



## The Indianapolis Times

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

### Well, Why Not?

Every citizen will be interested in the effort to bring here the national convention of the Republican party. This city is equipped to entertain such a gathering. It would offer an opportunity to exhibit to the nation the resources of Indiana. It would advertise the progressive rehabilitation of the Republican party in the state through a series of defeats at the polls. It would herald a growing opportunity for the followers of Lincoln and Roosevelt to regain control of the party itself.

True, the present indications are that the convention may be a ratification meeting and without dramatic interest. But even that picture may change before the convention. The show may be worthwhile.

Let it be hoped that similar invitation will be extended to the donkey that goes to the elephant. That convention has promise. It will probably be filled with fireworks and that most important phase of drama—suspense.

It is possible, of course, that both parties might accept invitations. They may desire to have an American atmosphere in which to operate. They may desire to tent upon contested territory. They would find that in Indiana.

### The Way of the World

Entrance of Clarence Darrow, noted defender of the underdog, into the case of D. C. Stephenson, will attract public interest and perhaps it may center attention upon the group of politicians who rose to power when this one-time czar ruled Indiana.

The people know part of that sordid story. They know that candidates for congress sold their patronage for favor. They know that governors obtained fancy prices for spavined horses and that mayors of cities took orders. They know that the laws of the state were rewritten by this dictator and that legislative committees were named at his suggestion.

They remember the sycophantic fawning of the great upon the man who is now under a life sentence. They know that through his influence men went to high places, even the United States senate.

They remember the sighs of relief from these same beneficiaries when Stephenson was lodged behind a cell and official power was used to prevent a confession of his political crimes and a revelation of his political triumphs and alliances.

There were whispers of promises of a pardon that never came, of influence that would be used for him but if used at all, was used against him.

It is written that those who live by the sword shall die by the sword and so it happened that those who used Stephenson and were used by Stephenson deserted him in his dark hours. Gone were the Coffins and the Robins. Gone were the puppets of mayors. Gone were the pliable congressmen. No wonder that Darrow came.

He was the outstanding foe of the Klan hate. He had stood rigidly for tolerance. But when you hear the yelping of an underdog, especially a deserted dog, somewhere in the offing is Darrow.

### How Miners Live in West Virginia

Years ago the soft coal miners in West Virginia were reasonably well organized. In the struggles of the last fifteen years against coal companies and deputy sheriffs at the beck and call of the employers, the union organization has been broken. The results on the lives of the workers are thus described by Tom Tippett, a highly capable and reliable student of labor conditions:

"The miners live in isolated company villages far up in the mountains. A small, unpainted shack on stilts, uncelled, with broken steps and leaky roof, is a common type of home. These houses are jammed like boxes next to each other, separated by narrow bare yards and untidy fences. Privies stand close to the houses and often above the out-door wells from which all water must be carried.

"The miners must trade at the company store where prices usually range from 20 to 66 per cent higher than in the outside towns. The wages of many run about \$2 and \$3 a day—and work is far from steady. On pay day many workers receive, literally, no money whatever, their payments for rent, food, doctor, explosives for mining, etc., having used up all their earnings and being subtracted from their pay. A very large proportion of the men are in debt to the company month after month. They hardly ever see real money, what they usually get being scrip, or company money, which must be discounted, perhaps one-fourth if they wish to buy outside the company domain.

"When the union was strong, the men worked only eight hours a day. Now they often are forced to stay in the mine for ten, eleven, twelve hours without extra pay. After work they go back to their little homes literally "coal-black" from head to foot with the dust.

"Since the men are in debt to the company, it is very difficult for them to leave. Boys inherit their fathers' debts. Some villages can be approached only up the railroad track owned by the company. The miners, their wives and children are practically locked up in these isolated, bleak, bare villages. Company guards are always on hand to keep the miners in the camps, and strangers out, and the miners remember how hundreds of their fellows have been tortured and shot down in the past by these private gunmen. But they are determined to fight nonetheless for better lives for themselves and their families."

A desperate effort is now being made to reorganize the West Virginia coal fields and regain for the workers some part of their former decent standards. Those who join the union are ruthlessly discharged by the coal companies and are compelled to live under conditions such as the following:

"There is the home of a 30-year-old striker, whom I will call Walter Robinson. He went inside. Some coals were burning in a grate, and around it huddled Mrs. Robinson and three small children. All of them were without shoes, all only half clothed. On the bed in the same room was a tiny baby, 3 months old. Still another child died this year. From where I stood I could easily see through the house whose walls were single planks separated by wide cracks. It was just as easy to see through the roof. Nothing that is called furniture was in the place nor any other thing commonly associated in our minds with the word home. All the Robinsons were hungry and have been underfed for months.

"Robinson is not a shiftless fellow. He gathered up his pay envelopes which he proudly has kept for a long period. Ten years ago, when there was a union here, he could earn \$70 or \$80 for two weeks' work. But that is all gone now. His home is a perfect mirror of his wages. Time was when he had furniture and clothes and food and a feeling of security with a strong organization back of him. The union was destroyed and with it his home and his self-respect. Now he lives on much lower standards than the mine mules.

"The Robinson home is typical of all the scrawled

families, and by and large is not far below the standards of the men at work in the mines. I have been in hundreds of such homes here."

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that we need to check on our claim to being civilized when men are forced below the level of brutes in order to realize a right which has been recognized as just by reputable economic opinion for a century. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" revealed no such abyss of human suffering among Negro slave cotton hands as emerges from Tom Tippett's reports of 1931 relative to white workers in the soft coal industry of West Virginia.

### "I Can Not Lie"

Recently the greatest living scientist, after a visit to California, wrote Governor Ralph B. Eshbach a letter to Mooney and Billings on the plea that he believed them "completely innocent."

"I myself am of the decided opinion," wrote Dr. Albert Einstein, "which I must express, for I can not lie, that a miscarriage of justice undoubtedly appears in the present case."

Contrast this honesty of a scientist with the sophistry of the Wickersham commission. This commission named a subcommittee to study "the lawlessness of the law" in the United States. Judge Kenyon, chairman of this subcommittee, named four men as experts to write a report. These men delved deeply.

One of their experts brought back from California the details of the nation's outstanding example of legal anarchy, the Mooney-Billings trials under which two innocent victims today are serving their fifteenth year in state prison. The scandal was described in a 600-page document and presented as part of the experts' report to the Wickersham commission.

Instead of rewarding the experts' diligence and honesty, Chairman Wickersham is said to have stormed in anger. No special case, he contended, should have been mentioned. The majority sided with him, although two of the experts, Carl Stern and Walter Pollak, came from New York to plead that their findings be turned over to the President as part of the report. As in the case of prohibition, expert opinion was shelved, politics won over science, opportunism overrode the truth.

The Mooney-Billings pardon cause probably will not suffer from this exhibition. But the reputation of President Hoover's commission has suffered again and immensely.

### The Farmer Is Hot

Harvesting wheat under a broiling sun is a pretty hot job at any time, and this year it's a hotter job than ever. Each time a farmer sells a bushel of wheat at his country elevator at 35 or 40 cents he is 10 or 15 cents out of pocket and his temperature mounts. Naturally the protest from the farmers is loud, and it promises to be long.

The decision of the federal farm board to continue limited selling from its wheat board to millers and foreign governments will add fuel. For, says the farmer, this grain competes with the new crop, depresses prices and unsettles the market. It would have been a simple thing, he argues, for the board to have locked up its grain. President Hoover, moved by pressure from the west, in effect suggested this, but the board complied only in part.

It is true the board told the farmers they should reduce their acreage, but recalling this will not pay mortgages at the bank. Kansas farmers, who are gathering 200,000,000 bushels of grain, and others did not take kindly to Chairman Legge's reduction admonitions in the first place, and the "we told you so" attitude now only fans their wrath.

The threat of political revolt in the west has become an old story. The much-heralded "farmer uprising" in 1928 fizzled, as did others before it.

Conditions since then have grown worse, however. Help was promised, but prices have gone steadily lower and lower. The farmers are just about at the end of their tether, if dispatches are to be credited, and are ready to do something drastic about it.

As in Populist days, it is likely the farmers will start raising less grain and more hell.

The London man who announces that he will push a perambulator around the world feels, apparently, that there is a crying need for thefeat.

Add similes: As busy as an absent-minded professor on his vacation.

## REASON BY FREDERICK LANDIS

THE Oklahoma deputy sheriff who shot those two Mexican students was acquitted at Ardmore, as was expected.

Possibly he thought the students were bandits, possibly he thought his life was in danger.

But he did not have on a uniform and all officers who seek to make arrests these days should have some specific designation to distinguish them from hold-up men.

There is not a motorist in his right mind who would stop, night or day, when commanded to do so by a man in plain clothes.

In the early days of motoring, all cars stopped to assist a brother on wheels when he was in distress, but now the driver who knows his onions and his bandits will not stop for anything but a washout or pick up anybody but a grandfather who has been duly certified.

Such problems need to be clarified, but that is impossible without giving every one interested a chance to be heard, or without paying some heed to majority opinions.

Nowhere else in the world is there a more

desperate effort is now being made to reorganize the West Virginia coal fields and regain for the workers some part of their former decent standards. Those who join the union are ruthlessly discharged by the coal companies and are compelled to live under conditions such as the following:

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## M. E. Tracy SAYS:

Parisian Patriotes Have Shown Us How Not to Solve a Big Problem in a Simple Way.

NEW YORK, July 2—A dramatic ten days, thanks to the weather, airplanes and France.

Eight hundred people have died from the heat in this country alone, while the world has shrunk by more than 50 per cent in the time required to go around it, and Parisian patriotes have shown us how not to solve a big problem in a simple way.

Win, lose or draw, France may make a mistake. Her emotions may be understandable. But her reasoning is not.

### Jailing Debtors Futile

It's all right to yell that a contractor's a contract, but what are you going to do when one of the parties to it goes broke?

We used to put poor debtors in jail on the theory that if we couldn't get the money we were entitled to such satisfaction as went with seeing them suffer, but even those whom they owed finally got wise to the senselessness of it.

Modern business not only gives the debtor every chance, but when his situation becomes hopeless, lets him go through bankruptcy and wipe the slate clean. Every one is better off, creditors included.

### Nations Can Go Broke

NATIONS are not much different from individuals when it comes to finance. They are just a little bigger.

Nations can be foolishly extravagant, get behind with their bills and go broke. They can make a big play and lose it all, or stand in their own light by crowding those who own them too hard.

In view of what has happened since 1914, there should be no need of pointing out that nations can't always get what they want when they want it.

### France Forgets Rescue

IF France is wise, she will profit by the failure of Kaiserism's arrogance, and not make the blunder of imitating it. Also, she will admit that she escaped disaster, not through her own prowess, but through the timely assistance of fifteen or twenty countries.

If 1914 proved that no nation could win battles alone, 1931 proves that no nation can maintain prosperity alone.

The one outstanding effect of modern progress is to lift human activities and interest beyond the control of individual governments.

### Statecraft Lagging

TRADE, travel and interchange of every description have become world-wide affairs. Statesmanship can not evade the challenge which this involves.

The performance of Post and Gatty stands out in sharp contrast to the windjamming, at Paris.

Statecraft is at least 100 years behind science and industry. It has hardly reached a point where it can visualize the needs of the grocery business, much less that of aviation.

As a matter of fact, statecraft is doing quite as much to block the path of natural development as to open them.

### Ally of Progress

THERE is one aspect of Russian Communism which outsiders would do well to study. Both recognize the necessity of statecraft to modern life, of employing it to help people get the benefits of modern commerce, science and industry.

That must become a world-wide attitude, regardless of the particular form of government under which people live, or the particular political belief they hold.

Mechanical power has altered completely the problems of trade and finance.

### New Vision Needed

MANKIND stands on the threshold of a new era, an era which promises to bring the resources of the entire world to the home and workshop of the humblest of us, but only if statecraft opens the way.

Statecraft can not open the way by clinging to traditional prejudices, or even traditional habits.

The politician, as well as the trader, must recognize how definitely horizons have expanded and increased his perspective to fit them.

### Trade Confusing

WE talk about international banking as though it were a calamity, when it is only a logical by-product of the times.

While professing alarm at certain aspects of international trade, we are all in favor of the goods it delivers, especially if we can't get them at home.

The general struggle to prevent imports on the one hand and boost exports on the other has become so confused as to be doing more harm than good.

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