



The Indianapolis Times

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

Waste in Government

This city is joining in the crusade to reduce the cost of federal government.

Waste must be eliminated. The people can not pay on the present basis. The little leaks have become torrents. What was tolerated in days of inflation because of its pettiness becomes important in these defaulted hours.

What is true of the federal government is also true of local governments.

The tax problem is important. But it is also important to stop waste at home immediately and that can be done only by a special session of the legislature.

The transfer of the gasoline tax to other uses should be made at once.

The tax that was once needed to build one mile of roads could today build three if the labor were paid on the basis of made work in townships. It could build two if the construction were paid for at prevailing rates of labor. But the state needs other things more than it does cement roads.

The farmers need relief from taxes. The idle men of cities need work. The real waste is the enforced idleness that is increased by the waste in government funds.

Every unnecessary dollar taken from the farmer and from industry today by taxation means a reduced wage for some worker and more men in the ranks of the idle.

A real demand for a special session that will change the direction of the one big fund at the command of the state would do more to help Indiana than an appeal to the federal government to cut the wages of its workers.

Good News

While the President and the Democratic leaders in congress are working out details of a compromise unemployment relief plan, the country can rejoice that federal aid of some sort at last is in sight.

Reports of local officials and relief agencies have shown for months that in many localities there is no way of preventing starvation without federal help. Private charity never has been adequate, even in the beginning of the depression when it was easier than now to collect funds.

During the last two years, approximately 72 per cent of the cost of relief distributed has come out of public treasures, state and local.

Since last autumn, these state and local authorities have been increasingly unable to carry that load. Many of them not only have exhausted their funds, but have reached the legal limit of their borrowing capacity.

The dire conditions resulting in large cities, such as New York, Chicago, and Detroit, are well known. But it is not generally understood that conditions are worse in many smaller communities. That is true because some of the smaller towns and cities are dependent upon one industry virtually laid low by the depression, and because they have less wealth to draw upon in an emergency than have the metropolitan centers.

It is a disgrace that the centers of wealth can not or will not take care of their own unemployed. Nevertheless, it seems to be true. Such being the case, it is essential that the federal government help to feed the hungry in the large cities as well as in the small communities.

Both the Democratic plan advanced by Senate Leader Robinson and the administration plan outlined by President Hoover, accept the two-fold relief principle urged by progressives since 1930: First, immediate emergency relief to the hungry; and, second, public works to stimulate industry and provide jobs.

Whether the proposed \$300,000,000 emergency relief should be handled in the first instance by a separate government commission, or by the American Red Cross, or by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation does not seem to us vitally important, so long as the job is done—and done promptly and efficiently, without political favoritism.

In the matter of public works, Senator Robinson and President Hoover are making an important differentiation between general construction projects and those that are self-sustaining.

One trouble with the country already is that certain states and cities have built more roads and public buildings than they can pay for, and thus have mortgaged future taxpayers to a dangerous degree.

Obviously, when the local and federal tax load is so heavy that it contributes to the economic depression, relief should be sought in public works that produce income rather than increase taxes.

Toll roads and bridges and hydroelectric projects are types that produce financial return soon, and reforestation is a good long-term investment. Fortunately, there are plenty of income-producing projects upon which construction could be started now for the benefit of industry and of the unemployed.

The fact that leaders of both parties have committed themselves to the principle of federal unemployment relief before congress adjourns is the most hopeful news in a long time.

Wetward the Course

Wetward the course of opinion takes its way. And, one by one, America's drys surrender to its impact. The new recruits of the last fortnight include men and women of many faiths—repealers, thoroughly disgusted with the noble experiment; moderationists, still hoping and groping; mere dry subversives.

All agree that the time has come for a showdown on the eighteenth amendment and its offspring, the Volstead act. For instance:

Representative Ruth Bryan Owen of Florida, dry daughter of a famous dry father: "I never have opposed a referendum on prohibition. My father (William Jennings Bryan) believed in the referendum. So do I."

Chester Rowell, California Hooverite and dry editor of the wet San Francisco Chronicle: "Let the Constitution prevail and let the people rule," meaning let's have a referendum.

Oswald Garrison Villard, ex-dry editor of the Nation: "Repeal the eighteenth amendment."

President Ernest M. Hopkins of Dartmouth, a former dry: "I am opposed to the eighteenth amendment, and believe it should be repealed."

Governor Henry S. Caulfield of Missouri, also an ex-dry: "The reason we have not been able to succeed with the eighteenth amendment is because it is fundamentally wrong; not wrong in purpose, but wrong governmentally. It never was intended that the federal government should police the entire country."

Senator Thomas D. Schall of Minnesota, a dry: "I am willing to be quoted as advocating a referen-

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