

COOLIDGE: Who He Is: What He Has Done

A CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF AND FOR THE PEOPLE

Simple and Human, Able and Determined, Solid and Frugal, Worker and Friend of Workers

What an awe-inspiring experience is that of a President of the United States, particularly a President who is a nominee to succeed himself! His friends sing his praises in superlatives; his enemies condemn him in extravagant, sometimes lying, fashion, and the indifferent or neutral multitude wonders if he can be one-half as perfect as his supporters assert, or a third as weak and dangerous as his political foes profess to believe.

Such is the experience through which President Coolidge is now progressing.

Here is Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States, but nevertheless a poor man, charged by some of his opponents with being a reactionary and a creature of that indefinite and fearsome monster, "Big Business;" and here, for instance, is Robert M. La Follette, a very wealthy man, but nevertheless advertised as a friend of the lowly and a champion of the people.

And while all the turmoil and uncertainties and extravagances and injustices swirl about him, Coolidge, the President, remains Coolidge, the man, and he is what he is, regardless of the contradictions of friend and foe.

HIS BEGINNINGS

A history of Calvin Coolidge, properly should begin 200 years or more before the present time, just as a history of the United States must reach back into the seventeenth century for its actual beginnings.

The first Coolidge in America settled at Watertown, Mass., in 1630. That was 294 years ago. Calvin Coolidge, a direct descendant, was born 242 years later on a Vermont farm, July 4, 1872.

The Coolidges have tilled the New England soil for nearly 300 years. A New England farmer may seldom attain great wealth, but he enjoys independence now because he was willing to fight and die for its benefits when occasion arose. In Calvin Coolidge, therefore, is to be found the heritage of three centuries of toil, of rugged, persistent, courageous struggle to exist; to fear God, to deal honestly, to live frugally, and to resist any effort to destroy or impair the liberty and the law of a new land and a new people.

Because Calvin Coolidge remains silent when he has nothing to say, because he refrains from demagogic and spectacular oratory and contents himself with plain and simple statement, because he does not possess the exuberance of the ordinary political enthusiast, a legend has been built around him in which he is presented as cold, aloof, unresponsive, unsympathetic.

Probably, as a healthy, active, hard-working President, who goes to work earlier than the average laborer, who has greater exactions upon his time and patience than the most "over-worked" business man in America, and who stays on the job longer hours than he expects his stenographers and secretaries to devote to duty, Mr. Coolidge may either smile or frown at the conflicting pictures of himself, and even at times, following a particularly hard day, feel inclined to believe that his is somewhat of a thankless task.

Regardless of his personal feelings, however, and of the popular conceptions and misconceptions concerning him, the following summary of his career, given in dispassionate form, affords an accurate account of his associations, activities and achievements.

He was born on a farm, which was no handicap; for there seems to be a popular impression in America that a farmer boy has a better chance to become President than a boy born under any other circumstances. His boyhood was spent on the farm; he learned and practiced the frugal ways of a farmer, of a New England farmer, and when he went to college he did the thing which the average farmer boy must do if he is to obtain a college education—he worked his way through.

When he graduated from Amherst, where he was regarded as a good, but not an exceptional student, he went into a law office in Northampton, Mass., and there acquainted himself with the purposes of the law and with its application. He was admitted to practice in 1897. He was then 25 years old.

Two years later, and not of his seeking, he was presented as a candidate for the City Council of Northampton, and was elected. He had already shown a very keen interest in public affairs and a grasp of public problems. He next became City Attorney of Northampton; then Mayor. He was elected four times as a member of the lower house of the Massachusetts Legislature, four times as State Senator and twice as President of the Senate.

His activities in the Legislature gave him a State-wide reputation for leadership. He was elected Lieutenant-Governor and then twice re-elected to that position. Then the people of Massachusetts, having seen his faithful and intelligent service in various lesser positions, elected him Governor.

THE BOSTON POLICE STRIKE

It was during the latter part of his first term as Governor

that the Boston police, after submitting certain demands that were refused, went on strike, leaving the city and its population subject to the reign of lawless and vicious elements of the community.

Gov. Coolidge issued the following proclamation to the people of Massachusetts on September 11, 1919:

"The entire State Guard of Massachusetts has been called out. Under the Constitution the Governor is the commander-in-chief thereof by authority of which he could not if he chose divest himself. That command I must and will exercise. Under the law I hereby call on all the police of Boston who have loyally and in a never-to-be-forgotten way remained on duty to aid me in the performance of my duty of the restoration and maintenance of order in the City of Boston, and each of such officers is required to act in obedience to such orders as I may hereafter issue or cause to be issued."

On the same day, the Governor sent the following to Edwin U. Curtis, Boston Police Commissioner:

"As you are the Police Commissioner of the City of Boston, you are hereby directed, for the purpose of assisting me in the performance of my duty, pursuant to the proclamation

issued by me this day, to proceed in the performance of your duties as Police Commissioner of the City of Boston under my command and in obedience to such orders as I shall issue from time to time, and obey only such orders as I may so issue or transmit."

Public uncertainty and misgiving were intense. A great clamor arose from the police and their backers that Commissioner Curtis be removed. Gov. Coolidge proceeded to restore order. His promptitude, his vigor and his clean-cut definition of the real issues in the crisis made him a national figure overnight.

COOLIDGE'S REPLY TO GOMPERS

To the demand of Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, that Curtis be displaced and the striking policemen be permitted to return to duty, Coolidge sent the following telegram, which stirred anew the whole nation:

"Replying to your telegram, I have already refused to remove the Police Commissioner of Boston. I did not appoint him. He can assume no position which the courts would not uphold except what the people have by the authority of their

FOR LOWER TAXES AND FOR ECONOMY IN GOVERNMENT

Coolidge Effects One-fourth Cut in Main Federal Tax After Slashing Three Billion Off Budget

law vested in him. He speaks only with their voice. The right of the police of Boston to affiliate has always been questioned, never granted, is now prohibited. The suggestion of President Wilson to Washington does not apply to Boston. There the police have remained on duty. Here the Policemen's Union left their duty, an action which President Wilson characterized as a crime against civilization.

"Your assertion that the Commissioner was wrong cannot justify the wrong of leaving the city unguarded. That furnished the opportunity, the criminal element furnished the action. There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, any time. You ask that the public safety again be placed in the hands of these same policemen while they continue in disobedience to the laws of Massachusetts and in their refusal to obey the orders of the police department. Nineteen men have been tried and removed. Others having abandoned their duty, their places have, under the law, been declared vacant on the opinion of the Attorney-General. I can suggest no authority outside the courts to take further action.

"I wish to join and assist in taking a broad view of every situation. A grave responsibility rests on all of us. You can depend on me to support you in every legal action and sound policy. I am equally determined to defend the sovereignty of Massachusetts and to maintain the authority and jurisdiction over her public officers where it has been placed by the Constitution and the law of her people."

The Boston police strike was lost by the men who deserted their posts.

Calvin Coolidge, who already had established a reputation as "Silent Cal," proved that when occasion arose he could speak, and with purpose and to the point.

His action in quelling the police strike was an issue in his second campaign for Governor. He submitted his candidacy on a platform of law and order. He was re-elected by the largest plurality ever given a gubernatorial candidate in Massachusetts.

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD LABOR

Some of the political foes of Coolidge have attempted to distort his police-strike attitude into an attitude hostile to labor. His record does not show it; the admiration expressed for him and his service to labor by representative labor leaders and organizations indicates that the spokesmen of labor feel that Coolidge has given labor a square deal.

In August, 1922, addressing a meeting of the American Bar Association in San Francisco, Coolidge, then Vice-President, said he would rather be known as the Governor who signed the forty-eight-hour bill in Massachusetts than as the Governor who broke up the Boston police strike.

During his career in the State government of Massachusetts, he supported the following bills, all of them having the unqualified support of labor: Antimonopoly bill; injunction modification bill; antidiscrimination bill; direct Senatorial election; woman suffrage; honest small coal sales; one day's rest in seven; improved working conditions for men, women and children; factory surgical equipment; pensions for widows and children of firemen; full train crew bill; teachers' pensions; barbers' license bill; eliminating profiteering in rents; preference for veterans; employment for veterans; revision of banking laws; forty-eight-hour week for women.

He supported many other just and wise provisions for

(Continued on Page 14, Columns 2 and 3)

COOLIDGE; HIS RECORD

(Continued from First Page)

the protection of workers, but he did not support them as class legislation or as discriminatory laws.

After reviewing the "labor record" of Coolidge and reciting approval of this record by labor organizations, the Illinois Labor News comments: "In view of this record it is impossible to see why President Coolidge should not have the unanimous support of all representatives of labor. In the past he has been their friend and the friend of labor, and there is no reason why he should not continue so in the future."

REDUCING THE PUBLIC DEBT

Coolidge became Vice-President in 1920. At the invitation of President Harding he attended Cabinet meetings and aided in the tremendous task of reducing the public debt and decreasing the cost of government. In the first three years of the Republican administration the public debt was reduced more than \$3,000,000,000—which represents an annual saving in interest alone of \$135,000,000. The cost of administering the Federal government was reduced more than \$2,000,000,000. The budget system, inaugurated by Gen. Dawes, was largely responsible for creating the machinery that made such stupendous reductions possible. More than 100,000 government employees were returned to private occupations. What this means to the average taxpayer is shown in the 25 per cent cut in income taxes this year.

Coolidge succeeded to the Presidency upon the death of President Harding in San Francisco.

The oath of office was administered by his own father in a lamp-lighted room in the Coolidge farmhouse. The extreme simplicity of this solemn ritual and the homely scene in which it was enacted symbolized the fundamental democracy of American institutions and became one of the dramatic episodes in the history of the nation. President Coolidge assumed his greater responsibilities calmly and with a steady hand. Public confidence in him was fully demonstrated by the universal recognition of his ability to meet the situation.

His first message to Congress dispelled any doubts that may have lingered as to his positive grasp of national and international conditions. He bespoke order, productivity and prosperity at home and peace and amity abroad. He stressed the need for greater economy, and still greater economy.

With expressed regret, but refusing to be turned from his course by personal or political considerations, he vetoed a bill providing for an increase in the pay of postal employees. He said this increase was just and should be given, but only through proper channels and after provision had been made to care for it by an adjustment of postal rates. He vetoed the bonus bill. It was repassed over his veto, but without provision for its enactment. He immediately instructed members of his Cabinet to provide emergency funds to put it into effect.

In his address last Thursday to the members of the United States Chamber of Commerce in Washington President Coolidge again mentioned the necessity for economy in government—and commented on the difficulty of obtaining it.

"A considerable, but disorganized number of people exist," he said, "who are willing to talk about economy in public expenditure. There are a very few who, in addition to talking about it, are willing to vote for the actual practice of economy. To my mind, the practice of public economy and insistence upon its rigid and drastic enforcement is a prime necessity."

Coolidge is temperamentally frugal. He knows the sacrifices which the man of moderate means must make if he is to rise above debt and attain self-support. He learned the austere lesson of spending less than he earned as a boy and as a young man.

When Coolidge was Governor of Massachusetts he did not own an automobile. The Governor and his family lived in a small cottage for which they paid a monthly rental of \$35. When he became Vice-President and moved to Washington he did not forsake his simple mode of living. He continued to live within his means. He found it necessary to purchase an automobile in order to journey to and from the Capitol, where he presided over the deliberations of the Senate.

The Vice-President of the United States for the first time in his life owned an automobile. It was a Ford. Coolidge is not niggardly or stingy; he simply adheres to the old New England creed that it is wrong for a man to spend more money than he earns. He has applied this principle to the administration of public affairs.

ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

This sketch of the high points in the career of Coolidge must of necessity be brief and must inevitably fail to supply a complete picture of the man and his works. He has unequivocally dedicated himself to co-operation in any sensible movement to banish war, establish friendly relations between nations and stimulate foreign and domestic trade. He is opposed to entry by the United States into the League of Nations.

He helped to formulate and fully indorses the purpose and accomplishments of the Disarmament Conference and the Four Power Treaty, the two agencies which have stopped the extravagant race for international naval supremacy and banished from the Pacific Coast any probability of war.

Coolidge is a moral force. He knows what is right and he follows the right as he sees it. He does not shirk. He is honest.

The only attempt to cast reflection upon his personal integrity was made in Los Angeles and elsewhere by Burton K. Wheeler, Socialist-third party candidate for Vice-President.

Wheeler said that Coolidge, as Governor of Massachusetts, was instrumental in inducing his appointee, Bank Commissioner Allen, to persuade State Treasurer Burrell to deposit more than the legal amount of State funds in a Massachusetts bank. Wheeler implied that Coolidge broke the law of Massachusetts in order to obtain a campaign contribution from an official of the bank thus said to have been specially favored.

The facts are simple and easy to obtain. Either Wheeler in his Los Angeles speech deliberately lied in an attempt to to besmirch the reputation of the President of the United States or he stooped to fling mud without taking the trouble to investigate his charges.

The transfer of funds of which Wheeler complained were made by Burrell several weeks before Allen was appointed Bank Commissioner by Coolidge. A legislative investigation of Burrell's conduct as State Treasurer was ordered by Coolidge while Governor of Massachusetts and Burrell resigned on the day this committee began its public hearing.

Commenting on Wheeler's malicious and irresponsible charges, the Boston News Bureau, which made a careful investigation of the facts and which characterized the charges as "a plain, unvarnished lie," asserted that "Senator Wheeler thought it wise to put 3000 miles between himself and Massachusetts" before repeating the story.

President Coolidge has taken full cognizance of all charges of corruption in governmental departments and acted with characteristic thoroughness and vigor.

The nation has his assurance, as expressed in his speech accepting the Republican nomination to succeed himself, that: "Wherever there have been suspicions of guilt, involving members of any party, I have caused them to be investigated and presentation made to the grand jury. If the evidence warranted, those suspected of crime have been indicted; and with out favor, but without malice, they will be tried on the charges returned against them. Wherever it has appeared that the property of the government has been illegally transferred and held, action has been brought for its recovery and will be pursued to final judgment. No government was ever able to prevent altogether the commission of crime, but this government, under my direction, is doing the best it can to detect and punish any and all wrongdoing. The laws of the land are being, and will continue to be, enforced, I propose to use every pos-

sible effort to resist corruption in office. The American government must be clean."

As President, Coolidge has shown himself sensible to the needs of California and the importance of California in national affairs. Under the authority conveyed to him by the Fordney-McCumber Act he has maintained the tariff schedules which the Congress enacted to protect more than 500,000 California workers and producers and their families, and an investment of approximately \$1,000,000,000, from destructive competition from the products of foreign markets where cheap labor predominates.

Coolidge is the only aspirant for President who is pledged to maintain these protective schedules. La Follette, in the Senate, voted against them or refused to support them, and Davis is pledged to reduce them.

The whole nation wondered whom President Coolidge would choose to succeed Edwin Denby as Secretary of the Navy. He chose a Californian, Curtis D. Wilbur, who resigned as Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court to accept the first vacancy that occurred in the Cabinet after Coolidge became President.

He chose a Californian for this post despite the fact that another distinguished Californian, Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce, was a member of the Cabinet.

Coolidge is a conservationist. He understands the Colorado River problem and in a recent message indorses a flood-control and water-conservation project in the Colorado basin, and said he hoped this great plan could be inaugurated and developed through his co-operation and during his administration.

Coolidge does not make campaign speeches or campaign promises. He has remained at his post in Washington while his opponents have traversed the country, criticising his efforts, deriding his accomplishments and impugning his motives.

His motto is: "Do the day's work." His forbearance under stress and strain, his willingness to forget the personal in his desire to attend to his public obligations, have won the admiration and respect of millions, who have become his energetic supporters. His service entitles him to the thoughtful consideration of every man and woman entitled to cast a ballot on Tuesday, November 4.