



## The Indianapolis Times

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"Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way."

### Utility Regulation

Killing the proposal before the legislature to place utility holding companies under state control merely postpones the question of whether the people are to control utilities or the utilities rule the people.

The assertion of utility representatives that there is no need of such a law and that the commission, if it wishes, can now obtain all the facts on which to base rates, is an indictment of the commission.

The truth stands out that the holding companies of many of the utilities are bleeding the people white for outrageous rakes-offs that are hidden, or at least not considered, in the fixing of rates.

If there is no need of a holding company law then there is a necessity for a new commission which will more closely watch the public interest.

If holding companies are essential to modern financing of utility expansion, then the people need either new weapons or new protectors against utility greed.

The public knows that rates or utility service are too high. They know that they are paying on uninvested dollars and for service never rendered.

If the utilities are so poorly managed as to require the high priced advice of holding company experts, then stockholders, not consumers, should pay the penalty for bad management.

The merchants of this city and the large users of electric power know that they are too heavily taxed since the merger and that the large burden comes at a time when prices of everything else, whether commodities or labor, is at a low level.

If it be true that the present commission has power to investigate all the unwarranted charges by these holding companies, then the present commission has utterly failed in its duty to the public.

There can be but one logical step. If holding companies escape regulation the people need new regulators. A measure abolishing the present board and naming a new one which would be responsible to the people, instead of fawning in fear before the political power of electricity, gas, water and transportation, should find favor and support from those who rebel against unfairness and worse.

### The American Civil Liberties Union

One of the sharpest sections of the Fish committee report on Communism relates to the American Civil Liberties Union. We may well investigate this as a sample of the accuracy and fairness of the report as a whole. The majority report thus describes the union:

"The American Civil Liberties Union is affiliated closely with the Communist movement in America, and fully 90 per cent of its efforts are in behalf of Communists who have come into conflict with the law. It claims to stand for free speech, free press and free assembly; but it is quite apparent that the main functions of the A. C. L. U. is to attempt to protect the Communists in their advocacy of force and violence to overthrow the government . . . ."

"Roger N. Baldwin, its guiding spirit, makes no attempt to hide his friendship for the Communists and their principles . . . ."

As all informed persons know, nothing would be more wide of the facts than to call Roger Baldwin a Communist or a man personally sympathetic with Communists. He is an extreme libertarian, who loathes all the regimentation and rigorous control of life and opinion which exists under Communism. He stands at the very opposite extreme of opinion from Foster and the Communists.

If the government would let Communists alone to enjoy their constitutional rights there would be no need for their frequent defense by the Civil Liberties Union or anybody else.

The Civil Liberties Union has defended the Ku Klux Klan in its rights to free speech and assembly. Does Mr. Fish allege that this makes Roger Baldwin a klansman?

### The Outlook for Liberalism

The outlook for liberalism in the next presidential election isn't so good. The infernal prohibition issue not only cuts through both old parties, but through both progressives and reactionaries.

Some men who are progressive along general lines are reactionary and decidedly illiberal on prohibition. Take two of the highest class public servants and progressive statesmen in the senate—Senators Norris and Walsh of Montana—and they are reactionary on prohibition and its violation of the Bill of Rights.

Senator Norris is a Republican, yet he is closer to the Bill of Rights and Jeffersonian democracy than such professed Democrats as Robison, Harrison, Caraway and practically all the southern Democrats, who, as slaves of the Anti-Saloon League and the preacher political lobbyists, have thrown Jeffersonian democracy into the garbage can. That is, on everything but prohibition.

Yef Norris, the prohibitionist, was so devoted to other principles of democracy that he supported Al Smith in 1928.

One trouble with the Democratic party is the solid and bone-dry south. If Democrats should control the next house, the foolish seniority rule would put reactionary, prohibition, non-Jeffersonian Democrats at the head of every important committee.

Probably the reactionaries in the Democratic party look with greedy eyes on Owen Young as the next presidential hope. That would mean a big campaign fund, but it wouldn't mean victory.

At this stage of the game even the party of Jefferson, Jackson, Cleveland and Wilson can't turn the country over to Wall Street and the power trust. Young is too close to both.

Of course we won't be any better off with Hoover,

## M. E. Tracy

SAYS:

It's Wonderful to Be a Creditor When Debtors Have Something With Which to Pay; When They Haven't

SACRAMENTO, Cal., Feb. 2.—Milk is being delivered to Sacramento homes at 4 cents a quart, while butter retails at 25 cents a pound. Fresh eggs can be had for 25 cents a dozen and, in many instances, fruit growers offer to let oranges, peaches, pears and lemons go for the picking.

The unusually low price of milk is largely due to a dairyman's war, but the prices of other farm commodities obviously have fallen in response to general conditions.

California's farm production was much greater this year than in 1929, but she will receive \$125,000,000 less for it.

As the department of agriculture points out, this loss somewhat is offset by increased purchasing power of the dollar.

Increased purchasing power of the dollar means that gold has gone up. It takes more fruit, grain, or labor to get an ounce of the precious metal this year than it has for many years.

### 'Mother Lode' Calls

THOUGH California has produced about one-sixth of the gold in existence, she has quite a bit left, and some of her old mines are being cleaned out and reopened.

Once again the "mother lode" calls to the gambling spirit of mankind, and this time it is backed by such an epidemic of financial fever andague as makes it doubly effective.

What the various nations owe each other, or their own people, heaven only knows. It has been estimated all the way from \$100,000,000 to nearly three times that amount.

Whatever they owe, they have only about \$9,000,000,000 in gold with which to pay it, half of which has been gobbled up by the United States and France.

### Overplayed Our Hand

FOR ten years, the nations have been trying to solve this problem by reverting to the primitive method of exchanging commodities.

Exchanging commodities has resulted in a definite advantage to low-wage nations, and high-wage nations now are trying to protect themselves from this unlooked-for debauch by throwing up a network of tariffs.

This network of tariffs is stopping the exchange, which means that most of the nations in debt not only will default, but cease to buy.

German economists professed to be puzzled at the renewed movement in this country for a revision of debt settlements. Are they dumb, or just trying to be funny?

We merely are acknowledging that we overplayed our hand, chiefly because we realize there isn't anything else to do.

### Dashed Hopes

IT'S wonderful to be a creditor as long as debtors have something with which to pay. When they haven't, it's about the worst misfortune that can happen to an individual, a community or a nation.

Of all the illusions that ever plagued and misled us poor mortals, the most pernicious is that which holds out the hope that we may get something when we know we can't.

It was such illusion that drove so many to mortgage their homes in a futile effort to protect margins on stocks last year, and it is this illusion that persuades some of our best statesmen and financiers to keep up a ledge which represents little of substantial value.

### Going Down

MANY allied leaders came out of the war assuming that Germany would foot the entire bill, which they optimistically computed at somewhere near \$200,000,000,000. Lloyd George, wishing to appear conservative, said they should be satisfied if the sum \$100,000,000,000.

After the first round of conference the allies found it necessary to whittle the amount down to \$200,000,000. And they have been whittling it down ever since, until they are ready to confess that they would regard it as a lucky break if they got one-third of that amount.

Nor is it fair that the rest of us who are respectable and law-abiding should be all tucked in at any such unearthly hour as 1 a. m.

After all, it is the function of the police to keep order, both day and night. There is no reason why a city might not have available shelter for the wakeful and still remain crimeless.

There is, as far as I know, nothing essentially sinful in remaining alert and abroad in the early hours.

This move to make us all pull down the shades and shutters before the shades of the evening comes to me a confession of weakness.

### A Place to Look

IN some benefit for police purposes is allowing late hours to a certain number of establishments.

It resorts exist which may attract the criminally minded, the officers of the law at least know somewhere to look for culprits when the peace is twisted out of joint.

To be sure, there would be fewer holdups and deeds of violence if no one were permitted on the streets after 11 p. m. There would be an even smaller number if any ordinance compelled each one of us to shut in our homes at 8 or 9.

But it seems to me unfair that the rest of us should be punished for the violations of a few. I do not believe that we should all be pressed down into a village schedule just because there are willful men with whom Mulrooney can not cope.

In the same way, many American leaders came out of the war assuming that the allies would pay us every cent they owed, interest included, arguing that such idea represented no hardship, or injustice, since they only would be handing us part of the money which Germany was to pay them.

The fact is that there was only about \$8,000,000,000 in gold with which to carry through the enormous transaction, and that we ourselves had reduced it to less than \$8,000,000 by tying up the remainder, seems never to have occurred to me.

### CANDLEMAS DAY

February 2

ON Feb. 2 Candlemas day is observed. In its ecclesiastical meaning, it is the feast of the purification of the Virgin Mary.

This festival is strictly kept by the Roman Catholic church, there being a procession with many lighted candles, hence the name "Candlemas."

This is equivalent to saying that all narcotic legislation should be repealed, that all forms of depravity should go untrammeled, so long as some people see fit to purchase it.

This cross-eyed philosophy would make legitimate every dope peddler, every agent of darkness in the land.

In other words, human progress has no right of self-defense.

WE read in the papers that Mrs. Einstein says the man who degrades art is a traitor to his kind.

The man who perverts the public taste, who serves fifth, is the lowest order of animal life and long ago should have been drummed off Manhattan Island.

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