



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; delivered by mail, 12 cents a month. Mail subscription rates in Indiana, \$3 a year; outside of Indiana, 65 cents a month.

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PHONE—Riley 5551 THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 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."

Less and Different Taxes

While various groups of citizens are organizing to save their property from confiscation through the tax route, the tax dodger can be depended upon to endeavor through political power to keep the burden entirely upon real estate.

The farmers of the state have a very just complaint against the present system. So has the citizen who still cherishes the ancient hope of being able to save enough to own a home in his old age. Both know that unfair taxation is robbing him of his hope.

Attention may be diverted by various demands for lower taxes. If that means an elimination of waste, such as occurs when \$65,000 is spent for washing the face of the statehouse or the erection of a forest of electric light poles on a public square, all citizens will agree.

It means the elimination of fee systems that permit public officials to take huge sums from the public, there will be a greater agreement.

If it means the placing of public service in all minor positions on a civil service basis with regular hours such as are demanded by private business, the public will not object.

If it means the trimming of high salaries for officials to meet the deflated levels of today, there will be public support.

But if it means that all the drive for lower taxes is to be used against teachers and policemen, there will be widespread objection.

If it means that the people are to keep on raising revenues by a property tax almost exclusively, the farmer and home owner will kick and kick hard.

Just why property should carry the burden and incomes escape is not explainable to the man who gets his living from a farm or from rentals and now finds himself without income because of the great deflation of farm prices and rental opportunities.

But incomes of those who live upon interest and dividends from investments that are not to be found on the tax duplicates, or, if found at all, in much less amounts than the real value, have not been deflated. The rate of interest has not been reduced.

Perhaps some candidate for Governor will soon announce a platform of raising all necessary revenues by a levy on incomes. That might make it possible for people to use real estate to create an income on which to pay.

At the present time property is being rapidly confiscated by government in favor of the owner of intangibles.

The Kidnapping

There probably is not a mother or father in the country who has not suffered with Charles and Anne Lindbergh for the last two days. As though every baby had become the symbol of all babies, terror and pain have struck into the hearts of parents.

What child is safe? is the universal question. May we, too, not receive the wound against which there is no anesthetic?

Senator Norris and Representative Summers propose quick consideration in house and senate judiciary committees of measures to make interstate kidnapping a federal offense; to punish with heavy penalties senders of threatening letters; to make interstate kidnapping a hanging offense.

Federal anti-kidnapping laws obviously are needed. As pointed out recently by Colonel Isham Randolph of Chicago's "Secret Six," this species of crime has become largely an interstate matter. Whatever laws can be passed and enforced to abate the savage and cowardly traffic should be put upon the books with respect to existing laws.

But law dealing so intimately with the very core of human affections must yield even righteous wrath in favor of wisdom. The kidnapping code contains no chivalrous clauses. Facing capture, would not a kidnaper kill and dispose of his victim if hanging were the penalty for his crime?

Would not capital punishment in many instances make conviction difficult in cases that did come to trial? Alabama, Kentucky, Nebraska, Virginia, Illinois and Missouri have laws making kidnapping a capital crime. It is significant that both Illinois and Missouri have been the scenes of recent kidnapping outbreaks.

Kidnapping for ransom is a crime as old as piracy. The recent cases in Chicago, St. Louis and elsewhere appear to belong to a new category, however. They resemble gang rather than individual crimes, as though spawned into the vast breed that had its beginning in the prohibition racket.

The depression, putting a keener edge to desperation, also may play a part in this present horror.

Action must be taken and penalty prescribed. But let wisdom be the guide of the lawmakers. Let them remember that in every kidnapping case there is a baby in the hands of a brute.

Court Reforms

President Hoover's special message to congress suggesting legislation for improvement in the administration of justice is uneven. Apart from his evasion of the prohibition problem, discussed in this column Wednesday, the notable thing about the President's program is its limited scope.

But it contains several good contributions. One is that federal authorities shall have power to turn over to state authorities juvenile violators of federal laws. The federal government lacks facilities for handling such cases.

Another good suggestion is that federal courts be relieved of part of their jurisdiction in civil cases, based on differences in the state citizenship of litigants. This suggestion very well might be carried further in the direction of the 1930 Norris bill.

In the matter of court congestion, the President is to be congratulated on reversing his earlier idea that congestion is general and on scrapping his earlier panaceas of juryless trials, trials before United States commissioners and other radical changes.

Having discovered that congestion is a problem only in a minority of districts, the President wisely turns back to the method followed by the judicial conference and the attorney-general, which is the appointment of additional judges.

Four Hoover proposals for eliminating obstacles in criminal cases merely repeat procedure recommendations contained in the attorney-general's report several months ago. Three of these proposals, concerning jurors, are relatively unimportant. The fourth, which would permit the supreme court to make rules for criminal proceedings subsequent to verdict deserves more careful study than seems to have been given to it.

Probably the most important part of the message is that dealing with changes in the bankruptcy act. Mr. Hoover makes the valuable suggestion that officers responsible to the court should examine bankrupts, and not leave this work to private initiative; also that agencies should be set up to co-ordinate

THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

M. E. Tracy

Says:

Kidnapping Is Just Another Form of Extortion Which Has Plagued the Country Ever Since Prohibition Gave Millions to Organized Vice.

NEW YORK, March 3.—Kidnap means literally to nab, or snatch a child. It comes from the slang of thieves who made child-stealing a regular business. This crime became so common at one time as to fill all England with terror and was to play a regrettably large part in providing labor for American colonies.

More of our so-called native stock are descended from kidnapped ancestors than from the pilgrim fathers. You don't hear so much about it, but that's due to bad history on the one hand, and false pride on the other.

No one ever will know the number of children who were waylaid and sneaked on board ships bound for this side of the Atlantic during the last quarter of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth, but it must have run well into the thousands.

The practice developed as a by-product of the bond-servant scheme.

Colonial Slavery

In those good old days when religious liberty, free land, or the love of adventure called men to America, there were many who felt the urge to come, but who lacked the money for their passage.

There were others in jail who were willing to accept banishment if they could get out.

Both classes were compelled to sign bonds that they would work for a term of years without pay in exchange for their transportation.

These bonds were accepted by ship captains as payment for passage.

On arrival at the designated colony, the captains sold the bonds for what they would bring, and those who had signed them became virtual slaves of the purchaser for five, seven, or ten years.

With the growing need for labor in America, the bond-servant brought a continuously higher price, while the supply of criminals and volunteers grew less and less adequate.

Black Record

IT was at this point that kidnappers stepped into the picture, snatching children, forging bonds and turning both to unsavory purposes.

Many a lad was shanghaied for \$5 or \$10, while many a mother went to her grave without knowing what had become of her boy.

It is a black record, and there are reasons for being grateful that there is not more complete, that we know enough to realize that there was a time when kidnapping held more terrors, especially for the common run of folk, than it does today, in spite of the many shocking occurrences.

Prohibition Again

Such news as swept the country Wednesday that kidnapping has been revived in an organized, malicious way, or that it has a definite connection with the racketeering, gangrule and blackmail which have developed around the illegal liquor trade?

If the feelings of relatives are injured by the revelation of demonstrable truths, then it is just too bad. If they are humiliated by untruths, then they can have resort to existing laws.

It is probable that in Harding's case the country could have survived without immediate knowledge of "The President's Daughter." But it would have been unfortunate if we had been compelled to postpone the investigation of Teapot Dome, the Ohio Gang, and Secretary Fall's \$100,000 until the last of the Harding relatives had passed to their final resting-ground.

Like other censorship notions, this proposal by Congressman Mouser runs counter to common sense, human freedom and the best interests of society. No writer of enough repute to carry any weight can survive gross misrepresentation on his part.

In the end he will suffer more than the dead figure he has maligned. We can afford to let this be the all-sufficient check upon biographical falsification.

Just Every Day Sense

BY MRS. WALTER FERGUSON

A LETTER has arrived from that eminent citizen "Homo Sapiens."

"Do," he begs, "try to get your view of your sex around to a man's angle."

But, my dear Mr. Sapiens, I don't dare do that, because it always makes me so mad. I find man's angle so unreasonable unless we can all agree that women are not human beings. That is it impossible for me to be a newspaper columnist.

Millions for Corruption

NEITHER can we hope to get it very far in suppressing it, until the main source of its revenue has been removed—the millions upon millions of dollars which are derived from the liquor trade and which enable the vicious element of every community to corrupt officials, retain lawyers, exercise power in politics and protect themselves in other ways.

The gangs must be smashed before the extortion can be stopped, and that is impossible, unless their supply of money is cut off.

Two ring-tailed monkeys have been added to a radio station's staff. Won't the crooners be jealous!

Diplomats trying to prevent fighting in China should take a few tips from the managers of champion prize fighters.

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