

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.

A Mistake?

"On every one of these questions, the vote of Senator Watson has been wrong."

That was the way the mayor of Kokomo, selected by the magnificent machine created in behalf of the Senator, introduced him for his one and only speech.

It was explained that the mayor was excited and confused and that he really meant to say that the Senator had always voted right.

It is a case for the psychologist as well as the politicians.

Here is the mayor of a sizable city, performing a graceful service for the organization with which he is in sympathy.

He has, in all probability, been impressed with the great power of the Watson machine and told that his own political future depends upon his "going along with Jim."

Certainly many other politicians in this State have been told the same thing and are reluctantly giving support to Watson much against their own inclination and because the impression has been fostered that Watson is unbeatable and that to oppose him means a blasting dart of lightning from this vengeful Jove of Indiana politics.

There have been many, and it is fair to presume that the mayor of Kokomo has been among the number, who have been told that opposition to Watson means the deathknell to any future ambitions.

Certain it is that the henchmen of Watson used every power of persuasion and force to prevent any opposing candidate challenging his renomination.

They did this, most patently, for the purpose of dodging a defense of his record of thirty years and of forcing people to forget the acts which have for years been questioned.

They wanted the kindly cloak of silence to spread over those activities disclosed by the Mulligan inquiry and which have been followed by this liberal use of the political stiletto against men in his own party.

They wanted no fight from the supporters of those who have seen his friends not only Luke-warm but hostile to other men in his party who could challenge his complete control of his party.

It would be interesting to know exactly why the mayor of Kokomo blurted out what very many men and women of this State believe to be true.

Did he draw from his subconscious mind the memory of twenty-five years of hostile criticism by the Indianapolis News concerning the same Watson it now praises so lavishly?

Did he automatically say what he had read for a quarter of a century and which had so soaked into his consciousness that not even the high honor of introducing the champion could blot it out?

Was it really a mistake and, if it were, was it one of fact or of political expediency?

The very fact that one of his close supporters could make such a mistake in such an hour may be one reason why the Watson strategy calls for no more speeches in this State.

There is a danger always that other men may forget their quick conversion and actually tell the truth.

Checking Crime

Seventy per cent of the women in Canada voted against a continuation of prohibition after a two years' trial.

This is the testimony of one of the leaders of thought in that country. It is the voice of experience and a very relevant fact for those who are disturbed as to some of the conditions in this country.

"They wanted to save their families," is his explanation which goes into details as to the prevalence of crime during the brief period of prohibition in western Canada.

He asserts that when the bootlegger was replaced by government distribution of alcohol, the crime record was immediately reduced.

The big problem of this country today is the checking of crime which has become so prevalent.

Every penitentiary has the largest prison population in its history.

There are more criminals loose on bond awaiting trial than ever before.

The cost of crime in money has multiplied prodigiously in the past six years.

The very opposite effect than what was confidently predicted by friends of prohibition, and there are many who are now opposed to the present system who had welcomed it hopefully, has resulted.

Those who may attempt to explain the increase of crime to a reflex of war conditions should look at the situation in Great Britain, where any war reaction was in the opposite direction.

That country has closed twenty-five of its jails during this period. The prison population has steadily decreased during the past six years.

Had that result been obtained in this country, advocates of Volsteadism would certainly have claimed it as its direct sequence.

Yet Great Britain gets what this country hoped for by an entirely different route and a directly opposite psychology.

It permits the largest degree of personal liberty under the law, and then enforces what laws it has.

It does not attempt to supplant conscience and character by statutes. It limits its crimes to those acts which are corollaries of the Ten Commandments.

There is something at least suggestive in the fact that this country is building more jails and that country is turning its prisons to other purposes than that of punishment.

Possibly the solution lies in the fact that it is not destroying its respect for law through its failure of courts.

Possibly the people trust its government because it is not faced by constant evidence of corruption. Certainly the testimony of this Canadian official, who shows how the women of that country, no different from our own women, are thinking is important.

The women of that country and of this are quick to detect any influence which strikes at their homes.

They were responsible for the abolition of that altogether evil thing, the saloon.

They drove the temptations from their own neighborhoods through the weapon of local option.

They can be counted upon to fight against any condition which takes their boys and destroys their

THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

RIGHT HERE IN INDIANA By GAYLORD NELSON

ANOTHER THORN FOR MOONSHINERS

Prohibition enforcement officials in the Thirteenth District, which includes Indiana, propose to restrain an old 1857 revenue law, which provides forfeiture of both real estate and personal property involved in hooch making, to stick another thorn into the present moonshine industry.

The long-forgotten law was successfully used to stamp out illicit distilling in the reconstruction period, following the Civil War, it is said. Perhaps it will be just as effective today. Certainly it has teeth that ought to inflict painful lacerations on the proprietors and nurses of wildcat stills.

Under this statute if a still is found purring contentedly in your cellar, the Government can not only confiscate the apparatus, mash, etc., but can also take your house and lot, mortgages and all.

That prospect possibly would deter property owners from embarking in the moonshine business. And it would cause landlords to take a deep, personal interest in activities of their tenants. Whether it will dry up liquor sources remains to be proved.

It is probable, however, that the resurrection of an old law with severer penalties or the adoption of a new law with more drastic penalties would greatly change the status of prohibition enforcement. Public opinion, not inadequate penalties, now makes moonshining easy and lucrative. Before any penalty can be inflicted you must first catch your moonshiner.

And at present there are a lot of people, personal libertines and plain thirsts, who don't care whether he is caught or not.

A CHAMPION JAIL BREAKER

Ralph Lee, Indiana's champion jail breaker, was one of the seventeen convicts who escaped from the Tennessee State prison the other day by a spectacular coup, it is reported. He was one of the ringleaders in planning and executing the getaway.

Breaking jail is one of the best things this young desperado does. Bars do not make a prison for him—just a resting place between escapes. In a criminal career of fourteen years he has a dozen escapes from penal institutions on his record.

Twice last spring he pried self out of jail at Franklin, Ind., where he was being held pending trial for murder of an Indianapolis grocer. The first attempt was only a dress rehearsal, he was captured in a couple of days. The second performance was successful, a clean getaway.

Before that he had effected successful escapes from Indiana penal institutions and Ohio and Arizona State penitentiaries. After the Franklin episodes he was arrested in Knoxville, Tenn., on a highway robbery charge. He escaped from the Knoxville jail, but was recaptured.

Compared with his record the exploits of such romantic super-outlaws as Chapman, Dutch Anderson and Marty Durkin seem tame.

But despite his possession of the championship belt and his undoubted talents as an escaper, the Hoosier jail breaker is not pictured as a sort of Robin Hood. No columns of subtext are written about him. His name isn't associated with romantic, glamorous legends that make him a popular hero of sorts.

He is just a plain desperado, un-honored and unsung.

If he wants to be famous and attract sympathy he should spend his time behind the bars reading the five-foot shelf of books, thumbing a book of synonyms, dabbling in poetry, and affecting high-brow culture. That's the distinction between a super-criminal and a thief.

To sic malaria germs on paresis seems to belong to that same ancient school of therapeutics. But the scientists know what they are doing. Bug eat bug is the law of nature. And much of the medical progress in late years is due to the efforts of medical investigators to find good bugs, that they can control, to eat the patient died from the hole in his skull.

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