



## The Indianapolis Times

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

### Taxpayer Emergency

Faced by what he declared to be an "emergency for taxpayers," one of the trustees of the state prison hits upon the very original scheme of reducing government costs by cutting the wages of the lower paid employees of the state.

Particularly he wants to cut those who draw the magnificent sum of \$140 a month to \$126.

He would take \$7.50 from the envelope of those who get \$100.

This particular trustee has an unbroken record, up to now, of never having taken any action that did not meet with the approval of the particular governor under whom he served. This proposal may be original with him. Or it may have originated with the Governor. That will develop later as public sentiment either makes popular or unpopular the proposal.

A slash in wages at the prison would be followed by a similar cut among all the lower paid employees of the state.

It may be true that the taxpayer is faced by an emergency, but wage cutting will increase, not decrease, his difficulties. It is probably true that some reductions could be made in the cost of government. It might be possible, for instance, to make some savings by limiting the amount of money spent at each meeting of the prison trustees.

It would certainly have been possible to have saved some \$30,000 on the cost of cleaning the statehouse, and the entire \$64,000 which is being taken from the Governor's "emergency fund" for the benefit of a Cincinnati firm might have been distributed among those who need money or have been saved entirely for the taxpayers. That bit of business or high finance, as you view it, cost the taxpayers more than would be saved at any single institution in a year by any wage cuts.

The proposal to cut wages is only important as evidence of the lack of vision on the part of those who have money, who are not on bread lines, whose concern is in their pocketbooks instead of in their own particular bellies.

They have not as yet reached that emergency of the men whose labor earned the tax money in the prosperous years and who now find themselves living upon charity funds or on bread lines. For these the emergency is real and pressing. For these the problem is a chance to work.

The one way in which these real tax earners can solve their emergency is to get work. The one way that they can get work is to increase the purchasing power of all the people so that the circle of industry and work will take the same swing as did the vicious one of unemployment and depression.

The country is artificially deflated through unfair and inequitable distribution of the products of labor. The remedy lies in an artificial inflation on the basis of justice and humanity.

### Testing a Theory

A year ago E. R. Squibb & Son did what many other large industrial firms are considering doing. It adopted the five-day work week, without cutting wages.

The president of the firm has made his first report on results of the new policy.

..... Curtailment to a five-day week effected greater efficiency in production. Theoretically the five-day week represents curtailment of the working hours of 9 per cent, or, stated differently, an increase in wages of 9 per cent, and hence it might be anticipated that labor costs of production would rise by this amount.

"In large operations where we can maintain an actual check-up on efficiency it was found that production in the five-day week amounted to 98½ per cent of the production heretofore attained in five and one-half days, or that 7.5 per cent of the 9 per cent cut in working time was picked up in added efficiency of the five-day week.

"During the last ten years production of volume in all departments has shown a constantly rising trend. During the same period, wages have been increased and hours curtailed. Ten years ago the working week was forty-nine hours; today we operate forty hours a week, a reduction of 18.3 per cent.

"Production costs during this entire period have shown a constant decrease year by year, until today our company operates at the lowest cost per dollar of sales in its history."

This comes within the category of expert evidence, entitled to special consideration.

### Seventeen Years After

Seventeen years ago today the German government declared war on Russia, after waiting nearly two days for the Russian government to suspend the general mobilization which the Russians well knew would provoke Germany to war.

Now, after nearly two decades, the states of Europe are more anxiously engaged in trying to undo the evil effects of the war and the subsequent peace than at any time since Aug. 1, 1914. This may be a propitious moment to try to draw a few lessons that may be of help in charting our future.

For two generations before 1914, Europe had been riding for a fall, with no serious efforts to prevent the ultimate calamity. Unbridled militarism, feelings of pride and revenge, imperialism and trade struggles, competing colonial designs, tariff wars, alliances, secret treaties and vast armaments had transformed Europe into a great powder house which needed only a spark like the murder of Franz Ferdinand to set it off.

Yet the war was not inevitable after the Sarajevo assassination. If Russia had not encouraged Serbian intrigues; if Germany had checked more carefully Austria; if Austria had been more careful in dealing with the occupation of Belgrade as a means

of holding Serbia to her word; if France had not encouraged the fatal Russian mobilization; if Russia had not frustrated promising diplomatic negotiations by that mobilization; if Britain had warned France and Russia that she would not tolerate military aggression—if any one of these things had happened, the war might never have taken place.

It all had happened; and they would if statesmanship had prevailed, there would most certainly have been no World war at the time. But there was no real statesmanship, and Europe partly strode and partly stumbled into the greatest misfortune which ever came to the human race.

Some ten million persons were killed during the war and the total casualties amounted to 36,278,000 in killed and wounded. The monetary cost was estimated officially at \$331,612,552,000. Writing shortly after the war was over, Professor Bogart said on this point:

"The figures are both incomprehensible and appalling, yet even these do not take into account the effect of the war on life, human vitality, economic well-being, ethics, morality or other phases of human relationships and activities which have been disorganized and injured.

"It is evident from the present disturbances in Europe that the real costs can not be measured by the direct money outlays of the belligerents during the five years of its duration, but that the very breakdown of modern economic life may be the price exacted."

Professor Bogart's words, we must admit sadly, are even more true and timely today than they were ten years ago. Where did all this carnage lead? Did it pay anybody involved? Austria-Hungary went down to ruin. Czarist Russia passed away, failing to obtain the coveted straits which were the real reason why Russia pushed Europe over the brink in 1914.

France obtained Alsace-Lorraine, but there is now as much discontent with French rule in the lost provinces as over German dominion before 1914. Germany suffered appalling losses in every way, and Great Britain probably never will recover her pre-war prestige and prosperity.

Only Serbia profited mightily, but forty million souls and three hundred billion dollars is a rather high price to pay for inflating this backward Yugoslavia.

Historical scholarship has proved that our wartime convictions were sadly mistaken and misplaced. Instead of a burly Hun jumping on unsuspecting victims, we now know that the guilt was distributed among all nations. Under the circumstances which existed in 1914, Austria wished a local but not a general war; Serbia, France and Russia, a European war; Britain, Germany and Italy, no war at all; but were too selfish, incompetent or dilatory to prevent the crash.

Likewise, even entente military historians have admitted that Germany, far from being the unique military octopus of Europe in 1914, was outnumbered hopelessly on land and sea by her enemies.

How about the ideals for which we pored out blood and money? Have the noble issues set forth by Mr. Wilson in 1917 and 1918 been realized? The war to end war and armaments failed to materialize.

Last year the world spent \$4,158,000,000 for armaments, \$100,000,000 more than the year before. France and her allies have a military strength amounting to more than forty to one against their old enemies. No such military preponderance has been known since Julius Caesar's day. France still struts as a victor at a moment when good will is needed to save the world.

We adopted a good many policies in the war that we had no idea of making permanent. Why not take a similar view regarding what should be done to meet the present situation?

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Idle Money and Men

ONE hears a deal of splendid conversation as to why wages should not be cut or farm prices allowed to sag, but it's a case for action, rather than words.

You can't sell goods without a market, you can't maintain pay rolls without selling goods, and you can't do either without keeping up public buying power.

Like war, this depression is an emergency.

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One Dollar Oil

GOVERNOR MURRAY of Oklahoma is right in announcing that if the big oil companies won't agree to a reasonable price for "crude," he will close down every oil well in the state.

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