



## The Indianapolis Times

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

### Meeting a Major Issue

BY ROBERT P. SCRIPPS

The Pittsburgh Press, a Scripps-Howard newspaper, has announced its support of Senator James J. Davis, ex-secretary of labor, in the Republican senatorial primary in Pennsylvania. In the past the Pittsburgh Press and other Scripps-Howard newspapers have opposed the brand of conservative and stand-pat party politics with which Davis has been identified in his state and at Washington.

In this instance Senator Davis has declared him in favor of modification of the Volstead act and repeal of the eighteenth amendment. His opponent, the colorful General Smedley D. Butler of marine corps and Philadelphia police department fame, is a well-known 100 per cent prohibitionist, and is supported chiefly by a less prominent prohibitionist, Governor Gifford Pinchot.

As senator, Davis voted for, and Pinchot and his friends advocated, direct federal relief for the unemployed. On this matter the two candidates are placed, apparently, on even ground.

The Pittsburgh Press expresses no overweening enthusiasm for the mental stature or political courage of Candidate Davis. At the same time, its editors have reason to distrust the attitude toward civil liberties of Candidate Butler, which, from speeches he has made in the past, embraces the military and autocratic rather than the American and democratic ideal.

From the above it is obvious that, to the editors of the Pittsburgh Press, the outstanding question involved in the present contest is that of prohibition. This is the issue that is thought paramount.

Wherever other elements of character and public policy permit, this is the stand that other Scripps-Howard newspapers may be expected to take.

And with good, and sufficient, and well-considered reason!

The problem of amending, if not repealing, oppressive federal prohibition laws has passed out of the realm of academic debate, and into the sphere of quite possible political action. In the recent wet-dry test vote in the house of representatives, twenty-one reversed votes would have meant a prohibition defeat.

This possibility, which becomes almost immediate by reason of the elections this fall, tingles our whole political horizon. Every representative and senator to be elected this year undoubtedly will have the opportunity and the duty, during his term of office, to cast a vote on prohibition that really will count.

Heretofore, this situation has not seemed to exist. Today it dictates only one possible honest course—to make the issue and to meet it squarely.

The Scripps-Howard newspapers favor immediate modification of the Volstead act, repeal of the eighteenth amendment and return of the liquor problem to the states for the following reasons:

Present statutory definitions of the alcoholic content of "intoxicating" beverages have no scientific basis in fact, while suppression of beer and wines creates a market limited to much more harmful spirituous drinks.

Any federal sumptuary legislation is at variance with the whole spirit of the Constitution, which is that of the widest possible degree of home rule.

Proved ineffective in practice, federal attempts to enforce the prohibition laws infringe police powers of states.

While liquor, some of it poisonous, flows freely everywhere, the federal government foregoes vast sums of revenue from its taxation, and is put to enormous futile expense, the whole making up a large part of the present burden of taxpayers. So federal prohibition goes to the very heart of the present economic crisis.

It is the profits of bootlegging and liquor smuggling that are the "sinews of war" for the major "rackets" that actually threaten our civilization today, from kidnapping and banditry to ballot box stuffing and police corruption.

The Scripps-Howard newspapers believe that federal prohibition properly will be a major issue in every congressional election this year, and in the presidential election this November, for these reasons:

So long as this question, cutting deeply into the hearts of the people, cuts crosswise through each of our great political parties, as well as through progressive and liberal groups in congress, the development of no sane and logical economic program by any party or group is possible.

Until the question of federal prohibition is settled, other progress, the routing of criminals, the clearing out of political corruption, waits throughout the country.

That the question is far from settled as it now stands, in spite of the eighteenth amendment and the Volstead law, is demonstrated by the expressed dissatisfaction of millions of people, as well as by the continued and "from bad to worse" drinking habits of the entire country.

The Scripps-Howard newspapers have supported the legislative activities and extolled the characters of outstanding statesmen like, for instance, Senators Norris, Costigan, and Walsh of Montana, whose political fights always have been fights in the interests of the common man and of public decency, but who are known as drys.

Certainly we will support no spineless or simple "organization" office seekers against men of this character in any case where an editorial opinion is demanded.

Nevertheless, other things being equal, our newspaper in the Pennsylvania case, it will be the policy of these newspapers to point out, with respect to each of this year's congressional and senatorial candidates, that his vote in the near future on prohibition probably will be the most important vote he ever will cast in the new congress.

### The Water Barons

Despite the fact that Public Service Commissioner Cuthbertson protected the water company from exposure of the extortionate character of their rates as compared with charges in other cities, the public did get a squint on some of the practices of the water barons at the Tuesday hearing.

The people found out that one of the operating costs of the company is a membership in a political club for a man who lives in Philadelphia.

They discovered that contributions to an organization whose chief function is a demand for reduction of wages of school teachers and policemen are charged as an operating expense of distributing water.

The people found that every "good fellow" gesture of the company in the way of memberships in civic bodies or charitable groups comes directly from the people's pockets and does not reduce the profits of the owners by a single penny.

Of course, the bookkeeping methods for hiding the gigantic profits are entirely beyond the original in-

tention of the public utility law and unjustified under any theory of regulation.

It is not difficult to be a "good fellow" with other people's money. That is the reason this company and other utilities can send their handshakers into public groups to mingle with the crowds and lead them. They can participate in various activities and become prominent. The bill is charged directly to the public.

Just how a membership in a political club for Clarence Geist of Philadelphia can contribute to the delivery of water to citizens of Indianapolis may be understandable to Cuthbertson and to other utility-minded officials. The people may require an explanation.

Major Sullivan and his legal staff gathered a large amount of evidence concerning rates charged for water in other cities. That information showed that the rates in this city are high. The mayor believes them to be more than just "high." They are unfair and unjust.

But the city has not been permitted to present this evidence of extortion and greed.

Technical objections prevented this public disclosure. The water company did not dare let its customers know the truth, if the truth could be suppressed.

But enough has been disclosed to demonstrate that the people are entitled to relief. If it is impossible to obtain it by regulation, the people may decide to build a new plant. A concern that charges political contributions to its operating costs deserves little consideration.

### City and State Taxes

Throughout America there is a movement for reduction of city and state taxes.

Insofar as it seeks to eliminate waste, it is sound. Activities which are useless or not worth the price should be eliminated. In useful activities, able officials can, if they try, accomplish the same purpose with expenditure of less money.

But if this movement seeks under the guise of "economy" to eliminate those progressive things which have made life easier and brighter for the working-man, it will not have the support of those fair-minded elements without which it can not succeed ultimately.

The workingman and those interested in betterment know that public schools, parks, libraries, hospitals, and health work mean more to him than they do to wealthy taxpayers who can obtain similar service from private agencies.

When these services are supplied by public agencies, and paid for out of taxation, the workingman gets more than he pays for in taxes, whether he pays taxes directly through home ownership or indirectly through rent.

Public school education for the average family actually is worth more in dollars and cents than the entire tax bill which the average home-owner pays. He gets all the other local government services free of charge. The difference between actual cost and value is paid for by the big taxpayers, as it should be.

Thus community service paid for by taxation is one means of bringing about a fairer distribution of wealth, something which most thinking people believe is needed imperatively in America.

Those sincere in their desire for governmental "economy" will attack governmental waste, but will not attempt to eliminate those things which have raised the standard of living of the workingman.

### Judges and Politics

The petition by 100 leading lawyers asking Judge Harry Chamberlin of the circuit court again to become a candidate for the bench was more than a mere compliment to an excellent public servant.

It demonstrated completely the necessity of changing the system under which judges are chosen so that partisan politics will play no part in the search for justice.

Judge Chamberlin has not been a politician since he went upon the bench. He has been a judge for all the people and his decisions have been free from any suspicion of partisan bias.

Under a nonpartisan selection of judges, or in any election of judges in which partisan nominations were barred, there would be no danger of losing Judge Chamberlin. He probably would be unopposed.

Only those who have been disappointed at the smallness of fees allowed in receivership cases would be disgruntled—or those who hoped to use crooked methods in elections and were checked by injunctions.

Now he is compelled to go into party primaries and a partisan election if the people are to have the advantage of his services.

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One of the necessary changes in our political system is the taking of courts out of politics. The sooner that comes, the less chance there will be of losing the Chamberlins from the bench.

### Just Every Day Sense

BY MRS. WALTER FERGUSON

DO you remember the mother in the old fairy tale?

She sat at her window, sewing, and looked out at the snow. Then she wished that she might have a daughter with white skin, black hair, and cheeks as red as roses, the most beautiful girl in all the world.

Every mother has the same secret desire. Stripped of pretense, I imagine we would all be foolish enough to demand, if we could, superlative physical beauty for our girl children.

So perhaps it is rather fortunate that there are no good fairies standing around ready to grant our wishes.

It may be trite, but nevertheless I believe it to be true, that more girls have suffered from, than have profited by, rare loveliness of face and form. If beauty always were innocent and uncalculating, like that of the fairy tale child, the story might be different.

But in these knowing days, a girl especially dowered with perfections is subjected to undue attention and therefore is the victim of more than ordinary temptation. Nine times out of ten she spoils her life before she is old enough to know better.

Admitting that the fate of the

was hung in the balance, French divisions were rushed hastily into the breach made between the British and French lines and succeeded in stopping, for the time, the German assault.

In this phase of the action, 30,000 French troops were opposed by nearly 150,000 Germans.

Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, in command of the British forces in France, asked for further French and American reinforcements immediately, in view of prospects for still further attacks from new German divisions, reported to have been moved into the salient created by the offensive of the three previous months.

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## M. E. Tracy

Says:

We Are Beginning to Understand That New York Must Be Found for Millions of Men and Billions of Capital.

NEW YORK, March 23.—This country faces a greater readjustment than most people realize. More than anything else, the crash of 1929 revealed a situation that could not, and should not be restored.

Had it been the genuine article, it would not have collapsed.

While the depression justly can be attributed to worldwide conditions, it should be remembered that this country played a major part in bringing about those conditions.

Since 1914, the United States has been recognized as the world's financial and industrial leader.

We can not deny a large share of responsibility for what happened.

### Wealth Dissipated

MUCH that happened was due to mistaken policies right here at home, to overproduction in certain basic lines, to overconfidence in the security of our position, to an unreasonable inflation of values, to an unwise dissipation of our surplus wealth.

Major industries were overbuilt, capital was watered, and stocks were boomed. People were crowded into our cities and given jobs, with little concern as to whether the setup would be permanent. Apartments and hotels literally were thrown together for their accommodation.

Everybody was going to live in a rented room, or flat and get a pay check each Saturday night. Taxes mounted and rents rose. It was a beautiful system, and no one wanted to believe it could go wrong.

### Inflation Not All

HERE was more wrong with the system than inflation. It took no account of those changes which occur as the result of invention, or mere caprice. It was not prepared for what we did to coal, or electric refrigerators did to the ice man.

At the rate farms were being abandoned, it looked as though every article of food would go up in price, but the reducing craze more than offset the reduction in acreage.

Closed cars and steam-heated houses played havoc with the textile trade. Safety razors wrought a revolution in the barber trade. Movies put the legitimate theater out of commission. Talkies lost the local orchestra player his job, and so one might go on ad infinitum.

### Prosperous Ease; Then—

HERE came a time when our economic structure was held up by a few gigantic enterprises which couldn't stop, or retrench, even if those in control had wanted to. Sheer momentum drove them forward, with their stocks mounting and their reputation and impregnability taking deeper root in the public mind.

At last, it seemed as if we had found a way to be prosperous without doing much, except watch the ticker, or listen for the whistle.

Now we're tightwads with our good fortune. If the rest of the world needed a little cash, all we asked was a note, or a bond.

### New Work Needed

THE decade succeeding such an orgy of contentment and optimism in these United States as has few parallels in human history, whatever we may have thought about the eighteenth amendment, or League of Nations, we were obsessed with the idea that nothing bad could happen to us in a financial way.

We marked progress by counting the stories of each new skyscraper, or noting how each census showed an increase of population in the old home town. There was little planning, except for something big in the same old rut.

New devices were demanded, but with no thought of their effect on the business of producing old ones. It was taken for granted that every city and every enterprise would right on growing larger.

When the crash came, we consoled ourselves with the idea that the problem of recovery included no more than getting the old job back and getting the old stock up where it was. We are just beginning to understand that new work must be found for millions of men and billions of capital.

In consequence, we see them allously embracing anti-hoarding campaigns, job-finding campaigns, and the multitude of other campaigns initiated by their overlords, the big financial and industrial capitalists, in a vain attempt to stem the tide of rapid disintegration.

Blinded in their fright, by the need of some hope and assurance, they fail to see the futile inadequacy of all these campaigns.

The anti-hoarding campaign, to begin with, is a fake from start to finish. The mass of the people, it is obvious, can not be hoarding, for they already have been milked dry. And such hoarding as the middle class has done is undoubtedly will continue to do, for its output of these machines would have no markets, and the industrialists would have no profits.

To speak of the anti-hoarding campaign is to speak of the biggest hoax ever perpetrated on the American people.