald's policy of moderation, but the British Daily Mail says, it is all very true, MacDonald is "sincere and earnest", but the big trouble with him is that "he serves only as a mask behind which actual revolutionaries are preparing their campaign to take possession of this great country."

We see the English bourgeoisie hesitating between fear and love at the possibility of the Labor Party's taking over the government. The capitalists of Great Britain would prefer Baldwin or Asquith or Lloyd George as the guardians of the ruling economic system; but as they are realists, if there is no help for it, they will be content with MacDonald just as well. The capitalists are aware of what George Bernard Shaw the "enfant terrible" of the British Labor Party has said with his usual sharpness and frankness: "The advantage of the Labor Party in such troubled times as these is that it stands between the country and the possibility of revolution."

What is the real significance of the acquisition of power by the British Labor Party?

It is a tremendous event of universal significance. It means the breaking of the old English two-party system. It will be the proof of the gigantic growth of the political power of the British working class. It will prove that the English capitalists can no longer master the great problems of decaying British industry, increasing unemployment and political world crisis.

But it would be foolish to think for a moment that the rule of the British Labor Party means the rule of the British working class. MacDonald and the Labor Party do not desire the rule of the working class at all, and they have betrayed even the immediate demands of the working class already before they have come into power. MacDonald receives the power from the hands of the king, and not from the hands of the victorious revolution. The Labor Party was the Opposition of His Majesty, and it will be the Government of His Majesty. The Labor Party will take over power as a minority in Parliament, but in such a way that it will not have at its disposal even the resources of power of a parliamentary majority. The Labor Party can only go as far as the liberal parties will suffer it to go. MacDonald will be nothing more than the rubber stamp of Asquith and Lloyd George. The Liberal Party will be in a position to drive him out of power by combining its votes with those of the Conservatives, the very first moment that MacDonald shows the slightest inclination to turn from a "Pilgrim" into a "Jumper."

In his last speech MacDonald already forgot two measures of the Labor Party, the capital levy and nationalization of mines and railroads. And the Labor Party will betray its program on the solution of the tremendous unemployment and of the terrible housing situation. The Labor Party will bring about the recognition of Soviet Russia; but it will not have the revolutionary courage to inaugurate a new foreign policy in Europe. The Labor Party will bring some relief in the German

situation, but will not have the courage to tear up the infamous Treaty of Versailles. The Labor Party will utter a few pious and sentimental phrases to the colonies in Egypt and India, but it will not have the revolutionary courage to burst the British empire. The Labor Party will receive the power from the hands of the king, and will not abolish the House of Lords and will rule with the old bureaucracy of the capitalist state power.

The coming to power of the British Labor Party will not mean the rule of the British proletariat, but merely the illusion of the rule of the working class.

But exactly for this very reason, the coming to power by the British Labor Party will start a tremendous revolutionary process in England.

Capitalist papers have likened MacDonald to Kerensky. The comparison is partly right, but partly wrong. It is incorrect, because the petty bourgeois Kerensky revolution in which the working class and poor farmers were the driving force acquired mastery after the bourgeoisie had been defeated, after the apparatus of power of old Russia had been destroyed. Kerensky went down before the onslaught of the Russian proletariat which always wanted more and more power. But MacDonald will be a Kerensky who must reckon with two factors: the unbroken might of the capitalist class and the ever stronger will of the working class. Kerensky meant the survival of the last democratic illusions of the working class in a society in which the capitalists were disarmed while the workers and poor farmers had not only weapons, but also Soviets. MacDonald will mean the sway of the parliamentary democratic illusions of the working class in a society in which the capi-

talists have the majority in Parliament, where they have the king, the House of Lords, the whole apparatus of state power, while the working class has neither weapons nor Soviets.

But in one respect MacDonald will resemble Kerensky completely. Whether he wishes or not, he will contribute greatly to the radicalization of the English working class. The workers will have only the illusion of power, but this very illusion will impel them to demand more and still more power. MacDonald will be forced either to yield and help the workers to real power—in that case the capitalist majority of Parliament will drive him out immediately. Or on the other hand, and that is much more likely, he will protect the capitalists against the onslaughts of the workers—and he will thereby give rise to a mighty left wing in his own party.

It is no accident, but rather profoundly symbolic, that at the very same time that the Labor Party comes into power, a nation-wide strike of railway workers is threatening. The railway workers helped to elect MacDonald the labor leader to protect their interests against capitalism; and to their great surprise, they will find against them Ramsay MacDonald the prime minister, the protector of the capitalist state. The capitalist press of Great Britain is right, MacDonald is harmless; but behind him stands the revolution. The workers will not follow MacDonald long on his "pilgrimage", but will go over to the "Jumpers", to the Communists. After Kerensky came Lenin. After MacDonald—the conditions of Great Britain of 1924 are not as ripe as those of Russia of 1917—there will come at least the basic prerequisite of the revolution, a Communist mass party.

## Introducing the Gentleman from

BY JAY LOVESTONE

Unless all the rules of the game of politics as it is played today are thrown overboard, we will soon be treated to a rousing celebration of the great "progressive" victory in the Senate. Many a so-called progressive journal, from "Battling Bob" LaFollette's Magazine in Wisconsin to the dreary organs of the staid old organ of Gompers and Brothers, the American Federationist, will soon greet with acclamation the election of the Democratic Senator, Ellison D. Smith of South Carolina to the Chairmanship of the Interstate Commerce Committee.

Who is this gentleman, Smith? What has he ever done to win the distinguished service cross from the capitalist class?

Senator Smith hails from the textile-baron ridden South Carolina, where thousands of children are exploited, and denied the opportunity to receive even the most elementary education.

Senator Smith is a native son of a State where thousands of women employed in the textile mills are subject to the most despicable working conditions, starvation wages, 70 per cent getting less than \$12 a week, and long hours destroying their vitality.

Smith Reactionary Nonentity:

This representative of the powerful textile interests of South Carolina in the United States is a reactionary nonentity. He has now been in the Senate for about fourteen years. During this period he has not put over a single measure that smacks even of the palest progressivism. His record in the Senate is distinctly bad. It is marked by many hostile votes to the workingmen and farmers on the major issues confronting the country.

Feb. 27, 1912 while the 62nd Congress was in session, a bill was proposed to investigate the condition of the textile strikers in Lawrence, Mass. Senator Smith dodged voting on this question.

When the final passage of the Eight Hour Law for railway workers was before the Senate, Mr. Smith likewise found it convenient to avoid voting.

In the Sixty-Third Congress Senator Smith joined with the reactionaries to pass the vicious Bacon amendment to the Seaman's Act proposed by Mr. LaFollette, who has now thrust greatness upon him by making him chairman of the most important Senatorial committee. When the Clayton anti-trust act was before the Senate for final disposition, Mr. Smith made it his business to abstain from voting. The gentleman from South Carolina did not even have the courage of his reactionary convictions.

For Child Labor.

But in the Sixty-Fourth Congress Senator Smith picked up sufficient courage to come out openly as an enemy of the working masses. On August 8, 1916, the South Carolina solon, speaking on behalf of the textile magnates whom he served in Washington, spoke and voted against the Federal Child Labor Bill.

In the next Congress Mr. Smith fought against a bill providing for an appropriation to help run the Employment Bureau of the Department of Labor. When the war was on in full swing and a motion was made in the Senate to strike out the "Work or Fight" amendment from the draft bill, Mr. Smith did not take a position.

At the close of 1918 a bill was presented to the Senate to tax those products in interstate commerce which were produced by child labor. The Honorable Smith again came up to the scratch as a loyal servant of the Southern textile interests and made a vigorous fight against the enactment even of this half-hearted attempt at limiting the employment of children.

Against Woman Suffrage.

When the bill to give the vote to women was presented to the 66th Congress, on June 4, 1919, Mr. Smith did his level best to defeat the measure.