

The Indianapolis Times

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No law shall be passed restraining the free interchange of thought and opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print freely, on any subject whatever.—Constitution of Indiana.

'Politics!'

PRETTY soon virtuous voices will be heard calling on Congress to quit playing politics with the tax program. This will have a proper sound and you no doubt will feel like joining the chorus. Before doing so it may be worth your while to consider the kinds of politics that are likely to be played.

A Congressman is said to play politics when he advocates or votas for a measure in order to help himself politically. If he votes for a certain kind of tax bill because he thinks it will make him or his party popular with the majority of voters, that's politics. If he votes for another kind of tax bill because he thinks it will make him or his party popular with large campaign contributors, that, likewise, is politics. The man of the first description calls the man of the second description a tool of the interests. The second calls the first a demagogue.

Of course, if the first man is acting solely on the conviction that what the people want must be given to them, he can't be called a demagogue; and if the second man honestly believes the way to benefit the average man is to benefit the big interests first, he can't be called anybody's tool.

Broadly, the political divisions in the coming session will result from the two tendencies described. The last tax reduction was the work, largely, of Democrats and independent Republicans. They took the vastly advertised Mellon tax plan and remodeled it until Mr. Mellon didn't recognize it. His aim had been to reduce the taxes of the little folks a little and the taxes of the big fellows a lot. Congress turned the project around, reducing the little fellows a lot and the big fellows a little.

Now the best of motives moved Congress in that, but, just the same, there was some politics in it. Indeed, it looked like the slickest kind of politics. There was President Coolidge, angry as a Vermont farmer finding a tramp in his haymow. His tax plan was busted and one likely to please the great majority of voters had been passed over in protest. He let it be known that he'd like to veto it, and then he signed on the dotted line. What happened? The country gave him, not Congress, the credit for the tax reduction! The country wouldn't believe that anybody could be more economical than Coolidge.

Congress is going up against another Mellon tax plan this session, although his name is being kept remote from the bill. Again the Mellon aim is primarily to reduce the big fellows' taxes. Congress may succeed in improving this program as much as it did the other, but at this moment it appears to be a harder job.

The Federal taxes of the little fellows are almost at the vanishing point. Reduce them any further and the little fellows cease to be taxpayers—direct taxpayers, that is to say; for they will continue to pay the taxes, hidden in rents and the prices of things they buy. It may not be wise to break this direct taxpaying connection between millions of citizens and their government. It would seem better to have every citizen contribute to the cost of his government, if only a little, and that he should know how much he is contributing. Nevertheless there will be much support in Congress for a plan to take the little fellows off the income tax books entirely.

Mellon's idea is to make a considerable reduction in the surtax of the big taxpayers. He would leave the little fellows paying about what they now pay, in order to do this.

Entering into the problem is the question of what to do with the leftover war taxes, the taxes on automobiles, theater tickets, club dues and so forth. The Administration's hope is to crowd through a bill this session without removing the tax on automobiles and then, two years later, just preceding the 1928 election, to sponsor the elimination of the auto tax. There would be a lot of votes in that. Everybody who buys an automobile would appreciate the removal from the automobile ads of those italic lines—"f. o. b. Detroit—plus tax." The tax amounts to 5 per cent of the manufacturer's price.

Well, there are some of the fundamental differences that Congress has to deal with. So, unless you want Congress to shut its eyes and pass the first bill the Administration hands it, regardless of what it contains, don't start shouting "Politics" too soon.

In a Class Apart

BACK in 1777, the Marquis de Lafayette and eleven men presented themselves before the Continental Congress at Philadelphia and offered their services to the American colonies, then fighting for independence.

You know the story. With an American commission in his pocket, La Fayette won universal and undying glory. He was fighting

for an ideal, for the right of a people to be free.

Some 140 years later, in 1914-15-16, many Americans went to Canada, or England or France and cast their lot with the allies to fight, as they believed, in a war to end war. They, too, were inspired by a high ideal, an ideal worthy of La Fayette.

A few weeks ago a group of Americans, headed by a Col. Sweeney, after being wined and dined and advertised and ballyhooed for all the publicity the stunt could get, left Paris for Morocco to drop bombs on the Riffians, a handful of natives fighting for their independence against the Spanish and the French.

It now appears, according to a copyrighted cable published by the North American Newspaper Alliance, that these Americans have not joined the French army, nor the Foreign Legion nor anything of the kind, but are without any real military status. In which event they have just about the same right to kill the inhabitants of the Riff as you have to kill the first foreigners you meet on the sidewalk.

Far be it from us to find fault with any American who wishes to become a La Fayette. In fact, we secretly admire the man who is ever ready to fight and die for his ideal—even when his ideal happens to be different from our own.

But Americans who become freelance bombers of Moroccans who have no planes to strike back with and of defenseless villages crowded with helpless women and children, somehow do not fit in at all with our idea of La Fayette. They place themselves in a class apart.

High officials quoted by the agency above referred to seem to share this view. Here is what some of them said:

Senator Reed Smoot: "It is a dastardly thing."

Senator Lenroot: "They are potential killers."

Senator Harrold: "They are a disgrace to civilization."

Lieutenant Williams, United States aviation service officers' reserve corps: "America's reputation for fair play has been handed a jolt by Colonel Sweeney and his opera bouffe flyers."

Colonel Hartney, former commander of the First Pursuit Squadron, A. E. F.: "A disgrace to aviation and un-American" * * * Their best course is to stay out of this country henceforth."

A Hard Choice for Coolidge

IN Philadelphia there is an earnest desire that Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler continue his job of reforming the police administration. This is not so much because of his efforts to enforce prohibition, as because of his success in reducing crime generally. Only about half as many Philadelphians are murdered each week, it seems, as used to be murdered; only half as many banks are robbed, only half as many citizens are held up at night on the streets. Philadelphians, notoriously fond of peace, feel that the Fighting Marine is providing it. They ask the President to let him remain.

The Republican organization in Philadelphia doesn't care so much for Butler. It has sought to have him withdrawn ever since it found that political influence meant nothing in his life. It has been happy in the expectation that President Coolidge would refuse to extend the General's leave beyond the first of January. It is prepared to give him a grand send-off if he is ordered out to San Diego, Cal., to boss 400 marines, leaving the city machine to re-absorb Philadelphia's eight or ten thousand policemen.

But General Butler and Governor Pinchot, between them, have crossed up this pleasant prospect. Butler has said he is willing to remain if the people really want him. The people have declared they do and have made their wobbly mayor and their wobbly United States Senator, George Wharton Pepper, subscribe to their sentiments. Governor Pinchot has voluntarily carried the word to Washington that the orderly citizens of all Pennsylvania prefer to have their principal city honestly policed.

There seems nothing for Coolidge to do but to let Butler stay.

He doesn't wish to do it. It may mean the election of Pinchot to the United States Senate next year. Controlling the police, the city organization has always done what it pleased in other years. Without the police participating, any candidate may win. Political observers say Pinchot can win against Pepper or Vare or whoever the organization candidate may be, if there is a fair count in Philadelphia. If Butler stays this will be the case.

It's a hard choice for President Coolidge.

THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

A Sermon for Today

By Rev. John R. Gunn

Text: "Thou art all fair, my love; thou hast dove's eyes within thy locks; there is no spot in thee; thou hast ravished my heart."—Song of Solomon 4:1, 7, 9.

THE text represents a husband making love to his wife. In a succeeding verse he tells her that she is like a garden full of fragrant and fruitful plants, and she responds by saying "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."

This sermon was suggested to my mind by a little extract I recently read from the biography of Thomas Carlyle, the great historian. Carlyle was devoted to his wife, but through the many years of their married life he was so absorbed in his work that he neglected to show her any of those little affectionate attentions which mean so much to a woman's heart. After she was dead he wrote "With his features dimmed with unavailing sorrow, he would often say to his friends, 'Oh, if I could but see her five minutes, to assure her that I had really cared for her.' But she never knew it."

Mrs. Carlyle kept a diary in which she relates one instance when he became a little romantic and bought her "a very nice smelling bottle."

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RIGHT HERE IN INDIANA

By GAYLORD NELSON

PANNING THE ADMINISTRATION

Richmond to Terre Haute. Hardly any two of the larger Hoosier cities are yet linked together with pavement.

One can't drive from Indianapolis to South Bend, from South Bend to Ft. Wayne, from Evansville to Indianapolis or Terre Haute, without dropping off the pavement into rutty gravel and profanity.

In fact they enthusiastically panned the Shanty administration, from the modern Mikado himself down to the street cleaning department.

That's a favorite pastime with some councilmen. They count that day lost on which they don't take their battleaxes and hack the cut-offs some municipal board or department.

Not long ago they charged the board of works with all the old time-tried sins and a lot of new wickedness. For a week they fumigated. They swore they would investigate, expose and extirpate that body instantly.

Members of the board almost felt their belts and scalps being jerked from them. Then the councilmen mislaid their dictionaries or ran out of adjectives and the advertised obliteration of the board of works was indefinitely postponed. The investigation died before it was born.

No one claims the present city administration is altogether pure and holy. Some of the boards and departments wear their tarnished halos askew.

But if the Indianapolis city government is as inept and incompetent as anti-administration councilmen claim why don't they do something about it? They are part of the municipal governmental machinery. The hurling of invectives at council meetings is entertaining but it doesn't serve the public interest. A sharp incentive never righted a blunt wrong.

Such a measure, says the resolution will "aim to elevate the profession and give it standards not now possessed."

Surely why not State licenses for librarians? That seems to be the trend of the times with all professions, vocations and trades. In the last Indiana General Assembly there were bills providing examining boards and State license systems for barbers, cosmetologists, chiropractors, pediatrists and music teachers.

A man can't pull a tooth, practice medicine, or embalm a corpse without a license. Probably for the safety, health and happiness of the general public it is as important that librarians should be required to exhibit similar evidence of their professional qualifications. At least, librarians think so.

Of course, it would be an awful blunder if an incompetent librarian handed out to an adolescent youth "Sapho" or "Moll Flanders" instead of "Pilgrim's Progress" or "Molly Make-Believe." But the country and State will survive such shocks after a fashion.

State supervision and license requirements in professions that affect the lives and health of the people are justified. But when extended haphazardly to other vocations the system merely multiplies State boards without any corresponding service to the public.

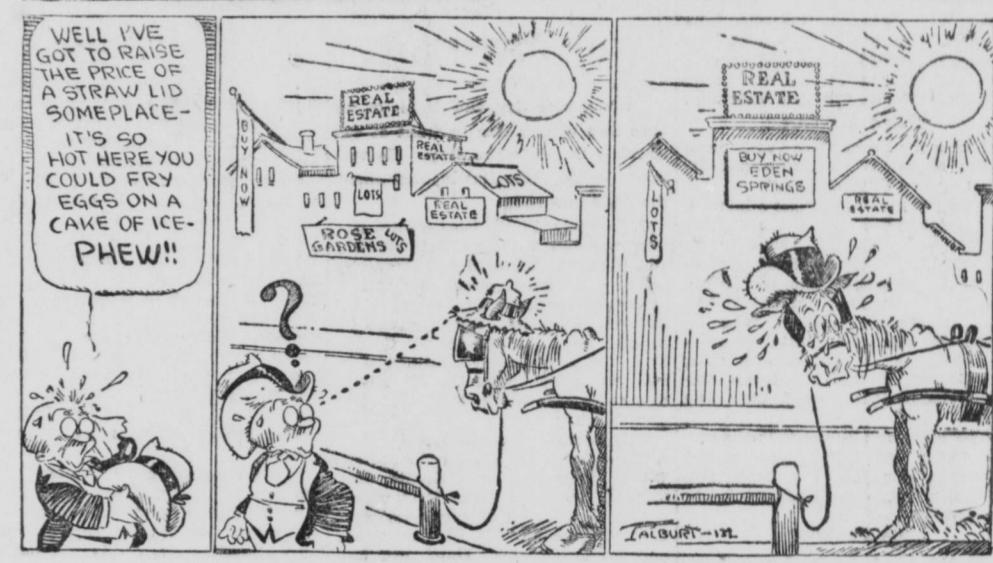
STATE LICENSES FOR LIBRARIANS

LIBRARIANS from Ohio, Michigan and Indiana, in convention at Ft. Wayne Wednesday, adopted a resolution asking the next session of the State Legislature to establish a State board for examining, certifying and licensing public librarians.

Such a measure, says the resolution, will "aim to elevate the profession and give it standards not now possessed."

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THE SPUDZ FAMILY—By TALBURST



Ask The Times

You can get an answer to any question of fact or information by writing to The Indianapolis Times Washington Bureau, 1200 16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Include a cent in postage for reply. Medical, legal and other professional questions cannot be answered. All letters are confidential.—Editor.

Tom Sims Says

You don't begin to enjoy an auto until after it has had a few fenders bent and paint scratched.

Men are not polite. One will take a girl out and kiss her when she would lots rather have an ice cream soda.

Things could be worse. Some day they may be wanting permanent waves put in their toothbrushes.

Sometimes a man doesn't know which side his bread is buttered on because there is none on either side.

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We Say it With Values!

STATE ROAD WORK

THE Indiana highway commission has paved 265 miles of Hoosier roads during the past year, according to John D. Williams, director. It is expected that approximately equal mileage will be paved next year.

Two hundred and sixty-five miles is a lot of pavement to lay in one year. It would make a paved highway extending clear across the State from the Ohio River to Lake Michigan, or two roads completely across the State east and west. But it does neither.

In spite of the millions of dollars spent and the hundreds of miles of paving constructed by the highway commission there is

one paved road across the State—the National road from