

DID IT EVER OCCUR TO YOU?

By Edmund DeFreyne
Did it ever occur to you that the United States of America is the only "civilized" country in the world, except Turkey and Spain, that does not have postal savings banks or their equivalent?
Did it ever occur to you that every post office in the Philippines is a bank of deposit for the people's savings?
Did it ever occur to you that Americans are as much entitled to this system as Filipinos?
Did it ever occur to you that the lobby in congress of our so-called national banks has defeated every effort to give us government security for our money?
Did it ever occur to you that a large majority of the citizens of the great Republic have demanded postal savings banks for many years, and that it was the bonded duty of our representatives in the congress to carry out the people's will?
Did it ever occur to you that the Congress, under the constitution, had the right to establish really national banks, which would be absolute safe depositories for our savings?
Did it ever occur to you that if the government banks there could be no financial panics, no money stringency, no possibility of loss to any one, no speculation with bank funds, no national debt, and no usury?
Did it ever occur to you that if Uncle Sam were only banker, rates would be uniform and very low? That taxes would be enormously decreased? That farmers and merchants and home-builders could borrow on easy terms? That exchange and clearing-house graft would disappear? That the credit of the nation would be behind every dollar? That stock-gamblers, high financiers and big business burglars could no longer use our own savings to plunder us?
Did it ever occur to you that a government is the only safe and logical maker and custodian of money? That to entrust those functions to private individuals is to invite dishonesty, dishonor and ruin? That it is too much power to give to an archangel? That only a race of fools would let the control of its circulating medium pass out of its own hands?
Did it ever occur to you that if every bank was a United States sub-treasury there could be no "run" on it? That it would be merely a branch of the great central depository? Thus

if a local president or cashier defaulted it would make no difference to you, because your deposit would be safeguarded and guaranteed by billions of national funds, to which the loss of a few millions would be a drop in the bucket?
Did it ever occur to you that if the federal government was in the banking business, the banking officials would be commissioned and bonded men, like the officers of the army pay corps? That these officers could not lend the bank funds to themselves and their friends and families? That they would soon become innoculated with the army idea of honor and honesty? That they would be inspected monthly by officers of higher rank, whose own commissions would be at stake? That, under such a system, every local loss would be almost impossible?
Did it ever occur to you that what other nations have done we can do? That we are as capable of running banks as Japanese?
Did it ever occur to you that we are a financial ass?—*Soc. Dem. Herald.*

MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP PLANS
OTTAWA, Feb. 10.—As a result of the municipal operation of its electric light plant, Ottawa has net profits of \$17,222 on last year's operations.
Three and a half years ago the city took over the plant on an arrangement effected by the Hydro-Electric Commission. Since that time the gross revenue has increased by 200 per cent, the number of customers has increased from 1,314 to 3,164, and rates for lighting have been considerably decreased.

THE FIRST "SCAB."
Undoubtedly the devil was the first "scab." There is no disputing the fact that heaven has always been run according to union principles and as a closed shop. Satan rebelled against these conditions and started to agitate for an open institution whereupon he was expelled from membership in the angels' union and fired to perdition. Ever since then harmony has reigned in Paradise, and the closed shop prevails. No "scab" is tolerated in the kingdom of heaven, and there is no room for Professor Elliot's hero strike-breakers there. Our advice to the man who is so low as to act the "scab" is to go to his father.—*Elevator Constructor.*

with a detective agency for a supply of strikebreakers and special detectives. After being fleeced by the detective agency the company decided to wring their loss from the union.
It is believed that if the decision of Judge Mills will be upheld it will work worse havoc with the labor unions than the Danbury Hatter's decision, which confines the damages liable to the in trade. That treasuries of labor unions can be mulched to reimburse employers for expenses incurred in fighting a strike ordered by that union is a departure even for American courts.
The ruling of Tuesday is practically identical with the famous Taft Vale decision of England, which was used for a precedent by British employers until the workers of that country united politically and caused the passing of the Trades Disputes act. This law protected the British workers from such decisions as rendered at White Plains Tuesday.

Machinists' Treasury Attacked by Courts

The courts deal another blow at labor unions Tuesday when Supreme Court Justice Mills, at White Plains, ruled that the District Council No. 15 New York, of the International Association of Machinists must pay \$3,847 to the Jones Speedmotor Company to reimburse the latter for the expense of guards for strikebreakers and special detectives caused by a strike of the former.
The suit was brought by Joseph W. Jones as president of the Jones Speedmotor Company, which has a large factory at New Rochelle and another in New York. It was directed against George M. Maher, as president of District Lodge No. 15 of the International Association of Machinists. Local No. 460 was made a co-defendant, as were several members of the local and district lodges.
A strike was called in March, 1907, to obtain the reinstatement of five men who were discharged because of their loyalty to the union. The company then made a contract

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SOCIALIST DEPUTY DIES IN EXILE.

The death is announced from Siberia of M. Dzharparidge, one of the Social Democratic deputies of the Second Duma, who, together with his colleagues, had been deported to Siberia for a period of eight years on the charge of having conspired against the life of the Tsar. He had been suffering consumption, and repeatedly asked to be transported to the southern part of Siberia. After a delay of two years his request was at last granted, but he died on the road.

THE DISGUSTED MULE.

Have you ever seen a two-legged mule? Here's a story about two four-legged ones:
Said the Grey Mule to the Black 'Un, one morning, "I'd like very much to go to town today."
"Well, why don't you go?" asked the Black 'Un.
"I've got no one toride me," answered the Grey.
"What's the matter with your feet?"
"Nothing. Why?"

WHITE SLAVES SOLD ON LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY

Unemployed men on Auction Block at Brooklyn, Sold Like Chattel Slaves But Few Get Masters.

New York, Feb. 12th
A thrilling spectacle, and one not likely to be forgotten by those who have witnessed it, was the sale of men that took place to-night at the Parkside Church Lenox road and Flatbush avenue, Brooklyn. There were 300 people to be sold, out of which two dozen with faces masked, each designated with a number and description of his characteristics and qualifications, took the platform. They stood there ready to be sold, asking to be sold, pleading to be sold. They made no high demands, and asked no price, no but were ready to give their skill, knowledge, health and powers to the man who would promise food and shelter. They were all, with one exception, young and strong, and masters of trades, well-built and neatly dressed.
E. T. O'Laughlin, the man who had arranged the sale, acted as auctioneer and he ordered many of the would-be slaves to take off their coats and display their muscles and strength, holding profits of the investment. But notwithstanding the fact that the church was crowded, and that 2,000 people were outside of the place, who could not gain admission, the demand for men was small.
O'Laughlin Explains Sale.
Mr. O'Laughlin, before bringing the men on the platform, explained the conditions that brought him to auction off human beings. "I once obtained a job for a friend, who was down and out," he said, "by placing an advertisement that I wanted to sell him. Since then I got 400 letters of people asking that I do the same for them. I did not want to do it. I have neither the time nor ability to give myself to the task, and I was about to dismiss the applicants. But I began to read the letters. Most of them read, 'for God's sake sell me. I have no food and no place to sleep!'
"Many of the writers," continued O'Laughlin, "stated that they were crime or suicide, and as I read, I began to realize in what a social hell we are living."
"I have a wife, and I have a little baby home. And as I was reading the letters to my wife she said, 'You must try, something must be done. Perhaps you can do something for him—for the one who says he will jump into the river—and for those who have little children, like ours!'
"Friends," continued the speaker, "I am sick, sick at heart, when I think of the contents of these letters."
He brought to the platform a dress-suit case, which he opened and displayed to the audience, showing it to be full of the letters. He then told how the task of answering them became impossible, and how futile it would be to take individual action. He, therefore, advertised for a church in which the auction could be conducted, and notwithstanding the fact that the advertisement for a church was inserted for six days, the only one that answered it was Dr. John E. Long, of the Parkside Church.

to stand unmasked before the crowd in church and let my face plead for me."
"Then the competition started anew. All were willing to do this to be put up first."
Auction Sale Begins.
No. 11 was the man put up first. The auctioneer gave the description: "Young man, twenty-four, out of job for eight months; is a driver by trade; strong and willing to work. He has tramped all over New York and Brooklyn in search of work; has seven little brothers and sisters at home; father is sick. What am I offered?"
At this point a man from the audience called out that he offered \$10 a week. This was greeted with tremendous applause. The man was A. C. Will, a baker, at 614 Coney Island avenue. Mr. Will also offered three loaves of bread for the man's family.
The next man to take the block was No. 10. Again did the voice of the auctioneer rise:
"No. 10 is a young man, twenty-five years old; out of work for eight months; is an ironmolder; can do hard work—ladies and gentlemen—what am I offered? Can you give this man a job; have you a job for No. 10, ladies and gentlemen?"
At this point Mr. W. F. Copeland, of the Straightedge Industrial Settlement, said that if no one is ready to buy No. 10, he will be allowed to join their settlement. They do not offer any wages, but are ready to take him in if the man can bring with him the necessary tools. He explained that their plan is to produce the necessities of life, and working on a co-operative plan.
No. 10 was sent away with Copeland to talk over matters, and No. 21 took the stand. He was a mechanic; steam and electric fitter; understood steam heating; knew how to work dynamos; was a total abstainer; fought in the Boer war, and served the United States in the Philippine Islands. He was twenty-seven years old. He was knocked down for \$25 a month.
But complications arose. His engagement was not to start until the first of March, and what was to be done in the meantime? Mr. Will the baker who bought No. 10, offered food and lodging until then.
While the arrangements were being made with No. 21, a man walked over to No. 17, and after a few words, took him away.
No. 23 was sold to a painter for \$10 a week.

The One Exception.
The exception in the lot of young and healthy men was No. 14. He was old and the only one whose head was gray. A shiver went through the audience when this man took the stand. A few moments of silence followed, and for a time not even the auctioneer found his tongue. Men turned away their faces, and women sobbed at the grotesque sight. The silence was intense, but of short duration. Young man stepped up, and after a talk with the auctioneer, led the old man away.
Here the demand for men stopped. No. 16 was put up. A man who, according to the auctioneer, had an education, was intelligent, in the prime of life, well built, willing to take anything. But no offer was made.
Then it was that the people realized the seriousness of the moment. The sight of twenty strong men facing a large gathering and demanding work was an embarrassing one. What was to be done with them? Should they be sent home? There was no home. Should they be turned over to the streets? Should they be forced to crime, or ordered to commit suicide? Never did the problem of unemployment strike home so forcibly and never was the right to work proven more eloquent.
Men wriggled and turned in their seats, and women covered their faces with their hands. It was like realizing a great common calamity. There was the social enemy claiming vic-

ims, depriving people of their natural right to sustain life. What was to be done?
The usual happened. Business gave way to pity. It was no longer a question of saving life. Charity took the place of justice, and a clamor for a collection was made. In just two minutes a hundred dollars was gathered to keep the unfortunates alive.
Appoint a Committee.
Dr. John D. Long took a prominent part in the meeting. He made a short speech in which he urged the necessity of creating a movement to supply work to the unemployed. On his recommendation, a committee was appointed to care for those who were not sold. P. C. Hammond, of 1199 Flatbush avenue, Brooklyn, was appointed as the head of the committee. He was authorized to collect funds.
W. W. Passage, Leon A. Malkiel and John A. Behringer, Socialists, had taken advantage of the situation, and addressed the overflow outside of the church. The police did not at first permit them to speak, but headquarters was telephoned to, and permission was obtained. There was enough to be said. Slavery was restored inside a house of God; human beings were sold into bondage, and this on a day when the entire world was celebrating the birthday of Abraham Lincoln! It was evident to all present that while freedom was a theory, slavery in this country was a fact, and those who were not Socialists, were held by the power of proof; so lavishly furnished by the proceedings inside the church.

Talk about the plutes deliberately controlling prices and panics, never before in a panic were the prices of goods known to go higher. They are soaring today. The prices of labor is all that is falling, and the job gets beautifully less. That is, the workers still have deadly competition among themselves for the job, but the capitalists have eliminated competition among themselves, so they control prices all around and the workingman controls nothing. About time to vote for socialism isn't it? Then the workers would own both the job and the product.
Not some far-off utopian event is Socialism but a bitter class struggle here and now.

WHY ARE YOU A SOCIALIST?

Why are you a Socialist?
Why did you declare yourself a Socialist?
What did you join the Socialist party for?
What does Socialism mean to you now?
Is it a living, working purpose with you to help build a better social state, to teach and train the workers who have been kept in ignorance, so that they may gain confidence, power and knowledge of how to conduct their own affairs?
If such is the case don't you think a spirit of helpfulness and cheerful co-operation is better than an eternal spirit of fault-finding and destructiveness?
Do you think that you are doing the best you can to make your party strong and capable of obtaining the best results?
Do you not think that the officials you have elected are entitled to the best support you can render?
There is no state or position in which they are not having a bitter fight, against the capitalist, against the ignorance and inexperienced of their own class, and against bitter financial odds.
Don't you think the part of a good true Socialist would be to strengthen this fight along class lines, and encourage the fighters?
Comrades, let us remember what is our business as Socialists.
Let us remember that the work of the class struggle calls us.
We must strengthen our locals, educate our communities, define our manifold issues against the capitalists, expose and attack every form of injustice against the working class, build a powerful local press that fight our battles and expose our wrongs.
Let us co-operate, let us work, let us help each other along.
Wherever you can give a lift you know how much it is needed, and how much it will be appreciated. Sit down and think for fifteen minutes just what you could do to help a lot right now.
And then get up and write to the Montana News about it.

To Emasculate Socialist Pledges

Olmpla, Wash., Feb. 13.—Seeking to end the custom of exacting pledges from candidates for the legislature to support certain bills or providing that any candidate who signs such a pledge shall be disqualified from holding the office he seeks. It was acknowledged on the floor of the senate by the framers of the bill that it is directed particularly at labor organizations, but designed also to apply to any compact working organization, such as the Anti-Saloon league or the Equal Suffrage association.
The bill as passed places disqualification also upon candidates for supervisor, school director or for any legislative body, who signs similar ante-election pledges, and also makes

acceptance of an annual retainer for looking after the interests of persons, company or corporation, a disqualification for holding office as a member of the legislature.
The bill was warmly contested by the minority members, who sought to have restriction placed only on the signing of secret pledges. This movement failed. The bill carried 27 to 11.
The above shows that capitalist legislators wouldn't do a thing to the pledges and resignation blanks held over the Socialists. The law is aimed to make it impossible for a labor constituency to control its representatives. What are you going to do about it?

TALK WITH THE NON-SOCIALIST.

Why is it that we are Socialists and you are not? Let us see what the Socialist wants.
He wants a good house to live in. So do you. He wants decent clothes to wear. So do you. He wants pure and unadulterated food. Don't you? He wants his children to receive the best education possible, just as you do. He wants leisure for enjoyment, so do you. He is as willing to work and produce these things as you are. But he objects to having any of his labor taken by those who do no useful work. Isn't he right? He desires to see unemployment, and sweating, and drunkenness, and prostitution, and tyranny of all kinds abolished. Don't you agree with him there?
It seems that there is not such a big difference after all, doesn't it? We each want to make life really worth living. We are agreed that so far as most people are concerned, we are not getting the best out of life. We each know what is good and desirable. Now, the Socialist says that he knows the way by which these things can be obtained.
Think it over. If the Socialist proposals can be shown to be wrong, and you know a better way, out with it, and we will help you. We Socialists want the best possible conditions for life, and so do you. Reason it out friend. Ignorance is a bad thing, but reason will not injure anyone.

SOLD TO A COTTON MILL.

Children Try to Commit Suicide in Japan
Child labor is dying hard in Lancashire, where it is over a hundred years old. In Japan it is new, but the depth of the misery which accompanies it may be gathered from the following daily official paragraph taken from the Japan "Times":—
Factory Life.—Four girls, none of them older than 15, were seen on Sunday loitering on the railway track near Uyeno Park, apparently intent on committing suicide. The police brought them to the Shiyaya Station, and elicited from them a rather sad story. They hail from Sharikmura, Aomori-ken, their ages ranging from 8 to 15. A few days ago they were sold to a cotton mill in Honjo, and came to Tokio on the 11th inst. After entering the dormitory they found the factory life so miserable and unhappy that they resolved to leave the factory for good. At dawn on Sunday they fled from the dormitory, and were able to reach Uyeno Station in the afternoon. But none of them had a sen to procure passage, and they thought the only way out of the distress was to die. So they went to the railway track, when they were stopped by the police. They do not know the name of the factory in which they had been employed, and are now quartered at the police station.