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The Socialist

To Organize the Slaves
of Capital to Vote Their
Own Emancipation

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ALASKA A SAMPLE WORLD

The whole big capitalist world is difficult to grasp. It is too complex. That is why speakers and writers so often image it all as confined to "an island," a "Robinsonade," where you can dispense with debates.

Alaska is such a sample world, though very far from imaginary. It is awfully real and substantial, where men starve and freeze.

As "The Socialist" is published at Alaska's commercial center, where the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition is about to open, it is fitting for this paper to report to the proletarian world what conditions are in this great Northwest Territory, even though Seattle is distant from it 2,000 miles and more.

We are quoting this week from the letters of Miners and Prospectors who are actually experiencing the growth and power of Capitalism in this latest and last "New World!" These letters are not literary products, but they beat with the red blood of living men. They are more thrilling than all the essays of the "Muck Rakers" in the magazines.

We ask readers to notice a few points especially, points which are just as true of the United States or of England or of the whole "civilized" world. Alaska displays civilization in the raw.

First. Here are the Three Classes.

A. The Trust Class, monopolizing all natural resources and owning all Means of Production, like Mining Machinery, Railroads, Steamers and Storehouses. Guggenheim is the Rockefeller of Alaska, in direct combination with "Standard Oil." One of him has recently settled in Seattle, and he controls the chief newspapers of Seattle as well as of Alaska.

B. The Middle Class, the "Independent" Class who fight for existence as pioneers in all new lands. In Alaska this class is best represented by the "Prospector," that daring, hopeful, indefatigable hunter for "Prospects" of the precious metals. Hear him groan in these letters, on account of the Petty Trade. It is this sturdy but helpless Middle Class of Alaska which elected and sent a delegate to Congress last year, who was as powerless as an infant in that den of Capitalist tools, where another of the Guggenheim name holds a Senatorial seat from Colorado.

C. The Proletarian Class, the Wage Class, itself divided into its normal sub-classes, the Employed and the Unemployed.

"Saved Labor" flocks to Alaska as it does to Oklahoma or to "Homesteads" and "Claims" everywhere, in its eternal search for the means of subsistence. The Migration of the Proletarians finds the final footing in the vast areas of Alaska. But there is no escape from the Law of Wages, which works inexorably wherever Machinery "Saves Labor."

The Unemployed compete with the Employed for all jobs in Alaska even more mercilessly in that land of primitive terrors than in the more settled lands of the East.

Wages \$5 a day, or even \$10 a day!

But what of it? It is prices of necessities that control wages everywhere. You pay 25 cents a pound for sugar and a dollar a gallon for oil. You are no better off than in Boston on \$2.00 a day, with sugar at eight cents and oil at 20 cents.

And what are you going to do about it all, you Proletarians in Alaska, or elsewhere?

Will you join together and vote with the Middle Class Proprietor, who vainly imagines he can down Guggenheim and give his Class a chance again? Will you listen sympathetically to his groans in the following letters and rush to his rescue?

No! The only chance for you or for him is for him to join you in your determination to own Alaska, the Mines and the Fisheries and the Railroads and all those Capitalist Machines on which you now must work, or die.

In no other way can you stop competing with each other, the Unemployed with the Employed. In no other way can you escape the awful Law of Wages.

You Wage Workers of Alaska, of America, of the World, you must join hands to own the World yourselves and capture its products, gold, silver, copper, coal, salmon, lumber, marble, and all the rest, for your own use. Then the Guggenheims, Morgans, Rockefellers, Carnegies, will be abolished when the Wage System is abolished, and superseded, and succeeded by an Industrial Democracy where the Workers own what they work on and appropriate the product of their own work.

AN ARIZONIAN IN ALASKA

Tells Exact Conditions -- A Middle Class Wail

(From Arizona "Tribune.")

Since my advent to the frozen North, I have acquired by careful observation, considerable knowledge of the resources of this marvelous acquisition to Uncle Sam's possessions, and the conditions prevailing under the system of exploitation and control by the great combines, and permissible under the federal law.

The individual prospector or man of limited means, has as much show to acquire a pro rata of the untold treasures Alaska contains as one of her glaciers would have permanence in hades. And if some man of wisdom and ability does not arise to the emergency in our national congress, or the executive chair, this vast empire will be absorbed by half a dozen individuals to the eternal disgrace of the present generation and the exceeding sorrow of generations to come.

I am not an alarmist nor a prophet of ill tidings; but simply stating an absolute fact; I will cite a few instances to bear-out the assertion:

Fisheries Monopolized.

The fisheries of Alaska today—along a coast meander of 10,000 miles—is in the hands of a combine as arbitrary and aggressive as is possible to be borne by an independent individual American fisherman. They set the prices of the season's catch and destroy indiscriminately—season after season—a fish supply sufficient to feed the total population of Alaska for a year. Traps are set at the mouths of streams in spawning season, and the run is caught in such numbers that many of the canneries are unable to handle the catch and boat loads are forked overboard like so much offal. I have witnessed a snow load containing 12,000 silver salmon cast overboard at the Orca cannery, and there was not an official to say nay! to this reckless destruction of human food and this in face of the fact that right in the same

neighborhood a one pound can of this same fish retails for 35c.

The fisheries are taxed a small percentage per case for school purposes and last year one enterprising firm paid into the school fund the generous sum of 32 cents on a packing return of some 60,000 cases; having found a little joker in the law relieving them of obligations to the government.

Small Outfits Absorbed.

The transportation service of Alaska is now absolutely in the hands of the Northwestern Steamship Co., a Guggenheim concern. The last vestige of competition has been driven from the sea, by the absorption of the smaller outfits. As an immediate result, another citation might be apropos. Coal was being delivered to the citizens of Cordova at \$17.50 per ton. The same coal is now sold at \$22.50 per ton and the freight from dock to town, 1 1/2 miles, is \$3 per ton. Yet these people claim they are public benefactors and are devoting their means and energy to develop the latent resources of the country, for the benefit of the people and the glory of the flag, sic:

It will be interesting to watch those country developers cringing before congressional committees, the coming season, for subsidies to construct railroads for the dear people.

Alien Combine.

A final citation will give a fair idea of how established capital conducts affairs in Alaska. The great Treadwell mines on Douglas Island, owned and controlled by the London Exploitation company—an alien combine—have extracted for the benefit of foreign subjects a princely profit of over \$25,000,000 and out of this colossal fortune, not one-half of one per cent of their income from American mines, has been paid in taxes toward supporting the government, federal or local in all

their years of operation; but last year when the employes of this generous company justly demanded fair treatment in eating and sleeping, our over-zealous government placed a guard of federal soldiers, to police one of the most orderly camps in the west.

When were the U. S. troops called out to protect a populace from ejection by land grabbing grafters from the soil God ordained for the benefit of mankind?

"Association Claims."

Predatory capital is not the only aggressors in the Northland, another vicious system prevails to an alarming extent, known as the power of attorney location evil. To an old Western miner it seems incredible that such a system can stand good in law, but such is the fact.

A few barefooted adventurers can, on discovery of "color," locate what are designated "association claims," taking up miles of a stream to the exclusion of any new arrival, and hold them for speculative purposes.

This is one of the meanest of all grabs, and is commonly practiced in all the placer camps of the territory, and no effort has been made by congress to prevent the acquisition of vast areas of mineral bearing territory by fraudulent locators. The foregoing are some of the worst features, but many more could be truthfully cited.

Tremendous Resources.

As to the possibilities of this great country, details cannot be given in a mere letter. The immensity of the territory, is almost incomprehensible. Regions as large as Arizona and New Mexico are yet unexplored, but enough is known to the pioneer and adventurer to place the

so-called frozen zone in the front rank of mineral wealth. Gold, silver, copper, coal, tin, lead, antimony, zinc and oil will be extracted from Alaska's mountains by coming generations, as she is practically inexhaustible. In copper alone, were the transportation problem solved for the benefit of the people, and her deposits developed to their capacity it would be a death blow to many of the trust's enterprises in the older states. Her copper ores are of such high grade that no ordinary ores at present mined in Montana and Arizona, could compete, and herein lies the kernel in the nut. The trust fully appreciates the fact that machinery, like human life, has its limits of utility, and just as soon as the machinery of Butte, Bisbee, Cananea and other camps of their grade of ore becomes antiquated, those camps will be abandoned, as they can fall back on an unlimited supply of 20 to 50 per cent ore.

"A Special Reserve."

Hence Guggenheim, Morgan, Rockefeller and Rogers have their agents in every Alaska field securing the cream of the pitcher, and their engineers are scattered broadcast over the coast securing every avenue of approach to these great beds of copper, coal and oil.

With a Guggenheim in the senate of the United States and the ablest brains of the professions on the pay roll of the combine, it may be reasonably assumed that unless measures of restraint are adopted by the government, the next decade will witness the great territory of Alaska a special reserve for the benefit of a few families and the average American mechanic and workman will be fortunate in securing a per diem pittance.

PRICES OF FOOD STUFFS

(From Fairbanks (Alaska) "Sunday Times," Jan. 31, 1909.)

Fairbanks, Jan. 30, 1909.

Editor Times: Can any one of our merchants give a good and reasonable excuse for the enormously high prices charged in this camp for the common necessities of life? Is there any reason why we should be asked to pay \$15 per case for coal oil, 33 1/3 per pound for sugar, \$10 per case for Carnation Milk, 16c per lb. for potatoes and onions, \$7.50 per case for candies, and make us say we like it? The same high prices prevail all the way down the line.

Is this condition to be charged to the actual shortage of these commodities, or is it because these articles are owned and controlled by one or more of the business concerns of this camp, with a view of cornering the supply, thus compelling the people to pay these prices or go hungry? This latter suggestion seems to be the case, much as it is to be deplored. The writer has lived in this valley for some years and it has been his experience that regularly every winter the people have been "held up" on staples beyond all reason.

We must take into consideration the extra cost of carrying over and handling a good many of these articles, where warm storage is necessary, where there is loss, in eggs, potatoes, onions, cabbage and other perishables, but after making all allowances, does the extra cost make up the great differences that we are compelled to pay?

Wonderful Tanana.

In the glowing prospectus of Alaska, telling of the wonderful Tanana valley, of its resources, of its mineral and other possibilities, the only country in the world where a man can work a month and make enough to keep him a year. Well, I'm from that old state where they take nothing for granted, "you will have to show me." That kind of a talk may look all right in a descriptive circular, but it don't go with a man who depends on his labor to make a living, and to get enough ahead to punch a few holes for himself.

Of course, \$5 a day looks good, and would be good, even to an old-timer, if he could purchase his supplies at a reasonable figure, and could work a good portion of the time, but such is not the case to the majority. There is no doubt, that the great cost of living in this country, the exorbitant prices charged by the companies have the effect of keeping away thousands who would migrate here if they could be assured that they would receive

a fair exchange for their money, and not be held up, simply because one or more companies controlled the food supply.

This condition embarrasses and retards the prospector, the man whom we must all look to for the development of the country, he is not able with his summer's wages to go out in the hills and prosecute his work for any length of time, but must come in and go up "against it" before the winter is half over.

Nor does this condition exist here alone, at Andreafsky, 180 miles from St. Michael, prices are much higher than here and on the Koyukuk. Well, they simply size you up, and tap you. Of course, there is no competition there, every one for himself, but it would seem that that policy is a poor one to populate the country.

SUBSCRIBER.

DESTITUTE AND HUNGRY

Get a Soup House. "Citizen" Subscribers \$25.

Fairbanks City, Feb. 9, 1909.

Editor Fairbanks "Times":

Sir: I would be much obliged if you would find space for the following: I wish to call your attention and the attention of the people of this town to the fact that a soup house should be got up in the very near future for the destitute and hungry in Fairbanks.

I venture to say, and I'll back my statement, that there are one hundred and fifty (150) men in town at present who never know what a square meal is. It's a shame and a disgrace to the city fathers and other bosses, who assume a considerable control of the people's destiny, to let this thing go by without ever as much as mentioning it. The reason I suppose is for fear of putting a ban on immigration.

However, the fact remains that it's up to somebody to start an eating house for the starving that are surely with us. When you or whoever passes the hat around, I'll subscribe twenty-five dollars. That's the best I can do, and I feel it will go much further in that idea than in handing over a dollar each time I'm "tapped."

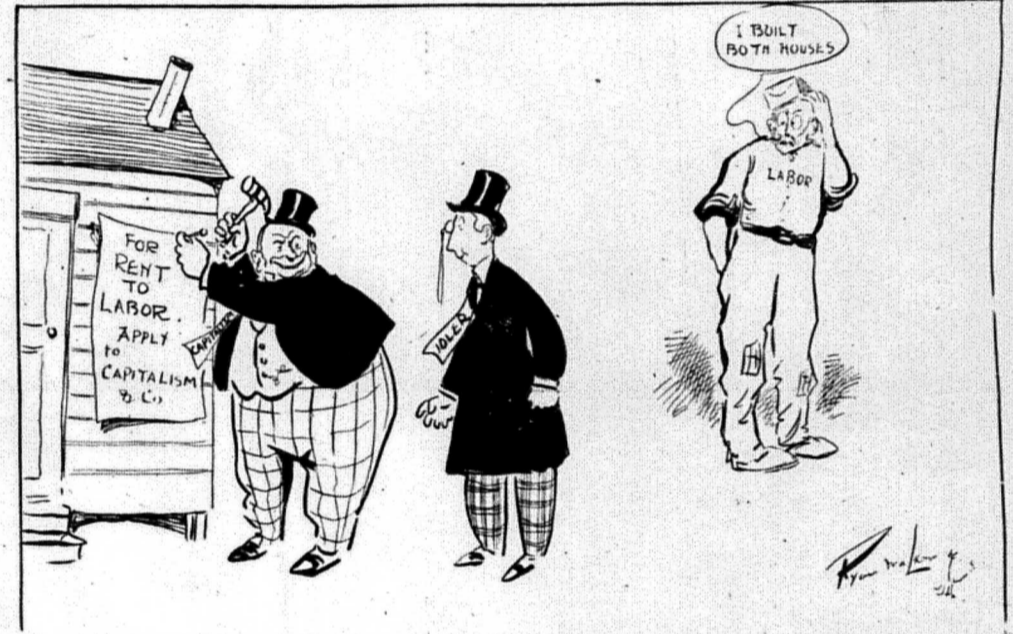
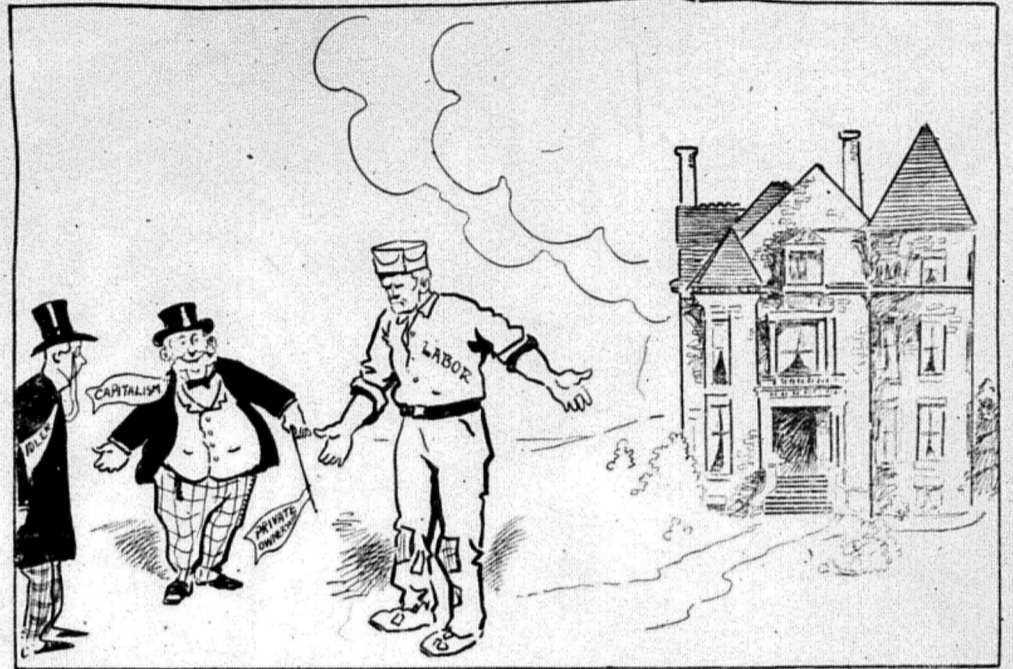
Respectfully yours,

CITIZEN.

WITHOUT WORK, WITHOUT MEANS.

Fairbanks, Alaska, Feb. 11, 1909. To the Editor of Seattle "Socialist": Dear Sir: I see by the local papers there has been organized in Seattle

A LESSON IN SOCIALISM



The Giant LABOR Builds Both Houses, but the Ogre CAPITAL Owns Them

an organization known as the Publicity Committee to try and dispell the so-called erroneous expressions concerning Alaska, evidently to try and lure hundreds of poor wage slaves to emigrate here and place them in the same condition as hundreds are in at present, without work and without means and without hope of getting a day's labor for the next four or five months. I also inclose you a few clippings of our local papers pertaining to some of the conditions as they exist and hope you will publish them in your worthy paper. I remain Yours truly, CHRIS PEDERSEN, Fairbanks, Alaska.

SOCIALISM VS. BUSINESS

It is almost axiomatic to say that a good Socialist can only be a poor business man and a good business man a poor Socialist. That is the main reason "The Socialist" is so often in financial difficulties. In our endeavor to be absolutely straight Socialists and to use what influence we had to keep the movement straight we have offended many people—all to the detriment of our income.

We do not intend to change our policy. The proletarian element will always find this paper at their back in any move they make for a better and clearer party. And we will not be backward about pointing the way when it is necessary.

If the proletarian Socialists want such a paper with them they will have to maintain it. "The Socialist" is the only weekly in the country today that takes such a stand and it is running behind constantly. Let us make Proletarian Socialism our business and as a first step support our press.

