

ished Monasteries and confiscated their property for the commonwealth.

Although neither the code of the United States nor the code of any one of the states contains such a law, it is nevertheless valid in this country, because it is a natural law. That is the fundamental law on which our government was founded, it is expressed in the declaration of independence and reads:

"We hold these truths to be self evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

This is the primary supreme law of the United States to which all other laws are subordinate; it abolishes all laws to the contrary. That law endows the government with full power to control corporations and even to abolish them if they are destructive to the unalienable rights for life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness of all men.

Now, I believe that the absolute tyrannical power, which our coal and railroad barons have usurped, using coal mines and railroads as the means to rob the people out of the fruits of their hard labor, even crippling and killing every year thousands of innocent people and freezing thousands to death by shutting up the coal mines, are destructive to the aim of that law. Our executive, who has to execute that natural law makes himself guilty of neglecting his duty and is responsible for all damages and losses which accrue from the existing coal famine. The executive has no right, to escape this responsibility by appointing a committee to arbitrate between coal barons and miners. In that contest the executive has to protect and defend the unalienable rights of the people, which is the most prominent party to the coal and transportation business. Now to distract the attention of the people from the real question and to prevent the executive from acting in that matter, our coal and railroad barons, who have grown together like the Siamese Twins, claim an absolute property right in the coal mines and railroads; but that's only a humbug to deceive the people.

There is no such thing as an absolute property right.

Men have a right to live; and because a man needs different articles for his sustenance, therefore a man has a right to acquire the necessary articles for his sustenance and comfort; but that right is limited by the rights and need of all other people who depend for their sustenance on those necessities for living. Besides there are things which can never become private property of single men or corporations, because they serve for the mutual use of all the people, as for instance, lakes, rivers, roads, railroads, bridges, etc. To regulate, control, and limit the acquisition of private property is the duty of the governments, which are instituted to secure their unalienable rights to all men.

That eminent dominion of the government is to regulate and prevent the accumulation of enormous wealth by single persons or corporations, to the detriment of the masses, and to readjust inequalities, can not be disputed. Moses introduced the fifty years jubilee, when a new census was taken and all property was again divided equally among the people. Christ was a communist, the first Christians had everything in common. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century even in Catholic countries, monasteries, which under a false pretense of a divine right, like our money barons, had amassed all the wealth of the nations, were abolished and the property confiscated for the common wealth.

In this country, too private property was confiscated without indemnification.

Negro slaves were the constitutional granted property of the slave-holders, but that constitutional right contradicted the supreme natural right of equality and liberty of all men as expressed in the declaration of independence, and therefore it was void. If, notwithstanding these facts and precedents, our executives, congress or legislatures say that they have no authority to interfere and make a final decision in the dispute of our coal and railroad barons and their employes and laborers, then

it is only a subterfuge to deceive the people, cheating them of their unalienable claim on coal mines and railroads and those members of executive, congress or legislatures are attempting to evade their disagreeable duty to accommodate our coal and railroad barons, to which they have degraded themselves as subservient lackeys.

That coal strike affects the pocket-book of every family in the United States. You and I have to suffer and pay at least \$20.00 too much for our winter coal to that unscrupulous, insatiable gang of robbers, those coal and railroad barons and we must even be glad if we can get it at all.

With unpardonable, stupid indifference did our government look when those coal barons a few months ago shut up the coal mines, although every man with common sense could see that it must produce a coal famine and horrible sufferings in the coming winter; but congress was not in session; secretary of state, Mr. Hay, had to defend and protect the rights of the Roumanian Jews; and the president had no time to tend to that business, as he was out hunting bears and making stump speeches; therefore he appointed a committee for whitewashing those coal and railroad barons.

The diabolical malice and obstinacy of our coal barons, who rejected every proposition for a peaceable settlement of the strike of the miners, caused horrible sufferings and misery to thousands of honest, industrious men and families; they caused losses of millions of dollars to other industries and people who must have coal. Not only that, but reports, from all parts of the country, are coming in, that people really did freeze to death, because they could not get necessary coal, and that is real murder caused by the satanic malice of our coal barons, who arbitrarily shut up the coal mines; and for these horrible conditions our executive and congress are responsible.

Now what are you going to do about it?

I saw in the newspapers that a meeting of delegates of the different states and cities will be called in Washington to petition president and congress for relief; but if those gentlemen go to Washington they must be careful and keep off the grass or they may feel the police club like the members of the Coxe army, who tried to petition congress.

What effect will a petition have on a president, who gets a salary of \$50,000 to protect the rights of the people, and then goes out bear hunting when our coal barons are shutting up the coal mines? What relief can you expect from a congress, the majority of the members of which are the owners of coal and railroad shares and bonds or are dependent upon such shares and bond holders? But those irresponsible demagogues make and execute our laws, without our consent and contrary to our wishes and will, and these laws are just as effectively binding and galling as the fetters of the slave; we are only the slaves of laws.

The criminal neglect of their duties by our executive and congress to settle that coal strike and to provide the people with the necessary coal, which neglect has caused so horrible sufferings and misery to the people, is an irrefutable proof that that government has become to be destructive to the end of securing their inalienable rights of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness to all men.

The people must now take the matter in their own hands and command those hired servants what they have to do, and settle that most important of all questions according to the principles of reason and natural right; and the only way to do it is, that the government takes possession of the coal mines and railroads paying the shareholders their real invested cash paid capital, thereby preventing such horrible calamities and sufferings for ever and in all future times.

The claims of our coal barons that the coal mines are their absolute private property is totally false. Coal is one of the indispensable necessities for men and therefore the mines can never become the private property of anybody. Even the whole living generation has not a property right, but only the right of an usufructuary on the mines, because those mines are intended by the Creator for the benefit and sustenance of the whole human race and thousands yet unborn generations must depend on them. The new born baby of the poorest laborer has just as good a claim on those coal mines as a Pierpont Morgan, Rockefeller or Carnegie.

The living generation has a right to take out their necessary coal, but it has no right to waste the coal or destroy the mines to the detriment of the coming generations; the mines must be economically managed and kept in

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I remember a similar case from Switzerland, where most all timber land belongs to cities and precincts, but some private corporations own some timberland, too, but neither cities or precincts nor even private corporations can absolutely dispose over the timber. The state inspector of forests makes a map of such forests and divides them into sections and the usufructuaries are only allowed to cut every year the timber of such a section under strict regulations for cutting and replanting, whereby the rights of the coming generations are protected and secured. The same law is valid for coal mines; it is expressed in the Declaration of Independence, which says that the government has to secure the inalienable rights of all men; therefore the government has not only authority, but it is its duty to take possession of coal mines and railroads and manage them in the interests and for the benefit of all the people, paying the shareholders their real invested cash paid capital; that is all that they can demand. Those shareholders are only capitalists like all others, who loan out money. They have nothing to do with the management; they may live in New York,

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