

THE OIL SCANDAL AND POLITICS

There has been what the papers call a "scandal" unearthed at Washington. Some of the facts have become known to us through the uncertain medium of the press, but nothing definite has yet been said concerning the guilt or innocence of the persons whose names we see daily in print. When, however, the words "Teapot Dome" appear in startling headline, we are prepared to read a new revelation of political intrigue and official dishonesty.

Teapot Dome is a government naval oil reserve and therefore of vital importance to the nation. These lands, as investigation have brought to light, were leased to private corporations by individuals to whom the people have paid deference by sending them to the capital, or by electing them to office; and all this for filthy lucre's sake. It is hard, indeed, in the face of such a betrayal of public trust, to call those who have involved themselves in this affair by the honourable name of patriots. Such men either lack conscience or they have failed to read the Constitution of the United States slowly and carefully; they are political grafters, who ought not to exist in office. It is little wonder that the people of the United States are disgusted and well-nigh out of patience with such insincerity and hypocrisy; investigations are really becoming tiresome propositions.

The astounding thing about this Teapot Dome controversy, and the unfortunate phase of the question, lies in the fact that it reflects on men in high stations of public trust. It remains, to be seen, however, just who started the whole thing. Good luck to the investigating committee, is all we may say at present. They may have a year's job on their hands, or it may not take quite so long. Their findings, at any rate, will certainly be received with welcome to the public.

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Although the November Elections are some months ahead, still such events always provoke early discussion, and there seems to be more than one reason for thinking that the coming campaign will be a stormy one. The Republican party is in power now, and is receiving a large measure of blame. The Democrats say that the Republican administration cannot possibly escape opprobrium in regard to the oil leases. They have even pointed a finger

of scorn at the President himself, and have accused him in open debate in the Senate of having direct dealing in the matter. They claim that they are prepared to uncover scandals that will implicate high officials in the government department.

The Republican party, on the other hand, is determined that the present controversy will not harm it in any way, if vigorous prosecution of the guilty ones is made. President Coolidge, in an address given before the Republican National Club, voiced his views thus: "I am a Republican, but I cannot on that account shield anyone because he is a Republican, nor can I on that account, prosecute anyone because he is a Democrat." In spite of all this, however, one must remember that this is not the spirit of the parties; they are the same old Democrats, the same old Republicans.

Political rivalry between the Republicans and the Democrats has been a sort of tradition; we know wherein they differ, and we laugh at their squabbles; they have defined their positions. But there is a party in the United States at present, that any democratic nation might well detest. The members of this party constitute the most uncertain element that the country has to deal with. They have failed to state their platform; they are an example of deplorable secrecy; they are a menace to the world. Since investigations seem to be quite popular, why does not the government find out just what the K. K. K. ticket represents in politics?

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