

# The Indianapolis Times

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Member of the Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance • • • Client of the United Press and the NEA Service

• • • Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations.  
Published daily except Sunday by Indianapolis Times Publishing Co., 214-220 W. Maryland St., Indianapolis  
Subscription Rates: Indianapolis—Ten Cents a Week. Elsewhere—Twelve Cents a Week • • •  
PHONE—MA 3500.

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## A CHARACTER WITNESS

When a man is on trial, he calls in his friends as character witnesses, if he finds that he needs them.

Quite naturally the close associates of any man know the most about him.

In the present campaign for renomination the best friend of Senator James Watson is the Indianapolis News. It is his character witness. It is, perhaps, something else, too.

That newspaper is urging the voters of the Republican party to again nominate Watson, and is pleading that he is a real statesman, a great leader, an invaluable public servant.

But there are those who remember that in the not distant past, that same newspaper had an entirely different idea of the qualifications and the abilities of Watson.

For nearly a quarter of a century, it has been aluding very frequently to phases of his public life which were anything but commendable, to talents that have nothing at all to do with leadership or statesmanship.

It is not too much to say that during that twenty-five years of constant revelation of the weaknesses of Watson, the Indianapolis News did much to create that almost universal distrust of him which is expressed in public meetings and in private conversations in every part of the State.

When he is defeated for the nomination in May, if he is defeated, it will be because the people of the State know him as a politician who has never hesitated to sacrifice the public good for his own political expedients.

The News found Watson a foe of prohibition in July of 1924, when in an editorial concerning the removal of Bert Morgan as prohibition director, it declared that it was a victory "not for prohibition but for politics." In other words, the dry forces were told that Senator Watson had imperiled their cause to satisfy his own purpose.

Here was the opinion of the News at that time of Watson:

"In dropping Bert Morgan, who was prohibition enforcement officer for Indiana, the main idea seems to be to please Senator Watson. The Senator has been after Morgan's scalp for a long time and now he has it. It was a great victory—not for prohibition, but for politics. Indiana has just been picked out as a conspicuous example of one State where something of an effort was being made to enforce the law. In return for this the man responsible for it is told to resign, and not one word of praise is given to him."

Perhaps the News was joking—and perhaps not—when it followed with the comment that "Some of Jim Watson's valiant friends must have been caught in one of Morgan's raids."

No suggestion of statesmanship here. Merely the picture of a Senator using his influence to avenge the prosecution of bootlegging friends.

If there be any doubt as to what the Indianapolis News then thought of Watson and his ideal of public office, here is another editorial taken from its issue of July 17, 1924:

"According to the national commissioner of prohibition, Roy A. Haynes, no charges have ever been filed against Bert A. Morgan, prohibition agent for Indiana, who is regarded as an efficient officer. Nevertheless, Morgan must go. Whether he has or has not administered his office properly does not appear to be considered. With the politicians the question is whether Morgan has the 'right' attitude politically. The man who is talked of as Morgan's successor is said to be qualified, but primarily he is regarded as a Watson man. This alone would appear to be sufficient qualification in the minds of the Watson politicians. He is also said to be a friend of State Chairman Walb, who apparently regards an interest in patronage as an important part of his job. Perhaps it is, but there would appear to be enough to do this year in managing the campaign."

"Of course, appointments to State and Federal positions should be considered on the basis of merit. Morgan, according to reports, is to be put out of the way in Indiana in the guise of a promotion that will keep him traveling. Next the politicians presumably will attempt to pick the right (Watson) kind of district attorney to succeed Elliott and the right (Watson) kind of judge to succeed Anderson."

Well, Judge Anderson has gone. In the northern part of the State the Federal judge would feel insulted were any one to suggest that he is not using all his influence to renominate Watson.

This is the testimony of the chief character witness for Watson.

It is the evidence given when there was no reason to taint it with suppression or adulterate it with imagination.

Has Watson changed his entire character and viewpoint since 1924? Has he suddenly ceased to be the master politician and become the super statesman in the past two years?

If not, perhaps the charge being made day after day by Claris Adams that Watson and his new friend propose to create a political hierarchy in this State which will dominate its officials and distribute its offices should be considered.

## WELL, WHY NOT?

Now comes a very unusual suggestion and, because it is unusual, one which will probably not be adopted.

A lawyer, studying the defects of our legal system, has the temerity to suggest that there be added to the constitution of every State a proviso that every law be automatically repealed at the end of twenty-five years.

Here is at least a practical way to keep the law books from being cluttered with statutes which are made obsolete by changed conditions of life.

The laws of Indiana contain a number of provisions which belong to the museum or the joke columns.

Every city has ordinances that would raise a laugh were they to be brought to public attention, and yet they stand as laws, dug up on occasion by some vindictive person to furnish an excuse for exercising his spite.

Every condition of living has changed in the last twenty-five years.

In the old days, there were laws and ordinances controlling and regulating hitching posts in the center of cities and the manner in which horses could be driven along city streets.

Today attention is directed to the automobile

and, within twenty-five years, in all probability, the people will be more concerned with the airplane than with the auto.

The old provision that the poll tax could be paid by a day's work on the public roads was a good law when it was passed. Today roads are built by machinery.

If the habits and customs have changed, the viewpoint of the people on many questions has changed quite as radically and completely.

Occasionally the old blue laws are evoked in communities under some special stress. Most of them would be refused a hearing before any State Legislature if it were proposed to enact them as new laws.

If we are to keep pace with the spirit of the times and make laws fit the actual thought, purposes and enlightened conscience of a new day, it is more than foolish to have obsolete laws remain as a drag upon progress.

There seems to be more than sense in the suggestion that all laws lose their effect after a term of years. The laws which fit conditions can be passed again. The dead will be permitted to bury its dead under such a system.

## THE PRESIDENT AND THE FARMER

President Coolidge at Chicago last December suggested that the American farmer shouldn't ask the Government to help him out of his distress. He should lift himself up by his own bootstraps, the President, in effect, intimated.

The President got a lot of criticism for that speech.

But it may be the criticism wasn't entirely justified. For the President has been demonstrating ever since December that it is quite possible to lift oneself by one's bootstraps. He has been doing it. He has been lifting himself out of the hole that speech put him in.

Conditions haven't changed. Economic law hasn't changed. But Coolidge has. He has lifted himself several pegs higher in the estimation of the farmers. It is a long step from that speech to the present farmer relief bill, drawn by his Secretary of Agriculture and having the President's support. It is a still longer step from the speech the President made at the opening of the present Congress, in which he said:

"They (the farmer) do not wish to have meddling on the part of the Government or to be placed under the inevitable restrictions involved in any system of direct or indirect price-fixing, which would permit the Government to operate in the agricultural markets."

Just how far the President has lifted himself from this position is made clear by a dispatch from The Times Washington bureau, on another page, analyzing the present status of farm relief legislation.

Blizzard in China. Bet they stuck their shirt tails in there.

The rising generation's great problem is the cost of gas.

Your luck could be worse. After a Tullus (La.) man dragged goods out of his burning store they were stolen.

## IS EUGENE V. DEBS A CITIZEN?

By Gilson Gardner

Federal authorities are plainly averse to a legal test of the question whether Eugene V. Debs has been deprived of his citizenship. They will, however, have to face it.

When Debs was released from Atlanta penitentiary, where he served thirty-two months for expressing his opinions about our going into the war, he was granted a commutation of sentence, not a pardon. A pardon would have restored rights of citizenship. He declined then to ask for a pardon and he declines now to make such request, taking the position that he never violated any law and, therefore, there is nothing to ask pardon for.

The matter is not important so far as the peace of mind or physical well-being of Mr. Debs is concerned. There is no intention to question Debs' right to return from Bermuda where, with Mrs. Debs, he has been seeking health.

Assistant Secretary of Labor W. W. Husband, in charge of immigration enforcement, says there never has been any question as to Debs' right to return from Bermuda. There is a presidential proclamation which supplements the so-called "quota act" which declares that residents of the United States may visit Canada, Mexico, Cuba and nearby island without passports, and authority wherever it goes.

Civilization is certainly hard on rivers—at least, in Indiana.

It is impossible, with intensive cultivation of land and crowding streams, to keep streams as clear and pure as they were originally.

But they should be sponged off, cleaned up, and unnecessary pollution prevented, to save as much as possible of their beauty for the enjoyment of future Hoosiers.

EDUCATION AND CRIME

Men who are well educated do not commit crimes, according to the Rev. L. C. Murr, chaplain of the State Reformatory at Pendleton.

In the seventeen years he has been connected with the institution only four college graduates have been confined there, he said not long ago in a public address.

And of approximately 1,600 men now in Pendleton only twenty-two are high school graduates. A third year of education is about the average for all the men.

Apparently, from the statistics, education pays. At least it seems to be a crime preventive.

Probably it is. However, yesterday a graduate of Kansas University, a star athlete, was arrested in New York charged with holding up a restaurant. And yesterday the bandit who staged the sensational Indiana Harbor mall robbery, in which he obtained \$37,000 in currency, was apprehended and confessed. He was a high school graduate, an interscholastic football star.

And yesterday Chicago police arrested a radio burglar, who in a short career had stolen radio equipment and jewelry, totaling several hundreds of thousands in value, from Chicago homes. He was a graduate of Wisconsin University, he said.

No doubt education is a crime deterrent. A well educated man is likely to feel the economic urge to steal. But if we were all college graduates, crimes would still be committed.

## RIGHT HERE IN INDIANA By GAYLORD NELSON

### A SMALLER HIGH SCHOOL

The Shortridge High School problem approaches solution. The majority faction of the board, it is said, views favorably the suggestion that the new school to accommodate 1,800 pupils, instead of 2,500 as originally planned, be erected on the Thirty-Fourth Street, and a system of junior high schools be started.

That seems to be an excellent solution of the dispute. Why didn't someone think of it sooner?

Educational authorities generally agree that more effective work is done in high schools with less than 2,500 pupils. So more and smaller high schools would improve our school system if not add such improvements to our city skyline.

W. M. Aiken, a prominent St. Louis educator, in a speech in Indianapolis some months ago, stated that the ideal high school should not have an enrollment exceeding 1,000.

How far Indianapolis high schools at present fall short of that ideal:

Arsenal Tech sprawls all over a township. It has an enrollment of 5,000 or more. It is not a high school. It is an educational city. Principal M. H. Stuart, has never seen his entire student gathered together at one time.

Manual Training is double the size that the learned Missouri declares is most efficient. As for the present Shortridge, it is a wreck.

In reducing the size of the new Shortridge to a school to accommodate 1,800 pupils and planning junior high schools, the board will be stepping right along with the trend of modern progressive school systems. And undoubtedly the decision will expedite erection of the new high school. And that is what plain citizens want.

STREAMS AND SEWAGE

Indiana Izaak Walton Leaguers are urging legislation to require all Hoosier cities to install sewage disposal plants and are actively engaged in a program to stop stream pollution.

Such a movement should have the support of conservation enthusiasts, nature lovers and plain citizens.

Fifty years ago Indiana was traversed by dozens of limpid, sparkling streams, gurgling joyfully between grassy banks. There are none such now. Most of them just crawl along under a burden of mud sewage, rusted in cans, industrial waste and a thick excretion of germs. Some of them emit an aroma that will peal the paint off a passing automobile and make the motorist's hair brittle.

The immortal Riley would be tongue-tied if asked to sing of his beloved Brandywine as it is today.

Some months ago residents along the St. Joseph River below South Bend complained that so much oil and waste had been dumped into that stream that it was inflammable.

"Just one more piece of cake—aw, please." How well a parent knows that every little tot can be put in just such words as those.

"Aw, I don't like my salad, 'cause it makes my tummy ache. Of course I still am hungry, but I'd rather eat more cake."

"Just one more piece of cake—aw, please." How well a parent knows that every little tot can be put in just such words as those.

The Senate and the House pages run for Congress every year—but never are elected.

Prof. Ofergosh Sakes has discovered what makes the giraffe's head so far away from its body. Its neck.

FABLES IN FACT

THE HUSBAND AND THE WIFE WERE DISCUSSING VILES PERIOD SHD COMMA OF COURSE COMMA WAS CONTEND IN THAT A WOMAN HAD TO BE IN STYLE OR BE IN BACK NUMBER PERIOD HUBBY LISTENED TO HER SIDE OF THE STORY TILL HE GOT TIRED OF IT COMMA AND THEN SAID COMMA QUOTATION MARK JUDGING FROM THE DRESSES YOUE BEEN WEARING LATELY COMMA FASHION AMOUNTS TO PRACTICALLY NOTHING QUOTATION MARK PERIOD FATHER WAS RIGHT PERIOD

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ON THE MOVE

Dr. Ralph W. Stockman, prominent New York preacher, in a recent Indianapolis address, deplores the nomadic tendency of Americans. He thinks we move around too much. "In New York city," he said, "people are moving an average of once every two years."

According to him, the nation would be better off if people stayed in one place long enough to develop "local loyalties."

We don't dispute his statistics.

Naturally New Yorkers must

## Many Beauties and a Circus Clown



Illinois furnishes eight of the young women shown in the pyramid, while Ontario supplies the ninth. They are members of the acme of aerial perfection.

"The Flying Wards," known as the greatest trapeze act in the world. Aside from the women members there are seven young men, the entire company being members of the Ward family.

The have been connected with the Sella-Photo circus for a number of seasons and will all be with the

## Questions and Answers

You can get an answer to any question you have by writing to The Indianapolis Times Washington Bureau, 1322 New York Ave., Washington, D. C. Your name will be used for reply. Medical, legal and marital advice cannot be given nor can extended research be done. Your questions will receive a personal reply. Unsigned requests cannot be answered. All letters are confidential.—Editor.