



The Indianapolis Times

(A SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPER)
Owned and published daily (except Sunday) by The Indianapolis Times Publishing Co.
214-220 West Maryland Street, Indianapolis, Ind. Price in Marion County, 2
cents a copy; elsewhere, 3 cents; by carrier, 12 cents a week.

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

Cutting Expenses

Demand on the part of the Chamber of Commerce for a reduction of taxes by pruning expenses of government locally calls attention to one phase of the present depression that may be overlooked.

It may be necessary to cut down the number of employes, and if there are those whose services are unneeded, this may not be a hardship.

But the fixed charges for interest will remain the same, and no administration of either county or city can do anything about it.

Every unit of government, except the state, has in times past borrowed money on bonds for public improvements. The interest charges on these debts form an important part of the tax levy.

Most of these bonds were issued for high-priced commodities and high-priced labor. It is now necessary to pay the interest in low-priced commodities and in low-priced labor.

Money, being a medium of exchange, fluctuates in its values and the tax-money must be produced by some form of labor. Those who are talking of low wages are overlooking this factor of the situation. The tax money comes from those who work and produce. If they are saddled with a high tax levy in dollars hard to get, it means a burden that may help to continue the depression.

Years ago General Coxey had an idea that there should be no interest on any public debts and had a plan for accomplishing this purpose. If that plan were in effect, the city of Chicago would not be in its present state of near-bankruptcy nor would other cities be worried about inability to collect taxes to run the government. Necessity may force consideration of his bill which has been before congress for nearly forty years.

At present the same business interests which demand economy should go to the fundamentals and discover whether there are not other factors than mere economy which should be considered.

One way of solving the tax and other problems is to keep up wages and see that every man has a job.

Cheap dollars instead of cheap men would help. A concerted drive all over the nation to increase wages and thereby increase the purchasing power of the public is probably the one way to solve the problems of prosperity.

More and more as a people the new slogan of the inalienable right of every man to have a job at a saving wage impresses itself as not only a matter of social justice, but of absolute necessity.

Red Cross and the Jobless

No organization holds a higher place in American esteem than the Red Cross, whose fifteenth anniversary was commemorated by President Hoover Thursday night. The long and honorable record of this agency of mercy speaks for itself.

But those who love the Red Cross most will injure it if they ignore the growing criticism of its refusal to aid in unemployment relief. Many families of the six million unemployed, who always have contributed to the Red Cross, can not understand why they are refused its succor now.

President Hoover, as head of the Red Cross, personally is responsible for this criticised policy. He and the Red Cross board, which is dominated by his appointees, refused the federal appropriation which the senate proposed for unemployment relief.

Hoover argued that private charity was adequate and that government aid would destroy the soul of the Red Cross. Experience has proved his error.

Official figures show that private charity has been inadequate, that 72 per cent of the unemployment relief last year was from state and municipal treasures, and that those funds are exhausted now in many places.

Also, the records show that the government in the past has helped the Red Cross without destroying it.

In the light of these facts, the President and the Red Cross, before next winter, should reconsider the policy which is beginning to undermine confidence in the present Red Cross management.

The people of this country, no less than the President, are anxious for the Red Cross to remain, as it has been and is, a chief glory and pride of the American democracy."

Doctor of Applesauce

If we hadn't said so many nice things about Will Rogers as an international statesman last month when he attacked American imperialism in the Caribbean, we would like to praise him now for re-earning an honorary college degree.

To the suggestion that he be made a doctor of humanity and letters, Will replied:

What are you trying to do, make a joke out of college degrees?

"I got too much respect for people that work and earn 'em to see 'em handed around to every notorious character."

If fewer business men accepted these honors for gifts made by them, Will could not say, as he does, that college degrees "are in bad enough repute as it is."

We can not agree with Will that the only degree he has earned is doctor of applesauce; but if colleges would establish a special degree for comedians, and a B. B. D. for big business men, colleges might be able to preserve academic degrees for academic achievement.

Justice for the Poor

A good will court was established by Judge Nathan Sweder in Brooklyn four years ago.

Sweder was convinced from long experience that the poor man and the ignorant man were at a great disadvantage in our courts. He believed that much expensive and often unfair litigation could be eliminated outside the courtroom if the parties involved

had been given opportunity to air their grievances and competent and sympathetic advice.

Therefore, he set up his informal court. This is made up of three volunteer laymen—one Catholic, one Protestant and one Jew. There is nothing mandatory and binding about the court's action, but hundreds of cases are being settled satisfactorily and without expense. As Frank G. Holmes says, in his recent description of the court:

"It is this human sympathy and lack of legal formality that is the most outstanding thing about the court. The timid, abused housewife who enters, nervous, flustered, often ashamed publicly to air her grievances, soon finds herself reassured. 'No more ideal situation for getting at the real truth as a basis for sound counsel could be devised.'

Hundreds of cases have been tried and hundreds of persons have been helped.

Why High Wages?

A statement containing three mighty important facts was issued this week by the metal trades department of the American Federation of Labor in its appeal for higher rather than lower wages. These were:

1. The American wage-earner is the great American consumer, since not more than 6 per cent of the nation's manufactured goods are exported.

2. Between 1923 and 1929 the total value of manufactured goods increased \$8,000,000,000.

3. Between 1923 and 1929, the total volume of wages increased less than \$500,000,000.

These three simple statements added together tell us a lot about cause and cure of the depression. They point to one remedy: The volume of wages must be high enough for American consumers to buy what American factories turn out.

That is not the entire solution, but it is a large part of it.

Official Crimes

The Wickersham commission, now winding up its two years' work, has at least one outstanding service to perform for the United States. This is to present a thorough and courageous report on the lawlessness of the law. Its experts long have been at work on this phase of law enforcement; the report is overdue.

Every town, city and state is concentrating its forces upon the job of catching and punishing the "bad" people. The bad things being done by the good people in the name of law—police brutality, third degree methods, raids without warrants, denial of legal rights to accused persons, especially aliens and radicals; trials by perjured witnesses, such as sent Mooney and Billings to prison, these and other matters—require official exposure.

The Wickersham commission faces no more crucial test than this.

The commuter who holds his seat in a crowded car by pretending to be absorbed in a newspaper is one who believes in the power of the press.

An 83-year-old man returned to a western university after an absence of sixty years. Probably he had his thesis finished at last.

What a pitcher probably hums as the heavy hitter takes the plate: "Mm, man, how'd you like to take a walk?"

The president of the American Bar Association is C. A. Boston of New York. A man about town, as it were.

Erich Remarque, noted author, blames German militarists for circulating the story that his name once was Kramer. He warns them to watch their Remarks.

Gandhi at last has been induced to appear in the talkies. And Hollywood already is talking about a revival of Indian pictures.

One of the smartest shades in the list of the season's fashionable colors is "ambulance blue." To be used, we suspect, only in case of emergency.

It is estimated that a murder is committed every forty minutes in the United States. At this rate our saxophone artists are doomed to extermination.

A New York woman suggests a "traffic dance" as a means of avoiding death and injury. The result is that it is likely to make a "hit" with the motorists.

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