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UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

By J. Edward Morgan, in the New Review.
In spite of the conspiracy of profit sharks to cry down the obvious truth, there came three months ago a climax in the situation here. The jails were overcrowded. Denied the jails, ousted from the cheap lodgings, the saloons and the free lunches, driven by dire need, an army of unemployed bums forming. In small companies at first, congregating on vacant lots, in alleys, on the plazas. Soon came agitation and organization. Socialist and I.W.W. speakers urged quick, united action for relief. Committees of the unemployed called on the Mayor and supervisors demanding immediate work for the unemployed. The petition was ignored. Then came a "wave of crime," but the jails could not hold the numbers guilty of petty larceny. Footpads terrorized the community, prowling nightly. Driven by fear of drastic action by the jobless thousands, the supervisors took the matter "under advisement."

Desperate from need and exasperated at the dilatory tactics of the supervisors, five thousand men and women marched to the Governor's residence. It was a long march and they found the Governor "not at home," as advised by the maid.
Determined to await his return, for two hours speaker after speaker addressed the throng from the steps of the Governor's mansion. His excellency did not return, so resolutions were passed demanding that he take immediate action in providing work for thousands of starving men. Adjourning to an uptown plaza, they left the resolutions with the maid, asking the Governor to meet a committee from the unemployed on his return.
Towards evening the Governor sent a message to the throng gathered upon the plaza. He was sorry for their plight and "regretted he could do nothing for them."

Back to the supervisor went the committee and demanded action in terms that received serious attention. Something must be done, and quickly. On the property unemployed would reap the consequences of their neglect. The thousands were out of work and would eat, work or no work.

Then was opened a soup house on Howard street. All desiring work was asked to register. Over six thousand registered the first day and thousands more were waiting to sign for work. The committee for the unemployed demanded the scale provided by the city charter—\$3.00 for eight hours. Came days of bickering among the politicians. Went up a wall from the prostituted press and pulpit. "Here were a host of beggars demanding work and threatening to loot the city if they did not get it; and these same beggars had the unmitigated audacity to dictate terms!"

\$3.00 FOR EIGHT HOURS.
"We spurn your degrading charity! We demand our right to work like men for the wages of men. We protest against being forced to scab on union men by accepting your cheap charity." And the property unemployed gathered on vacant lots formed in line and paraded the streets carrying banners: "\$3.00 for eight hours."

Dreading dire consequences, work was given a few hours a day at the union scale. Soon went up a howl from the press that over nine thousand were fed in one day at the soup kitchen. All were registering for work; the city had expended thirty thousand dollars and would soon be bankrupt. One paper wailed that the situation was so grave the city

could not touch the surface of it; that the state could not handle so vast a project; that all the out-of-work in the country were scurrying to San Francisco to take advantage of her liberality in providing work; San Francisco would be swamped with an army like that which swept Rome. And so the work was stopped, registering stopped, and there was talk of abolishing the soup house and driving the vagabonds out of town.

How the agitators punctured the specious arguments of the bought press! Always had it howled that the unemployed were bums who would not work. San Francisco offered them work and in a few days the supervisors threw up their hands crying: "We're swamped! We can't handle it! Stop the registering."

When the number fed daily reached close to ten thousand, and thousands more remained hungry, the accommodations being inadequate—the business interest suddenly discovered that with so great an army marching the streets daily and howling their wrares to the winds, profits would go tumbling and the bottom might fall out of the great World's Fair project. Something must be done to hide the damning truth from the outside world. The army must be driven from the city. "As long as we feed them they'll hang around!" "They're a bunch of bums—I.W.W.'s and anarchists."

When work was suspended and a cry went up to close the soup house, there came a change in the attitude of the unemployed army. They gathered on a vacant square near Mission and Howard. They deposited the old committee and selected a new one. They issued a paper called the Question, the voice of the unemployed army—writers and place of publication unknown to the police. Through this medium the facts are given to the public. They contend that on careful investigation fully sixty-five thousand are out of work in the city. They declare that an army of 65,000 hungry men and women is of vaster import than a world's fair to flaunt the stolen wealth of the world's commercial brigands.

The new committee called upon the supervisors but were ignored. Andrew Gallagher, union labor official, declared he would not treat with any committee that had an I.W.W. delegate. This turn down was followed by a march of ten thousand from the Howard Street Square to the Union Square Plaza, opposite the St. Francis Hotel. A frail woman, wheeling a baby carriage, led the army of marchers through the streets during the rush business hour. Trampling the grass into the earth, the ten thousand stood for hours under the very nose of the imposing St. Francis, listening to many speakers urging the vast throng to solidarity and to united action. The meeting was in charge of the unemployed women and was addressed by Ida Adler of the Cloak Workers, Lucy Parsons of Chicago, Pearl Vogel of the Waitresses' Union, and Thompson of the I.W.W. A committee went to the St. Francis asking a donation for the starving women of the glorious city. The afflicted guests stood aghast and some even dropped nickels and dimes in the hat.

Never saw San Francisco such a spectacle. The audacity of it! The disgrace of it! The most servile part of the press howled over the "insult to the Dewey Monument," "the insult to the guests of the St. Francis," and the tramping of the poor, dear, inoffensive grass of the Plaza. But other papers, the

Daily news and the Bulletin, saw in the tremendous pagant, warning to all who feel toil labor—a rumbling of the volcano asleep at the base of the robber system.

This great demonstration was followed by the closing of the sleeping quarters at the water front, and a threat to close the soup house on Howard street. William Thorne, chairman of the committee of unemployed, made every effort to prevent this parade, as he knew the police were prepared to turn it into a riot. Hundreds of police were in waiting, many in plain clothes swooped down upon the unsuspecting marchers like drunken savages. When their blood-thirst was satisfied many faces were crowned with a crimson flood—bystanders falling victims to the blind ferocity of these uniformed beasts as well as the hungry marchers.

One man who was felled to the pavement and picked up unconscious from a pool of blood, was taken to the hospital. There his jaws were found to be broken, but what is of graver moment to the police and the interests they serve, the victim was discovered to be a prominent real estate man visiting in the city. William Thorne, who took no part in the demonstration but tried to prevent it, is held with four others on a charge of rioting. At this writing Habeas Corpus proceedings are pending.

Monster protest meetings followed this bloody police riot. Speakers urged the unemployed to stay in the city and by the force of numbers compel the city to provide work. At Los Angeles, San Diego, Stockton, Sacramento, everywhere over California the same tale is told: unemployed and threatening starvation. From Vancouver, Seattle, Portland comes the same cry—hungry men and women, police riots, breadlines. From New York, Chicago, Denver the same; so San Francisco's army determined to fight it out here. "The Governor says he can do nothing," cried a speaker at a great gathering. "Look the city and see how quick he'll send an army to shoot you down. See how quick they will vote money to hire thugs to kill you but not a cent to start work that you may live."

SAN FRANCISCO'S INFERNO.
On Eighth and Market is an empty two-story building—the Marshall Hotel. Like a ghastly nightmare it will haunt the memory of thousands all their days and is destined to become historic—the most widely celebrated spot in San Francisco. Out of a generous heart the great city offered the building as sleeping quarters for the unemployed.

Below are two large store rooms. One flanking on market—main street of the city, the other facing Eighth Street. To hide the shameful sight from the public, the large room was partitioned so as to exclude the men from the Market street side. When the thousands came swarming the partition was torn down and the entire building occupied by the unemployed. "Passing ten o'clock the men began to come. A great drove of hogs in a crowded pen. At first sight one might fancy the place a temporary morgue where, from some awful disaster, hundreds of bodies have been laid side by side in death.

And indeed the hunger-pinched faces, lying in stial sleep, clutching the pallor of death in the dim light from the street lamps.

Allowing two feet for a man, over two thousand lie upon the bare floors in the three rooms below. On the second floor are eighty small rooms. Each is packed to suffocation and after eleven p.m. one cannot set foot in any room or hallway without stepping on a man. Packed to nauseating discomfort, more than three thousand lie like pigs in a pen making a human carpet for every room and hallway. Even the stairs are covered with the ragged wretches.

The place is an inferno of degradation, stench and corruption. Lying in rows, closely packed, is a motley throng of the living dead. Hunger-whipped, bedraggled and vermin-pestered in their isolated vagabondage, they remind one of the hope-lost wretches of the leper colony of Molokai. One night after nine I visited the abominable place. No capitalist paper in the country will publish the facts I ferreted out that night in this march of all pest houses. The room was not yet filled. Around a poor fire, the only one in the building, many were gathered drying their rags. In the midst of a group of some fifty talking together was a soldier, a dapper fine looking fellow of thirty, a graduate of the University of Tennessee. Just back from Manila, where he served six years in the Twentieth Infantry. He was interpreting a story of five Filipinos present. The five came recently from Hawaii with two hundred dollars in gold. They were held up on Third Street and robbed of all their savings. Penurious, hungry and unable to speak our language, the poor wretches followed the clamoring crowds to the breadline and to the sleeping pen at Market and Eighth.

"What! Soldiers sleeping here?" said I. "I should say yes! Over a hundred soldiers and more than two hundred bluejackets," answered a husky six-footer from the Philippines.

When I expressed my surprise, they crowded around, exhibiting their discharge from the army as evidence. Around me were more than fifty soldiers and sailors who had been standing for hours in the breadline in the drizzling rain.

"How do you like a stink hole like this after years of patriotic service to your country?" I asked in all sincerity.

"It's hell!" said a soldier. "It's a worse hell in the army," put in one man who had seen service in China and the Philippines. Then came a discussion to enlighten me on the life of a private in the United States Army.

Surprised to see so many brave and loyal flag defenders reduced to so filthy a vagabondage, eating charity soup and sleeping like dogs, with every brand of the outcast, I determined to study more closely the personnel of this motley aggregation.

There were four graduates of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and one useful graduate of the University of Georgetown, each with his certificate of graduation carefully pocketed. Twelve doctors, eleven dentists, many "busted" small business men—one who claims residence in San Francisco since 1874. Him I found grimy and seedy, proud as Lucifer, trying to console himself with the belief that better days are coming. Among these wrecks of our social system, prone in the filth with bums, doctors, lawyers, graduate technologists, soldiers, sailors

—and God only knows how many preachers, editors and cabinet ex-politicians—no police court judges—I found an old man of seventy. Scarcely may be seen a more pitiful spectacle. Wet, cold, without blanket, newspaper for pillow, feet wrapped in strips of gunny sack, lying squashed in the manly herd, he looked the incarnation of sorrow. Daily I had seen his bowed grey head in the breadline. He is the victim of a defunct bank that stole all his hard earnings. Another old man nearly eighty, bent, broke, body stiff from rheumatism and long years of unrequited toil, eyes sunken and almost colorless, looking like wells of grief. He was refused soup at the soup kitchen because he had come recently to San Francisco. I wondered what the old man could do, for he begged for work.

"Good God! look at them hands! Pick and shovel, of course!" he cried, and the gnarled and calloused hands he displayed should be a passport to whatever heaven awaits the disinherited sons of toil.

Many I found sick almost unto death. One old man in the last stages of consumption, too weak to walk to the breadline, in agony from rheumatism from standing hours in the rain. Every hospital in the city refused him admission because of his filthy appearance after a week in that hell hole.

At the midnight hour the rooms were all packed to their utmost capacity. There they lay—a nauseating sight, an army of vagabonds, squeezed tight and overlapping, grimy, filth encrusted, welting in the unutterable stench from unwashed feet and bodies, each gulping his share of the stink-laden air, smelling like seepage from a sewer, the lie rioting in their flesh. Soldier and sailor, doctor and lawyer, broken merchant and jobless slave; college men and unlettered beasts of burden, Christian and Pagan, Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Gentile, white, black, yellow and brown, brothers all, reduced to one common heritage in this inferno of the damned. Squeezing for room, hugging up for warmth, swapping lice and sharing each other's noxious breaths, this dog-kennel, souped, louse-eaten aggregation should long remember the social leveling of Capitalism's victims at the free-for-all pest house—the Marshall Hotel.

But Marshall Hotel houses but a handful of the unemployed army. Nightly with rolls of newspapers under their arms, the many hundreds scurry for cover under sheds, in dry goods boxes anywhere they can crawl in from the rain and cold. Scores crawl under the board sidewalks and there, in the grim and vermin-infested earth, smelling of sewerage and decay, they fall into a nightmare of sleep. On every vacant lot fires burn nightly and around this fitful warmth may be seen scores of hunger-bleached faces gleaming in the ghastly light like ghosts of the dead in some Gehenna of the damned. Around the fires they gather, cold and wet and hungry, with warmth and comfort and luxury on every hand. Every group are some who know the cause of all the hell they suffer—and these talk, and many listen and think.

The end is not yet. Since the above was written, meetings of unemployed have again been broken up, scalps crushed, arrests made, the victims being held under heavy bail on the charge of "rioting." The approaching World's Fair now seems but a brigand's dream. You should see the sights at the Marshall Hotel!

REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND

In 1880-81 the cost of the British army and navy was \$125,000,000 per year. It is now \$380,000,000 per year.

Three decades ago the cost of social services, national health, insurance, old age pensions, etc., was \$75,000,000. Now it is \$180,000,000 per year. While the increase on militarism has been around 300 per cent, the increase on social reform has been nearly 400 per cent.

Nevertheless the working class are not satisfied. They are pressing forward demanding ever greater concessions. The ruling class resist, nevertheless they have to yield. And in the future their yielding will have to be greater.

In Great Britain there are one million persons who pay taxes directly, and there are eight million voters.

To hold a majority of the eight million voters, Lloyd George is pressing the taxes upon the direct taxpayers. Income tax, super tax, death duties, land taxes, these are the sources from which the increasing revenue comes.

The source of taxation which is to be increased is the land tax. This tax will break up the big estates. The idea is to establish a peasant ownership to form a bulwark against advancing Socialism.

However, labor is awake to its interests. At the recent congress of the Independent Labor Party a resolution was passed declaring that the land should be nationalized and treated as a public trust instead of being thrust into the wasteful ownership of petty peasants.

In France the land is owned by peasant proprietors. With the increase of population the peasant holdings in the past were subdivided among the children till the holdings were getting too small to support the owners. Thereupon the French peasants deliberately set down the birth rate. Race suicide in France was a direct result of the economic interests of the peasant owners. This is what Lloyd George will bring about in England with peasant proprietorship.

While declaring for the nationalization of land, the Agricultural Laborers and Rural Workers' Union was started. This union has a membership of ten thousand. It demands a minimum wage, eight hour day with overtime pay, weekly half holiday, abolition of the tied house system, etc.

For the first time in history, the railway unions have compelled recognition by the railway companies.

In the strike of miners pending, the men refuse to follow their leaders who are dickering with the bosses.

In the recent revolt among the army officers, it is pretty well known that the King aided with the officers and court influences were at work. The British Labor Leader, commenting on this, says, "So long as the King was a mere dummy and idol, he was a master of supreme indifference to us. But

now that he has become something more than a figure head, we must reluctantly interest ourselves in him, and that interest once aroused, will not terminate until hereditary Government has been entirely swept away."

If the king should lose his job, let not the people worry. He has patented a turning place, which can be lit and warm one room, then turn around and warm the opposite room. He has sold this invention for \$25,000. So under a co-operative community, the king could be given a job as inventor.

The workers are pounding away at the armament trust and exposing it. They are pounding away at the use of the army in strikes as compared with its use in Ulster.

It is pounding away at the injustice of the deportation of the South African labor officials. All along the line labor is awake and active.

PROHIBITION

The movement to abolish the liquor traffic is winning.

At present the movement is to abolish the bar. The underlying reason for this is that the worker who drinks is not such a good worker as the one who does not. Hence the employing class want to curtail the consumption of alcoholic beverages among the wage slaves.

In Ontario when the working day was twelve hours, the bars were allowed to open at six o'clock in the morning. When the day became ten hours, the bars could open only at seven. Now the day is shortening to eight hours, eight o'clock in the morning is the time of opening.

Moreover the employers are forbidding alcohol by direct industrial fiat. The Carnegie Steel Company of Pittsburgh, Pa., has issued orders that only teetotalers among the employees shall be promoted. Many railroads and other concerns do not tolerate drinking among the slaves at all. Those who drink are discharged.

As there are more profits in prohibition than in the liquor traffic, prohibition will win out. And with the coming of prohibition, the slaves will have clearer brains to think, not only for the master class interests, but for themselves.

Prohibition will be a great aid to working class revolt.

From the time the iron ore comes from the ground to the time when the glittering finished mass of steel stands ready to manufacture commodities, labor, and labor only, has been the power which accomplished the transformation. The plute in his easy chair never did one stroke of brain work or muscle work towards its completion, yet he owns the machine, and owns the jobs of the slaves who will crowd each other for a chance to operate it. Doesn't it strike you as rather funny?

OVERPRODUCTION

A special correspondent to the Montreal Star declares that the experts of Europe believe that a universal slump is coming. This slump may beat the worst slumps of 1901 and 1908.

Slumps in 1901 and 1908 and 1914 show that the periodical crises are coming swifter. Formerly they were looked for every eleven years. Now they are coming every six years.

Says the correspondent, "Ministers, bankers and experts are warning the manufacturers and exporters against plunging into big enterprises, as the world, they say, is suffering from over-production, and only by a sharp reduction in economical activity can equilibrium be restored."

The experts predicted the slump a couple of years before because so many workers were employed. "The world in 1912," says Dr. Emil Breziger of Berlin, "was in precisely the same condition as in 1900 and in 1907. All three were years of unusually good trade, exaggerated output of iron." During 1913 the unemployed figures increased rapidly till 80,000 unemployed were in Berlin alone. Unemployment among trade unions was eight per cent of the membership.

There is a certain gentleman friend of the editor of this paper who in his own opinion has solved the whole problem of our troubles. The working class are too extravagant. They want the very best. They will hire livery teams of a Sunday to take their young ladies for a drive, that is, the unmarried slaves who have not yet a family to support. The workers, instead of saving their pay, spend it all. If they only saved their money by living on peasoup, wearing very cheap raiment, etc., they would have money to tide them over hard times.

This gentleman who is but a specimen of our middle class economists who have only a very superficial understanding of present day problems, entirely overlooks the fact that OVERPRODUCTION, according to the capitalist thinkers, is the trouble. If the workers saved their wages (providing they could live on air) commodities produced for the consumption of the working class would remain on the market and overproduction would come all the quicker. The so-called extravagance of the workers is what prevents the panics striking us all the sooner.

Overproduction is not the trouble with us. Underconsumption is the trouble. We have built a system whereby production outruns distribution. The working class produces tremendously. The product of the labor of the working class is not consumed by the working class. It is handed over to the capitalist class. It is poured, through the hopper of capitalist ownership, the hopper is too small. The more the workers produce, the quicker the hopper is clogged. When the

hopper is clogged, industry halts and the producing class go workless and hungry.

The remedy is simple. Abolish the hopper of capitalist ownership. Let the working class produce, own and consume. Then we will have no more of overproduction, no more want and misery. We will no more see the tragic face of women and children going hungry and illclad because their husbands and fathers have produced so much wealth.

Socialism is the only real and sane move. Stand now! Now to the work of our present and future panics.

BOTHA'S FINISH IN SIGHT

Botha's government of South Africa in a high handed manner deported the union officials of the striking miners.

The government declared martial law. The troops rode down workers peacefully assembled. It was forbidden for any striker to go out of doors at night, to picket, and no one was allowed to give aid, financial or otherwise to the strikers.

Had J. P. Morgan been alive he would have said that Botha had shown himself to be a lion and not a mouse.

The transvaal elections were recently held. In the former house, Labor got only two members, a Unionist got forty-five. Now the labor party has twenty-three members. Many of the elected members have just been released from prison. It has a majority of one. This may not be a workable majority. The labor party intends to proceed, if it can, with a bold program of political and social reform. All property and sex disqualifications are to be removed, proportional representation to be restored, free elementary and secondary education, and taxation land values. This program would be made still stronger if the public were ripe. The work of education will be vigorously pushed along class lines.

A by-election has recently been held in the Liskeek division of South Africa. This is a "respectable" suburb of Cape Town. It was formerly represented by a Unionist supporter of Botha. The result of the by-election was as follows: Magesa (Labor), 1,298 votes; Eddy (Unionist), 47 votes; Brydone (Independent), 337 votes. This is a remarkable turnover.

In the present South Africa House, Labor had six (not seven) representatives in a house of 121 members. It will be interesting to watch the next political contest.

Man makes machinery to lighten his labor, and machinery is driving him to the wall and causing him to labor harder. Why doesn't he own the machinery of the world to lighten his labor and these of his fellow workers?

Machinery was destined to be man's friend. Under capitalist ownership of all the machinery of production, it is his downfall. He must own the machinery of the world to lighten his labor and these of his fellow workers.

MASSSES WILL NOT RESPOND!

Kings, princes, and the royal parasites are not popular with Canadians. This fact is being demonstrated day by day and in various ways.

At while ago a kinemascope show was touring Canada. The pictures were splendid, and were taken in the old country. They were in charge of a typical son of Albion, loyal to the core, a man who expected that Canadians would go into ecstasies over the royal mugs reproduced on the films.

The writer sat in a crowded opera house and witnessed the show. First came a colored picture of the union jack. Silence!

The announcer started in surprise, but passed on to the next. It was a race of hydroplanes near Portsmouth. Cheers from the audience.

Next came the investiture of the Prince of Wales, attended by the king and queen and other members of the royal family, with soldiers in their various colored uniforms. It was a magnificent display. The king and queen and prince were in the centre of the camera's focus all the time. Deep silence!

This aroused the announcer, and he plainly told the audience that he had always had the hand for that picture no matter what occasion they were being held under. He pleaded for applause. He wanted to work the audience up to an enthusiastic stage, and showed another picture in which both king and queen were right up near the camera in a carriage smiling at the audience. More deep silence!

"This got the Briton. He appealed again: 'Surely you have a cheer for your king!' A few raucous yowls from newly arrived emigrants in the gallery was the only response. A reel showing warships in a naval review at Portsmouth met with the same fate. That was all for the royal family that evening. The programme was over and splendid portraits of his in England met with a good reception.

But no cheers for royalty. No spasms of foolishness for the parasitical crowd who cling to the banks of the workers. Patriotism of the old order is fast dying in this country. A man could march the length of the longest street in the largest city dressed in full military uniform and never be saluted. "Coming events cast their shadows before."

The slaves of to-day do not have a blacksnake whip over their shoulders to keep them at their work, nor bloodhounds set on their track if they try to escape. The whip of starvation works lots better than the blacksnake, and if a slave refuses to work, the masters have a little law made for such cases which has bloodhounds beaten a mile.

The city of Montreal has turned itself upside down over the election of a mayor who will look after the interests of the capitalists of that city, and see that the poor workers do not steal from them.