

# Indiana Daily Times

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PERHAPS the plesiosaurus was hatched from a cold storage egg.

OKLAHOMA is running California a close race for front page murder records.

SOUTH BEND should be thankful, however, that it has other attributes aside from the fact that it once gave refuge to a countless.

**Undermining Civil Service**

The abrupt dismissal of thirty-two employees of the Government bureau of printing and engraving by executive order without an opportunity to defend themselves against ugly charges bruited about is the most serious blow ever struck at the civil service system. The President's order relieving these men summarily from their duties followed so closely Attorney General Daugherty's attack on civil service that it leads to the belief that an organized movement to restore the odious "spoils system" is receiving Administration sanction in Washington without even observing the customary political amenities, usual when lucrative appointments are desired for "deserving" partisans.

The statutes explicitly provide that a person removed from the classified service of the United States must have "notice of the charges against him and be furnished with a copy thereof and also be allowed a reasonable time to answer the same in writing and to file affidavits in support thereof," yet when the employees sought to learn the reasons for their dismissal at the White House President Harding was golfing.

Secretary Mellon says no charges involving the honesty of the men were made, yet the capital is full of rumors, emanating undoubtedly from official sources assiduously endeavoring to find alibis for the unprecedented procedure, that there was laxness and even dishonesty in the conduct of the bureau.

The ousted employees are entitled to a fair hearing and should be allowed in fairness to answer the quasi-official imputations cast against their integrity. President Harding and Secretary Mellon, the two most intimately connected with the affair, owe it to the public and to the men themselves the right to be heard, even if they have determined that this incident is the opening wedge in a determined effort to "break down" civil service and usher in the "spoils system" in all of its tarnished glory.

There is another phase of the situation that also demands an explanation. The Washington Times declares the men were ousted after employees of the bureau of printing and engraving had threatened to make public serious charges involving the twenty-five who came under presidential displeasure. If it is true that a little coterie of men in any department of the Government have sufficient power to intimidate high officials by the threat of an exposé without due regard for the rights of the individuals concerned, it is time for the country to know it.

That the discharges were the culmination of a carefully studied scheme to pave the way for men who are more deserving of plums at the hands of the Harding Administration is evidenced by the fact that the actual selection of the victims was left to Elmer Dover, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and regional director for the Republican party on the coast. Dover has been intrusted with the task of restoring the "spoils system" to the Treasury Department and his first effort seems to have been unusually successful.

Democrats and Republicans alike are aroused over the incident, for it was not just a drive of the Administration to oust Democrats. Eighteen of the employees are Republicans and eight are Democrats, the others professing no political affiliations, thus giving unmistakable evidence that the whole affair was a direct attack upon the civil service system.

**Passing the Strike Buck**

The miner passes the "buck" to the owners of the mines, they pass it on to the railroads, they pass it on to the dealer, and he passes it back to the railroads, while the Uncle Sam public pays the bill.

The present peaceful, so-called, strike is more in the nature of a lock-out than a strike. The contract between the miners and owners of the mines terminated March 31. The miners did not strike, they simply had no jobs. They offered to go on at the old wages, but the operators refused to meet them to discuss a new scale. So the "buck" passed to the owners of the mines, who claim the railroads are charging an increase of 300 per cent for hauling coal, and that the cost of coal to the public is so high their business has been practically ruined. The railroads say the retailers, often the mine owners themselves, operating under a different name, are collecting too much profit from the public, thereby passing the "buck" along once more. At this point the retailer of coal must either keep it or pass it on, or back to the railroads, where, as a matter of fact, it should remain.

Of course, the poor miner can only deal with the operator, and while the wages of the miner, if he had steady work, would be too high, can only be adjusted in connection with a reduction in freight rates, not only on coal, but all other commodities, thereby reducing the cost of living. There is no wage ton basis for mining coal. There are thousands of mines and hundreds of different working conditions which make a uniform ton scale impossible.

One West Virginia coal mine operator told me in Washington last week that he was delivering his coal f. o. b. cars on side track at his mines for \$1.25 a ton. We used to buy his coal in Chicago delivered in our boiler room for \$3.50 a ton. Now the freight alone is \$3.50 a ton and the coal costs us \$7.50 a ton, an increase of \$4.00 a ton. The operator is getting 30 cents of that \$4.00 increase, while the railroads and retailer get \$3.70. I give you this concrete example in order to show you that after all this so-called "strike" is not so much against the owners of the mines as it is a combined strike of the miners and operators against the railroads and middlemen who have put up their prices until the public is unable to buy coal and the miner is working less than half time, and the mine owner's sales have been cut in two with his overhead, taxes, investment, wear and tear remaining the same, or more. I will admit that until I got all the figures together I blamed the coal mine owner for at least one-half the trouble, but I have changed my mind as the public must with the facts before it.

Where I say owner or operator of the mines I mean owners independent of the railroads or big financial concerns that own both the railroads and the mines.

Before the United States Government passed a law forbidding the railroads to own coal mines, nearly 50 per cent of the mines were owned by the railroad companies, and whether coal cars were scarce, or not, they would freeze out independent operators by not spotting cars at their mines. While the law says the roads cannot own mines they have evaded the letter of the law in many, many cases by organizing coal companies and operating under a different name. I know this to be true. Even sometimes they are so brazen as to use the same officers in both the railroads and coal companies.

Now, what's the answer, is the question you and I are deeply interested in. This is a peaceful strike and there will be no trouble unless the railroads attempt to open up some of their—under—cover—mines. The miners know that the cost of coal to the consumer must come down for them to have steady employment. How is this all to be brought about, who is going to give way first? The railroads believe that starvation will force the miner to take less pay, especially as the country can keep going for the next four months on the coal now in sight and the tonnage produced by the non-union mines. If all the coal in the United States were dug for nothing it would not take \$1.00 a ton off the price. Suppose the miners stood a 25 per cent cut in their wages, that would only take 25 cents a ton off the retail price, and nobody asks this, not even the mine owners. The "buck" must remain with the railroads until the game is over. The delivered price of coal must come down before we reach a before-the-war basis. Coal should be delivered, and will be some day, at an average cost of \$1.00 per ton above 1914 prices, but I do not expect this to be reached for a year or so.

Few people in this country realize that only 10 per cent of our manufacturing in this country is done "on top of the coal," while 77 per cent of British, 44 per cent of German, and 37 per cent of French factories are located at the coal mines. Except for the fact that the countries named have to import their raw stock we could not compete with them. Some day our factories must locate "on top of the coal."—W. D. Boyce, in the Saturday Blade.

## Highways and By-Ways of Lil' Ol' New York

By RAYMOND CARROLL

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NEW YORK, April 5.—Many of the big, are 25,000 in the entire city and their chief center of trade on the east side is back of Chatham Square.

The cross of war-sawed by the government of Czechoslovakia to Maj. Sherman M. Craiger for services to the allied supplies mission in Trieste has been presented to him by Maj. Gen. Robert Lee Bullard, commanding headquarters' Second army corps area, Governor's Island, with formal ceremony. Accompanying the decoration was a diploma from the minister of national defense at Prague.

To one who knows the metropolis that is New York, it is not surprising that in the last month hundreds of small restaurants have opened on Manhattan Island, and they are doing excellent business without the sale of intoxicating liquors.

What happened was this: The public is finally awakened to the fact that it is being outrageously mulcted for food in the hotel restaurants and simply stays at home. The small places in the side streets. Even guests of the hotels go elsewhere to eat.

Another sore point with the public is the knowledge that the hotel proprietors still the right to gouge them for the care of hats and coats in the garment est. They themselves killed the game that laid their golden eggs and they have only themselves to blame for unoccupied rooms and rows of empty tables with idle waiters standing around. Of course there are exceptions and from these we hear no complaints.

To the southeast of Chatham Square, along Madison street and adjacent cross streets is the Greek quarter of the lower east side. The signs are all in modern Greek and shops abound in which Greek olives, tobacco and other Near East imports may be procured. For several blocks in any direction the impression is that of being in a Greek assembly district.

I dropped into a nearby political club and asked: "What is the Greek vote of the assembly district? The reply: "Exactly ninety-six Greeks are on the voting list, out of a total registration of about 17,000 of all races in the First assembly district."

It cannot be estimated how many Greeks live in this district, but there

### Ye TOWNE GOSSIP

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By K. C. B.

IT MUST BE.

THAT YOU'RE getting old.

AND A little crabby.

I SAID to myself.

JUST A moment ago.

FOR SITTING here.

IN THE sunny room.

WHERE I do my work.

I'VE BEEN disturbed.

BY SOME little kids.

WHO ARE at play.

IN THE court outside.

AND I was surprised.

THEY SHOULD bother me.

FOR YESTERDAY.

AND THE day before.

THEY PLAYED out there.

AND YELLED a lot.

AND LAUGHED a lot.

AND I wasn't disturbed.

IN THE very least.

AND I'VE wondered why.

I SHOULD have changed.

AND I'VE figured it out.

AND THE reason is.

THAT TWO of the kids.

SHOWED UP today.

WITH SOME man-made things.

THAT SOME one invented.

TO ENRICH himself.

AND PUT them in stores.

AND PARENTS bought them.

AND TOOK them home.

AND SHOWED the kids.

HOW TO rattle them.

AND SCREECH with them.

AND TURNED them loose.

ON THE neighbors' ears.

AND SO it is.

IF I'M disturbed.

IT ISN'T the kids.

WHO ARE doing it.

NOT HALF so much.

AS THE grownups.

BUT NEVERTHELESS.

IT IS the kids.

WHO GET the blame.

AND IF I had the guy.

WHO INVENTED the things.

THEY'RE WHACKING on.

THIS VERY minute.

I'D MAKE him eat 'em.

AND THEY'RE made of tin.

AND PAINTED green.

I THANK you.

### Washington Briefs

WASHINGTON, April 5.—President

Harding's merchant marine subsidy pro-

gram will be launched on Capitol Hill

with the opening of hearings before the

Joint Committee created for the purpose

—the Senate Committee on Commerce

and the House Committee on Merchant

Marine, both of whom are headed by

Sen. George W. Norris, of Nebraska.

The bill, which is to be introduced

in the Senate on April 10, will be

introduced in the House on April 11.

The bill is to provide for a

subsidy of \$10,000,000 for the

merchandise marine.

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