



The Indianapolis Times

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

Quo Usque Tandem

Centuries ago an old fellow named Cicero began in these words to berate another man named Catiline. Both are dead. The words still are studied in public schools.

What Cicero was trying to say was that Catiline had insulted the intelligence of the day and he was asking just how long Catiline would continue to abuse the patience of a long-suffering public.

Catiline today means Harley Clarke and Samuel Insull and the public service commission.

The latest abuse of public patience is the announcement that rates for electricity are to be cut in seventy-six southern Indiana cities, an announcement heralded with glee by the Insull publicity agency, within a suspiciously short time after the commission had made its decision.

So brief a time, in fact, as to make it plausible to believe that the crocodile tears had been mimeographed in advance.

If there had been a reduction in rates, the cut has been so small that the rate payer never will feel it. At the best, it gives an average saving of only \$4.20 a meter a year to all the people of each city. At its worst—and it probably is the worst—the people who pay will find their bills larger.

More important is the fact that the advertised cut, if it is permitted to stand, means an end to all regulation of electric utilities in the state, for at no time in the future can any single city ask and receive any reduction of rates.

The decision ushers in a period of regulation by sections which may be the right way of regulation, but is the end of the present law. It means that the commission will be compelled, even if it were inclined to serve the public, to delay for months and years before giving any relief.

The commission set a precedent for itself when it ordered a cut of 20 per cent in rates for electric users in the city of Marion.

The rates in Marion were among the lowest in the state where private ownership prevails. There are lower rates in enlightened communities which own their own plants.

The commission is still inactive on the petition filed by the city of Indianapolis and the South Side Civic Club for relief in this city.

Were the rates given to Marion applied to Indianapolis, the people of this city would save millions of dollars of the tribute now paid to the electric monopoly.

On Saturday night, over the radio, Ward Hinman amended the advice of The Times on telephone calls. He suggested that the people call not only the public service commission and Member Cuthbertson, but also call the office of Governor Harry Leslie and tell him that his hired men on the commission are loafing on the job.

It is good advice. The telephone number of the commission is Riley 6551. The telephone number of the Governor is Lincoln 9535. If you find that Cuthbertson and the others are "in conference," call the Governor. It may work.

(The rest of what Cicero said was, "How long are you going to abuse our patience?")

The Pastors, Twain and War

In the most militant attack on war ever recorded by the clergy, the membership of the Ohio Pastors' Association says in formal resolutions:

"We never again will sanction or participate in any war."

But won't they?

Without desiring to be cynical, we want once again to quote Mark Twain on war:

"There never has been a just one, never an honorable one—on the part of the instigator of the war. I can see a million years ahead, and this rule never will change in so many as half a dozen instances."

"The loud little handful—as usual—will shout for the war. The pulpit will—warily and cautiously—object—at first; the great, big, bulk of the nation will rub its sleepy eyes and try to make out why there should be a war, and will say, earnestly and indignantly, 'It is unjust and dishonorable, and there is no necessity for it.'

Then the handful will shout louder. A few fair men on the other side will argue and reason against the war with speech and pen, and at first will have a hearing and be applauded; but it will not last long; those others will outshout them, and presently the anti-war audiences will thin out and lose popularity.

"Before long, you will see this curious thing: The speakers stoned from the platform, and free speech strangled by hordes of furious men, who in their secret hearts are still at one with these stoned speakers—as earlier—but do not dare to say so."

"And now the whole nation—pulpit and all—will take up the war-cry, and shout its hoarse, and mob any honest man who ventures to open his mouth; and presently such mouths will cease to open."

"Next the statesmen will invent cheap lies, putting the blame upon the nation that it attacked, and every man will be glad of those conscience-soothing falsehoods, and will study them diligently, and refuse to examine any refutations of them, and thus he will, by and by, convince himself that the war is just, and will thank God for the better sleep he enjoys after this process of grotesque self-deception."

Twain wrote that years before the World war.

Making Germany Safe for Democracy

Foremost of Woodrow Wilson's war ideals was making the world safe for democracy. In particular, he wished to make Germany democratic—to liberate it from its "military masters" and to establish free and democratic institutions. What are the results and the prospects thirteen years after the birth of the German republic?

The German people radically altered the political institutions and traditions in accordance with Mr. Wilson's alluring suggestions. They hoped that as a result they would receive justice and decent treatment.

Had not Mr. Wilson said that we had no quarrel with the German people? We were concerned only with lifting from their backs the bellicose octopus saddled on them by their rulers.

Did their conquerors meet the Germans half way and make good the Wilsonian idealism? The answer is contained in an excellent survey of Germany at the end of 1931 by John Elliott in the Nation. Mr. Elliott is no Bolshevik or Hun. He is the Berlin correspondent of the New York Herald-Tribune.

After the proclamation of the Weimar constitution, there was real enthusiasm for republicanism in Germany. By 1925 even Marshal von Hindenburg was converted to the support of the new regime. With even half-way encouragement from abroad, German republicanism would have been assured of permanency and success. But the thirteen years of re-

pression, reparations and revenge have all but ended the republican regime.

Chancellor Breuning rules with dictatorial powers which make Bismarck, "the iron chancellor," seem almost a democrat by comparison. Even that foremost of German liberal newspapers, the Frankfurter Zeitung, holds that a frank dictatorship would be preferable to the ineptitude of the present Reichstag.

Hitler and his Fascist National Socialists have a larger popular support than any other party. They are destined almost inevitably to govern Germany, either alone or through a coalition with the Catholic Center party. One or more persons are killed and a score or more wounded every day in the clashes between the National Socialists and their opponents. These things are so common that they no longer are "news" in Germany.

The republican regime is attacked on the ground that it has gone on its knees before France, and that it has wasted its substance in social welfare expenditures.

Neither charge is true in any significant degree.

The dubious or criminal speculations of great German bankers and industrialists have done more to bring on the present financial crisis than any expenditures for social relief.

Reparations have been a colossal problem, to be sure, but something worse might have come if payments had been suspended or repudiated earlier.

Germans remember the horrors of the Ruhr invasion and the winter of 1922-23.

The chief reason for discrediting of democracy and republicanism in Germany is the disastrous economic situation into which Germany has been driven by reparations and other aspects of the post-war policy of revenge. Some 4,600,000 are unemployed, and the figure will probably reach 7,000,000 before the winter is over. Artillery caissons rattle through the streets picking up old clothes for the destitute.

Except for three weeks, the stock exchange has been closed since the middle of July. Reichsbank reserves are as low as 27 per cent, compared with 40 per cent, once the legal minimum. Wages still are being cut, in spite of the fact that it already is hard for the workers to live under the existing price schedules. Taxes are terrific. Even salaried persons often pay as much as 20 per cent of their income.

And the end is not yet. The chancellor, with frank realism, recently warned that the additional burdens would have to be imposed.

Mr. Elliott concludes that "after almost two decades of war, famine, blockade, inflation, reparations payments, and economic depression, Germany finds itself worse off than at any time since Jena and perhaps since the Thirty Years' war."

The collapse of Germany, or a definite swing to Fascism or Communism, would have momentous if not fatal results for Europe. The reverberations would be severe in the United States, still further depressing our already groggy business conditions.

It is high time that temporizing and vacillation be superseded by resolute international statesmanship.

You have seen this illustrated in dozens of suicides during the last two years.

Dictatorship Next?

THE secret of Russia's success is work. Leaders of the capitalistic world could do worse than keep that in mind.

The Russian people may be getting comparatively little to show for their labor, but they are busy, and that inspires them with hope.

No matter how well off people may be, they fall easy victims to despair when placed in a position where they can do nothing to help themselves.

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Children Work; Elders Idle

There is one fact even more inglorious than the great American paradox of millions of men and women begged because they have produced too much wealth and food. That is the fact of American children working for wages while their elders search in vain for jobs.

Today being Child Labor day in the public schools let us do a bit of national self-searching, even at the cost of national pride.

There never has been a just one, never an honorable one—one on the part of the instigator of the war. I can see a million years ahead, and this rule never will change in so many as half a dozen instances.

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