



## The Indianapolis Times

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

### The Oxnam Incident

The celerity with which pastors of his own faith, alumni of De Pauw and citizens generally resented the attack upon Dr. G. Bromley Oxnam, the president of that university, is one of the inspiring incidents of local history.

That attitude suggests that it is no longer possible for professional patriots and agents of privileged interests to wave the red flag of sovietism to destroy those whose contribution to the times is an open mind and a courageous facing of facts.

It is because these professional patriots fear minds that are open and ready upon prejudice to further their private and professional aims that such men as Oxnam are dangerous to them.

If this government is ever destroyed it will not be through the teachings of the Oxnams, but through the acts of such men as those who resent him.

As a sequel to the attack, there might well be a concerted drive in two directions.

The first of these is to discover how far the utility barons of this state were responsible for supplanting forgery for legislation in the passing of a bill by the last legislature through which the shackles of privilege were tightened just a little more upon the people. Here was a real destruction of government, real treason.

The second might be a long-delayed report on just what happened in the building of state armories, an investigation of which was ordered by the legislature of more than two years ago. These were built in defiance of law. There was a huge profit. These topics are of much importance.

### More Commissions

Now that Hoover has created another commission, there probably will be a revival of the wise-cracking on that subject. Like most wise cracks, this over-worked one is funny because it is an exaggerated half-truth.

Not all the politicians combined can ruin the commission method of government administration. Government daily becomes more complicated. And the more complicated it grows, the more need there is for commissions of experts to handle technical problems which are beyond the province of the old-time political appointee.

No one now would think of scrapping an independent governmental agency like the interstate commerce commission. Even an agency so notoriously misused for partisan purposes by a succession of Presidents as the tariff commission has proved itself indispensable.

Perhaps the chief reason for current ridicule of the commission idea is the Wickersham organization. Certainly popular cynicism in that case partly is justified. The Wickersham report recommendations on prohibition were dishonest and contradicted the body of the report.

Nevertheless, the body of the report itself, the data gathered by the experts, and the individual reports of the commissioners, were on the whole remarkably well done.

The point is, of course, that any type of governmental machinery can be misused. The Wickersham commission was not misused in the matter of prohibition. In a field in which national party politics is not involved so directly as in prohibition, for example the study of crime statistics, the Wickersham commission has done more in two years to put the government on the right track than the department of justice has done in two decades.

Public attention is focused again on the commission idea because on Monday Chairman Woods of the Hoover emergency committee for employment announced his resignation and the President announced that he had created a new commission on federal personnel administration.

Many persons are saying that the emergency committee for employment failed. It did not. Hoover failed to permit it to function fully. But the committee, both in the data it collected and the ideas it provided, did a good job.

That the administration suppressed much of its data and rejected many of its expert ideas, was not the fault of the committee nor the commission method.

So with the new commission on federal personnel administration, no one can deny the need for such a commission, after the long failure of existing agencies and departments to solve the personnel problem. But whether Hoover will get the best out of this particular commission remains to be seen.

### Porto Rico Wants to Know

When the Caribbean pot stops boiling in other quarters and the administration has time to think of something besides Nicaragua, Honduras, Haiti and Cuba, it should remember that Porto Rico has a grievance.

That grievance just has been stated in San Juan by Dr. Jose Padin, commissioner of education, a man of high esteem on the island and in this country.

Some Porto Ricans have been demanding independence. During the Coolidge administration the island legislature sent, through Lindbergh, to Washington its famous give-us-liberty-or-give-us-death memorial.

Probably a majority of Porto Ricans would be satisfied with a dominion or free state status. Others want only the right to elect their own governor. Few are satisfied with the status quo.

But Dr. Padin was voicing the virtually unanimous demand when he asked that a decision be made one way or the other. Porto Rico can not begin to solve its problems—whether political, economic or educational—until it knows the kind of a country it is going to be in the future, the kind of government it is going to have.

"For what are we preparing Porto Rico?" Dr. Padin asked. "Inasmuch as congress has the right and the power to say the last word, I submit that it should be at the earliest opportunity to make a declaration of the ultimate political status of the island and on the requirements that the people of Porto Rico must fulfill before they are accorded recognition."

"Having defined the objective, congress should give Porto Rico ample freedom of action to work out a program and reach the goal by its own effort."

That is a fair demand.

The Oxnam Incident

### The Bland-MacIntosh Cases

The legal intercession of Quakers and of Episcopalian bishops in behalf of Miss Marie Bland and Professor Douglas MacIntosh, whose pacifist cases are before the United States supreme court, is another evidence of liberal ferment within the churches.

These cases are tests, marking how far we have progressed since war days. Miss Bland, an Episcopalian war nurse, was refused naturalization because she declined to swear to bear arms, on the ground that war "is not according to the ethics of Christ."

Professor MacIntosh, Baptist teacher of theology at Yale, is not an absolute pacifist. In reply to the question as to whether he would take up arms in defense of America, he replied candidly that first he would "want to be free to judge the necessity."

Both of the Canadians are intelligent, high-minded Christians. The very fact that they applied the yardsticks of their reason and conscience to a question usually perfunctorily asked and answered should in itself recommend them as American citizens.

As MacIntosh's counsel, John W. Davis, said: "We want more people in this country who will stand out against the crowd."

The government had to go out of its way in challenging these two. Miss Bland could not, if she wanted to, bear arms. MacIntosh could be exempted under the draft act as a religious conscientious objector.

So it is an issue of free thought, a right guaranteed by the Constitution.

"If there is any principle of the Constitution that more imperatively calls for attachment than any other it is the principle of free thought," wrote Justice Holmes in the minority Schwimmer opinion. "Not free thought for those who agree with us, but freedom for the thought we hate."

"I think that we should adhere to that principle with regard to admission into, as well as life within, this country."

### City and Country

The farm board announces it will stop attempting to peg the price of wheat—which everybody knew must end some time—and it crashes on to the front page and stays there a day or two. Politicians get excited.

The census bureau announces that 6,050,000 persons are wholly without work—which independent economists had discovered earlier—and it gets on the front page, but stays there a shorter time. Politicians get excited, but not so much so.

Maybe that is because most of our political leaders come from agricultural states.

But, whatever the reason, it has been evident for a long time that when the farmer is in distress, it is time for the federal government to do something. But when the unemployed city dweller is in distress, it's time for him to do something for himself, or get his former, or prospective, employers or his neighbors to help him.

We spend \$800,000,000 to "aid" farmers and appropriate \$500,000,000 to set up the new United States employment stabilization board and broaden the work of the United States employment service.

But we could spend twice as much as a billion dollars to give relief to farmers and accomplish almost nothing if the city folk stayed jobless and had no money to buy what the farmer raises.

If cops are the runn runners they're suspected of being, how about making that old expression read: "All policemen have big fleets?"

A book on contract bridge sold 64,000 copies the first three months. They say it got a big "play."

The boy who flunked penmanship at school now does a neat turn at skywriting.

"I'll make the grade," said the professor boastfully as he gave the student his mark.

Most movie comics imagine they abound in histrionic ability merely because they feel funny.

A wealthy Pennsylvanian has given \$1,000,000 to help promote good will between this country and Germany. In the interest of Hans across the sea.

Dorothy calls necking "a petty" offense.

## REASON BY FREDERICK LANDIS

MISS RUTH NICHOLS of Rye, N. Y., is a very unusual young woman, for already she is a flier apart from all others of her sex.

She holds the world's speed and altitude records for women.

But this is not enough and she now plans to walk up to Fate and snap her manicured fingers under his very nose by flying from Newfoundland to Paris—and all alone, a la Lindbergh.

We hate to see her do it, for such a trip is utterly useless, except for the tickertape which it may bring to her lap when she rides up Broadway, should she succeed in making the audacious hop.

ALL there is to learn of a practical nature from such a flight has been learned from the experiments of those who have negotiated the great leap. In fact ocean flying has become about as passe as channel swimming.

And it would be a shame to lose a girl like Ruth.

If she simply must have adventure, let her toss her bonnet into the political arena and go after the various forms of repulsive animal life that now cutters up New York politics.

There she could find thrills aplenty.

One is not surprised to hear Mr. Wickersham say that lawless public officers are largely to blame for the terrible state of law enforcement and the cynical regard for constitutional authority which covers the the.

If you will just take an automobile ride out of any county seat with one who is familiar with the place he will point out to you scores of places, known of all men to be the establishments of bootleggers.

And why do they go untouched?

Go ask the officers, supposed to handle such things.

But this isn't the worst of it by a long shot, for clear up to the top of the criminal calendar there's the same rotten condition, murder having become a mere social indiscretion in the United States, the guilty having bouquets thrown at them all along the line by everybody from the lowly juror to the august supreme judge.

Is it not a healthy sign, ladies and gentlemen. Older nations than ours have gone to the bone yard because they did not do the work they were created to do.

We have lost our faith in courts and we have almost lost our capacity for righteous indignation.

Beyond that lies the end.

## THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

### M. E. Tracy SAYS:

*The Country Is Getting Tired of the Way Racketeers Have Abused Their Privileges.*

NEW YORK, April 29.—This king of Siam, about whom we used to recite all the ribald poetry, is not such a queer or benighted chap.

He not only shows up well beside the allegedly civilized members of his craft, but has ideas regarding its obligations and responsibilities which some of them could follow with profit.

In explaining the plan to grant his people suffrage, he says: "We adapt, not adopt, from the west."

That is a happy thought, not only for kings, but reformers.

Nothing does so much to hold back progress as the notion we must upset the whole apple-cart every time a new toy, or a new theory appears.

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### No Crime to Talk

OHIO'S anti-red law has been declared unconstitutional. The judge who did it was not only an aviator in the World war, but was shot down behind the German lines.

Men who have been up against the real thing are not afraid of talk, which seems to have been the issue in this case.

Two federal agents, disguised as workmen, reported that a fellow mechanic had told them how he had left rivets out of certain beams and connections in the great airship being built at Akron, for the purpose of wrecking it.

He was arrested under the syndicalism law adopted by Ohio in 1919.

In dealing with the law unconstitutional, Judge Wanamaker says, in many words, that people have a right to talk and that mere talking doesn't constitute a crime.

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### England Is Game

CHANCELLOR SNOWDEN'S plan of balancing the budget of the British government is simple and direct. First, he proposes to levy a new land tax amounting to 2 cents on each \$5 valuation; second, to increase the gasoline tax from 8 cents to 12 cents a gallon; third, to withdraw \$100,000,000 now held in New York as an exchange reserve; and fourth, to advance the date of income tax collection so that \$50,000,000 will be added to this year's revenue.

Hard as times may be in this country, you don't have to look far to find that they are just as bad, if not worse, somewhere else.

Englishmen already pay higher taxes on land, incomes, inheritances, and gasoline than we do. The fact that the house of commons cheered Snowden's proposals ought to make some of us ashamed of the way we are whining.

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### Cermak Shows the Way

TAXATION brings to mind the inaugural address of Chicago's new mayor, Anton J. Cermak.

He says that that city's problem is to reduce taxes on the one hand, and crime on the other.

He already has demonstrated how the former can be accomplished by firing 3,000 city employees without any apparent injury to the public service.

It only remains for him to get rid of an equal number of gangsters.

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### Tough on Racketeers

SPeAKING of gangsters, "Killer" Fred Burke just has pleaded guilty to murder in Michigan and given a life sentence. Jim (Legs) Diamond has been shot again; Governor Roosevelt of New York has ordered the attorney-general to take charge of affairs in Greene county, where the Diamond gang has been making life miserable for the inhabitants, and where a vigilante committee is being organized to help him out.

If the racketeers keep on, they will force similar harsh action in other places. They have been having an easy time, with bootlegging as an excuse, but the country is getting tired of the way they have been abusing the privilege.

Undoubtedly it is not practical to say that any stowaway of sufficient ingenuity should be admitted regardless of the law. Nevertheless, it is distinctly complimentary when anybody risks suffocation or life and limb to gain entrance to this land.

The fervency of the wish would seem to take some of these volunteers quite a distance on the road to Americanization.

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### If They Queried?

BUT putting the whole matter on a broader basis, I think that we have become a little snobbish in our attitude toward the immigrant. We act as if the risks involved were wholly ours.

I don't know just what this particular alien had done to render himself undesirable. Nor am I in a position to state that the young man in the packing case necessarily is good enough for our purposes.

However, I can conceive of a reverse situation. It may well be in certain cases that some man or woman from a far land has made terrific sacrifices to come here in search of something which we do not possess in full purity.

It is well to remember that the national achievements to which we point with pride are by no means the sole and exclusive creation of those born within our borders.

The instruments of government by which we live were from the very beginning enormously affected by foreign thought.

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### People's Voice

Editor Times—May I ask a question? I hear so many people say charity. Please tell me where charity comes in. A man has to work for what he gets, and, not only that, but he must pay three or four prices for everything. He will work three days for a supposed-to-be \$5 basket of groceries. He must pay anywhere from 5 to 20 cents more than the regular prices.

For example, potatoes in such a basket are 40 cents a peck, when they are 19 cents at any store. Why can't the trustees give that man the full amount in cash and let him buy his groceries? No man wants charity. He wants work. Give the men of Indianapolis a ROOTER.