



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, Indiana, in Marion County, 2 cents a copy; elsewhere, 3 cents—delivered by carrier, 12 cents a week. Mail subscription rates in Indiana, \$3 a year; outside of Indiana, 65 cents a month.

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PHONE—Riley 5551 SATURDAY, FEB. 13, 1932
Member of United Press, Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, Newspaper Enterprise Association, Newspaper Information Service and Audit Bureau of Circulations.

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

Utilities in Michigan

Public utilities, especially the electric utilities, in Michigan are to be forced to slash their rates in line with the deflation of labor and commodity costs.

The public service commission of that state has told the utilities that they can ask for voluntary reductions, and that if they fail, there will be arbitrary action.

The state takes the viewpoint that no court, under its precedents, can justify the maintenance of prosperity rates in panics.

In Indiana, the commission reduced the rates for the city of Marion, but has been suspiciously slow in acting on the seventy other applications for relief.

In Indianapolis, the holding company which collects a fortune from the citizens and nearly a half million from the city government, goes into a federal court by proxy to force down the wages of miners of coal in order that it may make more profits.

The holding company which owns the electric light company also owns a coal agency. That agency has a contract for coal from a mine at which it is proposed to pay much less than the union scale of wages. Even though no trouble has started at this particular mine, the federal government will stand by previous non-political reports of his fellow engineers."

An Embellished Report

There was another presidential commission: The Hoover Muscle Shoals commission.

It made a report: A report bound very prettily in red, embellished with gold lettering.

The report contained some figures: Figures prepared by Lieutenant-Colonel M. C. Tyler of the army engineers, alleged to show that government operation of Muscle Shoals would be a very costly thing.

Then came an answer to this report. Prepared by Judson King of the National Popular Government League, and only mimeographed on plain paper. The report said:

"The findings of Colonel Tyler that government operation would create a deficit of 23 million dollars in fifteen years are based upon arbitrary, undocumented assertions of his own, which are proved absurd by previous non-political reports of his fellow engineers."

More Patriotizing

Folly, masking as Americanism, again would impose laws of suppression on the United States.

Such a program, carrying out recommendations of the Fish committee, is before congress, backed by profeitering zealots and opposed by liberals. This program would revive the madness of the Mitchell Palmer terror, start a nation-wide hunt for radicals and political heretics, and destroy our constitutional civil liberties.

This program would:

Strengthen deportation laws, to make deportation of alien Communists easier.

Re-establish the notorious spy system of the days of Attorney-General Harry Daugherty and William J. Burns.

Bar all alleged Communist literature from the mails.

A protest, signed by seventy-three prominent Americans, none of them Reds, has been sent to congress. It signs include Julia Lathrop, former head of the United States children's bureau; Professor John Dewey of Columbia university; Professor Jerome Davis of Yale divinity school; Dr. Edward T. Devine, author; Dr. Alice Hamilton of Harvard medical school; Francis Fisher Kane, former United States attorney of Pennsylvania; B. M. Huebsch, publisher, and others.

"We hold no brief whatever for Communism," the signers declare. "We are not its apologists or defenders. Our sole concern is with free speech for all movements in the United States, regardless of their purposes. That includes Communists, just like others."

"All history should make it clear that it is dangerous to the public peace to outlaw a political movement, whatever its character, and to drive it underground into secret conspiracy, thereby encouraging violence."

"It's open agitation may annoy people who fear to have it in the open than under ground. Existing laws adequately protect the government from acts of violence or conspiracies against it."

Congress should ignore the patroting bills, as it did last year. The Constitution, common sense and present circumstances all demand that speech be free. Let the patriots spend their energies in stamping out the cause of radical discontent.

Death came at a time when the political necessities of his party indicated that he might be called to high honors. The loss is great. Sincere men are all too few.

George B. Lockwood

Indiana loses one of its forceful men in politics and journalism in the passing of George B. Lockwood of Muncie.

The confidant of Presidents and others of the mighty, he played important roles in the making of political history. It was his pen which often gave direction to campaign policies. His was the genius of giving emphasis to issues. An an editor, men might disagree with his conclusions, but none doubted his deep sincerity or his unquestioned power and ability.

He served well, but he served only where conviction carried him.

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Bank Relief

Rightly administered, the proposed bank relief law to increase credit facilities and support sound business, embarrassed banks should prove helpful to business.

Like any other strong dosage, it could be dangerous if misused. But these are emergency times. And emergencies involve risks.

There will be much argument over whether this bill is an inflation measure. Its advocates say no. Its opponents say yes.

Apparently both are right. Obviously it is impossible to draw with any precision or general agreement, the imaginary line between what some describe as "anti-deflation" and others call "mild inflation."

Whatever one pleases to call it, the measure would make possible a large increase in federal reserve currency. But—and this is important—it would not permit the gold basis to fall below the customary 40 per cent.

The change would not be in that gold base, but in the remaining 60 per cent nongold collateral. In addition to the commercial paper eligible for rediscount by the federal reserve under the present law, the federal reserve board would be allowed during the next twelve months to accept United States government bonds as collateral for currency issue.

As Senator Glass, the Democrat chosen by the Republican administration as the author of this bi-party measure, points out: "This will enable the federal reserve banks to maintain a desirable volume of what is known as 'free gold,' which means gold in excess of the statutory requirement and not including 'earmarked' gold."

"This simply fortifies the gold status of the federal reserve banks in this period of extraordinary disturbance. It is altogether probable that the federal reserve banks may not find it necessary to make use of this authorization."

He adds:

"The bill, as perfected and introduced, is not intended, nor will it be used, for excessive inflation or currency."

Most persons probably will be inclined to accept the word of Senator Glass as an adequate guarantee of the measure. Glass is not only the father and zealous guardian of the federal reserve, but over a long period has demonstrated an expert knowledge and a freedom from control that inspire public confidence.

That, after all, is the chief purpose of this emergency measure—to inspire public confidence in sound banking.

The Fairest Tax

As various tax-raising schemes are discussed on the other side, and various groups of citizens explain the injustice of a tax falling most heavily on their particular business, the essential equity of income, inheritance, and gift taxes becomes recognized more generally.

Within the last few days, the National Retail Dry Goods Association has announced itself in favor of raising the government money required by income tax increases in the higher brackets, by increased inheritance taxes, and by restoration of the gift tax.

The retailers, of course, are fighting the sales tax, which would cause them much burdensome book-keeping, and possibly loss of business. But good economic reasons support them in this position, and support likewise the opposition to all special sales taxes except those levied against luxuries.

However slowly and reluctantly we may arrive at the conviction that partial redistribution of great fortunes is the only sound method of restoring health to business and to the national life, we arrive there sooner or later, if we think through the problem.

Just Every Day Sense

BY MRS. WALTER FERGUSON

ON my desk is a very intense letter from a 17-year-old girl. And the intensity of adolescence demands attention.

It she has put down her ideas about men and women. They are something like this: Woman's chief work, for which God intended her, is to be a pure, good mother. If men are not as they should be it is because women have departed from their rightful place in the home. Women are responsible for most of the sins of the world.

These are very fine ideals for any girl to hold in her heart about herself. If cherished too long and too tenaciously, however, they might cause her to develop into a rather narrow-minded woman.

There can be no dissension from her first proposition. At any rate, the average woman's most important work is motherhood. And these hundreds of thousands of wonderful women today who have no babies of their own, but who are influencing thought and helping the race, are, let us not forget, mothers in the finest sense of the term. Maternity is derived from this symbol in the Taoist religion.

What increase has there been in the consumption of cigarettes in the United States since 1925?

The preliminary report for 1930 shows a consumption of 115,379,197,000, and the average annual consumption for 1925-29 was 97,857,540,000.

Is money derived from betting, lotteries and other forms of gambling subject to federal income tax?

As to the second statement, unless we can assume that women are born without the same tendency to succumb to temptation that men possess, we can not admit the truth of that.

Women are by no means the cause of all sin. The safest way is to let ourselves believe that God, who must surely be a just and reasonable spirit, hardly would demand more goodness from one sex than from the other.

These conclusions nevertheless are safe ones for a 17-year-old girl. The banners of decency should be held aloft by women. And it is undeniably true that when girls cling to the good for themselves and seek for high ideals in their friends and the men with whom they associate, they are treading the path of wisdom.

To be 17, to cherish the thought that all women must be pure and that by being so they can uplift men, is a marvelous state.

Youth must have its dreams. And perhaps these dreams cherished through the centuries have made women better and have helped men in their struggle toward perfection.

M. E. Tracy

Says:

Does the World Propose to Sit Idly by While the Stage Is Set for Tearing One of the Greatest and Oldest Countries Apart?

NEW YORK, Feb. 13.—Chinese resistance should not be taken too seriously. It suggests possible, rather than available, power.

According to press reports, Japan has about 20,000 men at Shanghai. If they prove unequal to the task, she can, and will, send another 20,000.

Japan is in a position to mobilize effective fighting forces faster than China.

Barring intervention by other nations, she soon will take Shanghai.

With Shanghai in her possession, she can, and will reshape her demands.

Scheming Nipponese

THE rapidity with which the Sino-Japanese situation has changed and ramified since last September should warn us of what is in store.

First, there was the row in Manchuria, with solemn declarations by Japan that all she wanted was law and order, that she had no thought of taking anything, that the nine-power treaty was in no danger and that she was firmly committed to China's integrity.

One thing led to another—intervention to boycott, and boycott to the attack on Shanghai—with Japan gradually altering her position.

At present she wants the nine-power treaty modified, with neutral zones around certain Chinese ports.

Dismemberment Next?

THE dismemberment of China becomes a possibility, with ground for suspicion that certain European countries would not make too much of a kick, provided they get a break.

It sounds rough, but no rougher than what actually occurred fourteen years ago.

When the World war began, few leaders, especially on the allied side, had an idea of remaking the map of Europe.

You can tell what is going to happen by the result of conflict, until you begin to compromise with the victor, which is exactly what we are headed for in the far east.

Hard to Stop Now

THE problem of saving China and preventing war over her division is far more difficult than it was four months ago, and its difficulties will increase from now on.

Each success causes Japan to become more exacting, while the outside world shrinks from an open break as the consequences appear more serious.

Last night the thing could have been stopped by a firm stand on the part of the League of Nations, especially with our support.

Right now it looks as though something more than a firm stand would be required.

It is possible that in another three months, nothing less than war would suffice.

World at Crisis

IT is useless to speculate on what might have happened if this, or that, had been done with regard to the Sino-Japanese situation, the only worth while question being, where do we go from here?

After all that has been said about the orderly adjustment of international controversies, does the world propose to sit idly by while the stage is set for tearing one of the greatest and oldest countries apart?

Assuming that Japan had a right to intervene in Manchuria, should the quarrel incident to its exercise be permitted to go until a situation is created that threatens international conflict?

Our Future Involved

WE Americans have a peculiarly big stake in Asia, a stake which involves our peace and prosperity, which has a definite bearing on our future.

We can let things drift until the Pacific becomes another ocean of strife and rivalry.

We can hug the thought of isolation until our very destiny is imperiled.

The one thing we can not do is change the course of events without exerting ourselves.

Questions and Answers

Why is China called "The Land of the Dragon?"

Because the dragon was the national symbol and badge of the royal family of China for centuries. It represented the power of the air, and forces of nature deified. The old Chinese flag bore a figure of the dragon swallowing the red sun. A great deal of religious meaning is derived from this symbol in the Taoist religion.

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How old is the world?

There are widely varying estimates of the age of the earth. Physicists now seem to be more or less agreed that its age must be placed at something like 900,000,000 years.

People's Voice

Times Editor—Has the depression also laid low the American sense of humor?