

THE POST-DEMOCRAT.

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Muncie, Indiana, Thursday, November 12, 1925.

THE GRAND DRAGON

D. C. Stephenson, who grand dragoned the klan during the first three years of its glorious career in Indiana, declares that he has been "framed" by his enemies. Having officiated for three years as the chief "framer" of Indiana, his plaints at this time are somewhat ludicrous.

Drunk with power, the "grand dragon" for three years controlled public officials and directed their acts in every part of Indiana. Judges took his orders, sheriffs, prosecutors and police officers were his errand boys and at a nod from Stephenson those who opposed his reign of anarchy were arrested, tried and sent to prison on baseless and fantastic charges, while criminals who did his bidding were immune from prosecution.

Surrounding himself with a band of armed bravos, the grand dragon established a mediaeval court at Indianapolis and assumed to be the dictator in Indiana. Weak minded politicians, blowing with the wind, hastened to do homage to this grotesque personage, who was heralded as a sort of a combination of John the Baptist and Alexander the Great.

Being great, and a boss, the fact that he was a whisky addict and revoltingly lecherous, was not discovered until one of his women victims took poison and died, and he and two of his henchmen arrested and placed in jail on murder charges.

Imagine the surprise of the man who felt that he was above the law being arrested like an ordinary person, placed in jail and then tried for murder! And all this happening in a state which Stephenson thought had been reduced to such a state of subserviency that the theory had been accepted that the king could do no wrong.

Having asserted "I am the law in Indiana," and having demonstrated many times in every section of the state that the 'boast was not an idle one, the grand dragon simply can't get over his surprise that the agency which he assumed to control should place him in the criminal dock.

The grand dragon doesn't understand it, at all. It is simply beyond comprehension. One day he was the boss of the Indiana legislature, the close friend and confidant of Senator Jim Watson, the avowed organizer of the forces which had elected a governor and the supreme boss of the republican party in Indiana, and the next day he occupied a felon's cell and those who had fawned at the feet of "Steve" and boasted of their stand-in with "The Old Man," changed front in the twinkling of an eye and seriously advocated the idea of taking him out and lynching him.

In the high tide of his rulership, Stephenson blandly gave orders from Indianapolis which were implicitly obeyed in Muncie, not only by public officials, but by thousands of deluded men and women who regarded him as a superman.

The Post-Democrat, daring, almost alone in Muncie, to draw sword against the Stephenson mania, was marked for slaughter by "The Old Man," and when all the facts are finally revealed, an amazing chapter will be added to the history of the klan in Indiana, and the power exercised by its "grand dragon."

Less than a week ago a well known Muncie citizen, who was a high officer of the local klan while Stephenson ruled Indiana, voluntarily made this statement to the publisher of this newspaper:

"About three years ago I received a 'fiery summons' to appear before the grand dragon at Indianapolis. I disregarded the summons, but later received another summons of a similar character to meet Stephenson at Yorktown, where a big klan meeting was to be held that night.

"A 'fiery summons' from the grand dragon is a demand to appear instant before the potentate and the one summoned is expected to obey any order given. I went to Yorktown and met Stephenson.

"Dispensing with preliminary talk, Stephenson said: 'Look here, that man Dale at Muncie must be knocked off. I am commanding you to see to it that he is beaten up. It's up to you to see that the job is done right. Send him to the hospital.'

"Stephenson became very angry when I refused, on the ground that you had always treated me decently and that such a performance would hardly add to the prestige of the klan in Muncie. 'It's got to be done, and if you won't look after it, I'll get somebody who will,' said Stephenson."

The gentleman who made this statement is a good citizen, who is now in a normal frame of mind. There are hundreds of others who look back and wonder now how they stood for Stephenson's bunk, which is now so apparent to them in the light of sober reflection.

Sitting in the prisoner's dock at Noblesville, Stephenson still dreams of empire, we believe. And at that he is a remarkable man. Personally he has the utmost contempt for the highfalutin' talk of the klan, yet he is the man who invented the bunk used in Indiana to coax tenspots from the pockets of the unwary.

He is frankly contemptuous of his dupes and his favorite expression is one employed at one time by one of the world's greatest leaders in war and diplomacy: "I never look behind to see who is following me."

Napoleon nor Nero never gave orders with more absolute authority and expectation of implicit obedience than D. C. many bills they left unpaid when they went away.

Stephenson and the dreams of Aaron Burr were childish as compared to the vaulting ambition of the man who is now fighting for his life at Noblesville.

In the klan he saw his opportunity. In the kingdom of bunk, he soon rose to be the chief mountebank. In a modern era he chose to rule by mediaeval methods. With all his vices there must be something about the man that approximates greatness.

The editor of the Post-Democrat knows Stephenson personally. We became acquainted with him in his office in the Woolworth block in Indianapolis last winter while the legislature was in session. We witnessed many manifestations of his power. His offices were filled with politicians of high and low degree. He gave orders and all obeyed without question.

"I am building a Tammany in Indiana," said he, "which will completely rule the state and I am the leader."

Immediately after the election last year he wrote to every republican county chairman in Indiana, summoning them to call on him to consult in regard to federal, state and local appointments.

In the letter he thanked them for their "co-operation" and assured them that he, Stephenson, would recommend no appointments from their counties unless it was satisfactory to the county chairman.

Stephenson really believed that he would gain permanent control of Indiana, then widen his influence until every state in the union recognized him as master, and then—but figure the rest out yourself.

It may be that he dreamed of the president's chair instead of the electric chair, which threatens.

The sixteenth precinct on the Southside, popularly known as "The Redlight," gave a majority vote for John Hampton. Law abiding Riverside cast its vote for Retherford. It is to be construed that the sixteenth wants a Bigger and Better "redlight."

Inch by inch the Billy Williams machine is being driven to its last line of defenses. One more battle and the war will be won. Prepare for Aemageddon.

OGLE PROVES IN GUN CASE THAT GRAND JURY WAS ILLEGALLY DRAWN

Like Tennyson's brook, the gun toting case entitled State vs. Dale, threatens to go on forever.

Special Judge Lon Guthrie Monday ruled for the state in the matter of the plea in abatement asking for the dismissal of the case.

Here's the status of the case, with apologies for taking up so much space talking about the editor:

The case was sent to Winchester on a change of venue, on the ground that the defendant could not get a fair trial in Delaware county, and was there dismissed by Judge Alonzo Bales.

The next day the defendant was re-arrested on the same charge. A plea in abatement was filed before Special Judge Lon Guthrie, setting up the fact that the arrest was made on an affidavit; that the grand jury was in session at the time and that the law provides that an arrest to be legal must be based upon a grand jury indictment. Arrests may be made upon affidavit and information only when the grand jury is not in session.

The plea in abatement was tried out several weeks ago, Judge Eichhorn and Judge Gordon, of Bluffton, appearing for the defense. The county clerk was placed on the witness stand and the circuit court order book was produced to show that the grand jury had been impaneled in September, 1924, and that it adjourned in January, 1925.

To every question propounded by Judge Eichhorn, Prosecutor Ogle made the amazing objection that the grand jury in question was not a real grand jury, but a "pretended" grand jury; that when the six grand jurors were summoned for service only four appeared and that Sheriff Harry Hoffman, on order from Judge Dearth, illegally and unlawfully selected two bystanders and placed them on the grand jury and therefore, the grand jury being illegally drawn was not a grand jury.

The objection was overruled and the grand jury record introduced, showing that seventy-nine indictments had been returned by Ogle's "pretended" grand jury.

Judge Dearth was put on the witness stand to help prove that he and Hoffman had unlawfully impaneled a grand jury, but an objection by Judge Eichhorn stopped him. He volunteered the statement, however, that "everything was just the way they said."

Monday morning Special Judge Guthrie ruled for the state, without giving his reasons in writing. However, he declared from the bench, when the case was argued, that he had decided one point, and that was that the grand jury was illegal.

It will be recalled that the editor of the Post-Democrat was convicted of contempt for attacking the legality of the selection of jury commissioners and for criticizing grand jury methods.

In order to try to convict the defendant in the gun case both Prosecutor Ogle and Judge Dearth proved to the satisfaction of a trial judge in the Delaware circuit court that grand juries ARE ILLEGALLY DRAWN in Delaware county.

There is a similarity here between Ogle's action and that of the second hand clothing merchant's argument. A prospective customer complained of the evil odor emanating from a second hand garment. "You must have found that in the sewer," he said.

"No, it isn't the coat," said the merchant, anxious to make a sale, "it's me you smell. I'm a stinking son of a gun."

But how about the seventy-nine who were indicted by Ogle's "pretended" grand jury. Some of them were compelled to wear stripes, yet according to Guthrie's ruling, the grand jury was not a grand jury. The state at least owes these unfortunate an apology.

The sentences they served were at least not pretended. They were real.

You never can tell by the length of their vacation how many bills they left unpaid when they went away.

(Continued from Page One.)

The "machine" got out its vote. The machine works at politics three hundred and sixty-five days every year. There is only one way to beat Billy Williams's machine, and that is for those who oppose his ruinous rule to work just as steadily at the job of politics as Billy does himself.

The Post-Democrat is willing to do its part to redeem Muncie and Delaware county. We have led the fight here for five years and have seen some astonishing results. Last year, because of our revelations of the Whitney gravel steal, we saw five rock ribbed republican townships go democratic by large majorities.

All machine-republican candidates for county office were elected by tremendously reduced majorities. In a county with a natural republican majority of eight or nine thousand, the three Billy Williams commissioners were elected by majorities of less than two thousand and the sheriff came through by a bare nine hundred.

In the recent city election the revolt against the republican machine aww so complete that a natural republican majority of at least six thousand was whittled down to a measly 415. In fact there is little doubt that Retherford, the democratic candidate formayor, really received more votes than his opponent, if all fraudulent votes were excluded from the count.

Eight of the biggest republican precincts in Muncie went democratic by large majorities and had it not been for the combined efforts of a coalition of the Williams and Bunch machines, a solid combinations of gamblers and liquor law violators, and an exasperating and utterly needless disaffection on the part of a number of Southside democrats, the democrats would have won by an overwhelming majority, even without the help of the seven thousand stay-at-home non-voters.

And in this connection the Post-Democrat wishes to pay a high compliment to the independent republican voters of the city of Muncie, who threw party to the wind and joined with other good citizens in an effort to save the city from disaster.

With the republicans of the rural districts almost solidly insurgent and with a majority of Muncie republicans stirred to rebellion against gang rule, there is no reason on earth why the machine should not be utterly wiped out in the coming spring primary.

In order, however, to do this, it is incumbent that everybody get on the job AT ONCE. The machine is working now. The insurgent republicans and the democrats must not sleep in fancied security until about a week before the May primary.

An organized minority always lacks an unorganized majority. Billy Williams makes a business of politics. Nominally he is postmaster and draws a salary for it, but in reality he is the all-year manager of a bi-partisan minority. That's his real job. The postmastership is a negligible side-line, valuable only to him because of the fat salary attached and because of the importance of the postoffice as a coaling station for his political organization.

Let's get on the job, right now. There's no use in sitting around bewailing the fact that the Jolly Roger of the pirate sloop is to float over the new city hall after the first of January. It will be there and that's all there is to it.

The thing to do is for the voters of Delaware county to forget their past mistakes and go at this thing of busting the machine in a businesslike manner.

If every man and woman in Delaware county who opposes gang rule will seriously address himself or herself to the task of machine-busting, the thing can be done so easily that it will be laughable.

Billy Williams knows this himself, better than anyone. He is now banking on future successes on the theory that the apathy of the past on the part of his antagonists will be duplicated in future performances.

He knows that he and his cohorts are sitting in a leaky old boat, which can be sent to the bottom of the sea by one well directed shot, but is relying upon the admiral of the opposing fleet forgetting to load the gun as usual. Let's load 'er to the muzzle and shoot!

How can the health of a state longer be gauged by the death rate? States with a low mortality may have few automo-

CITY ADVERTISEMENT.

Department of Public Works.

Office of the Board.
Muncie, Ind.

NOTICE OF IMPROVEMENT RESOLUTION.

NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNERS. In the matter of Certain Proposed Public Improvements in the City of Muncie, State of Indiana.

Notice is hereby given by the Board of Public Works of the City of Muncie, Indiana, that it is desired and deemed necessary to make the following described public improvements for the City of Muncie, Indiana, as authorized by the following numbered improvement resolutions, adopted by said Board on the 10th day of November, 1925, to-wit:

I. R. No. 118-1925. For General District Sewer known as Madison Street Relief Sewer, commencing at the manhole in the intersection of Main street and Madison street, and extending southwardly in said Madison street to the manhole within thirty (30) feet of the center of the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad Company's tracks.

The territory to be derived, affected and assessed for the construction of said sewer is as follows:

Beginning at the center of the alley between Main street and Washington street and 50 feet west of the west line of Lincoln street; running thence west on the center line of said alley to the center of the first alley east of Walnut street; thence south on the center line of said alley 67 1-2 feet; thence west on the north line of Lot 8 in Block 12 in Brown's Donation to the east line of Walnut street; thence south on the east line of Walnut street to the center of the alley between Main street and Jackson street; thence east on said center line to the east line of Elm street; thence south in said east line of Elm street to the center of the alley between Jackson street and Adams street; thence west on said center line of said alley to the east line of Jefferson street; thence south on said east line

of Jefferson street to the alley between Adams street and Charles street; thence east on the center line of said alley 125 feet; thence south to the south line of Charles street; thence east to a point 62.5 feet east of the east line of Elm street; thence south to the south line of Howard street; thence east to the east line of Center street produced; thence south on said east line of Center street; to the north line of the right-of-way line of the Lake Erie & Western Railway; thence northeasterly on said right-of-way line to the east line of Madison street; thence south 30 feet to the south line of the right-of-way of the Lake Erie & Western Railway; thence northeasterly on said south line to a point 200 feet west of the west line of Hackley street; thence north 30 feet; thence northeasterly 58 feet; thence north parallel to the west line of Hackley street to the alley; thence east on said alley 108 1-6 feet; thence north 125 feet to the south line of Charles street; thence east on the south line of Charles street 114 2-3 feet; thence south 125 feet; thence east 167 1-6 feet; thence south to the south line of the right-of-way of the Lake Erie & Western Railway; thence northeasterly on said south line to the center line of Ohio avenue; thence northwesterly on said center line of Ohio avenue to the center line of first alley south of Jackson street; thence east on said center line of said alley to the west line of Hamilton's First Addition; thence north on said west line to a point 125 feet south of the south line of Jackson street; thence east and appurtenant to the said south line of Jackson street to the east line of Lot 4 in Hamilton's First Addition; thence north to the north line of Jackson street; thence east to the east line of Lot 2 in Block 12 in Thomas H. Kirby's Addition; thence north on the east line of said Lot 2 in said Block 12 and Lot 2 in Block 8 in Thomas H. Kirby's Addition to the place of beginning.

All work done in the making of said described public improvements shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions of the improvement resolution, as numbered, adopted by the Board of Public Works on the

above named date, and the drawings, plans, profiles and specifications which are on file and may be seen in the office of said Board of Public Works of the City of Muncie, Indiana. The Board of Public Works has fixed the 1st day of December, 1925, as a date upon which remonstrances may be filed or heard by persons interested in or affected by said described public improvements, and on said date at 7:30 o'clock, p. m., said Board of Public Works will meet at its office in said City for the purpose of hearing and considering any remonstrances which may have been filed, or which may have been presented; said Board fixes said date as a date for the modification, confirmation, rescinding or postponement of action on said remonstrances; and on said date will hear all persons interested or whose property is affected by said proposed improvement, and will decide whether the benefits that will accrue to the property abutting and adjacent to the proposed improvement and to the said City, and to the property in said district will be equal to or exceed the estimated cost of the proposed improvements, as estimated by the City Civil Engineer.

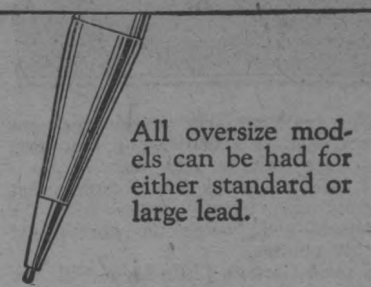
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS,
Mary E. Anderson, Clerk.
Adv. Nov. 12-19, 1925.

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