



The Indianapolis Times

(A SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPER)
Owned and published daily, except Sunday. The Indianapolis Times Publishing Company, 214-220 West Maryland Street, Indianapolis, Ind. Price, 25 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 FRIDAY, JULY 8, 1932.

Member of United Press, Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, Newspaper Information Service and Audit Bureau of Circulations.

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

This Can Not Be Delayed

The house of representatives had adopted a compromise relief bill not particularly satisfactory to any one, violently opposed by many. It will be killed either by the senate or by the President.

The work of getting tangible, practical relief to the people who need it must start again at the beginning.

This time, politics should be left out of the discussion. Success in a political campaign is important to a great many people, but it is far more important that citizens be saved from suffering and that the country be saved from the wrath of men made desperate by want.

It is important, first, that adequate funds be provided to assure care for all who may be in need. Some weeks ago the senate passed an emergency hunger relief bill, separating this fund from the controversial provisions of the present measure, which are intended to lessen unemployment.

Speaker Garner prevented passage of this emergency bill, forcing it to travel the slow, troublesome path of the other relief provisions.

Without delay, both houses should make money available to the states for this purpose. They should be very sure that the amount is sufficient to meet all needs.

In his proposal that the government take over the function heretofore performed by banks, and loan to private business firms and to individuals, Speaker Garner has raised a fundamental economic question. It never has been debated adequately in either house of congress nor in the committees of either house.

It is not enough for Garner and his friends to say in its defense that help must be given the little fellow as well as the big industries on top. Nor is it enough for the President to say in opposition that the proposal would lead the government into pawn-broking on a gigantic scale.

Most of us will agree with the purpose announced by Garner. On the other hand, most of us want to be shown that the Garner plan actually will bring benefit to men at the bottom of the economic scale, that it will do something to increase the purchasing power of the country rather than simply increase further or maintain the producing power.

A study of the problem should have been started months ago. The lateness of the day is added reason why it should be undertaken at once.

Committees of senate and house, or a joint non-partisan committee of both houses, should review the whole problem at once, with expert assistance.

They should consider at the same time the interesting proposal of the railroad brotherhoods, sponsored by Senator Costigan and Representative La Guardia, for putting government credit behind needy consumers.

Such a study should not take long. Congress should wait in Washington until it is completed, and should then, at last, come to grips with the problem—the problem of creating work for those who have none and restoring the general purchasing power, as the first essential toward making industry function normally.

But in the matter of direct relief to prevent suffering, there is no excuse for any delay. Such a bill should be passed, separately, at once.

To hold it back for political advantage is little short of criminal.

A Good Platform, But—

Timid souls in congress have advanced another excuse for delaying modification of the "Volstead act."

The eighteenth amendment, they argue, prohibits manufacture, sale and transportation of intoxicating beverages. Thus, until this amendment is repealed, they say, legalization of 2.75 per cent beer, 3.2 per cent beer, or 4 per cent beer might be in violation of the Constitution.

At what point, they ask, does beer become intoxicating? They evidently are insisting on a categorical answer before voting their support of the Democratic platform. They have heard the testimony of qualified experts concerning the intoxicating qualities of beer of various alcoholic content, but they demand more words from more experts.

Their high regard for the Constitution might be commendable were it not obvious that they only are angling for time.

Must they personally test the intoxicating, or non-intoxicating, qualities of 2.75, 3.2 and 4 per cent beer before they are willing to vote?

The real resistance is coming from Democrats. Is this an indication of the manner in which they will carry out the other promises of their well-written platform?

Back to Peasantry?

Many tears have been shed in our fair land over the sad fate of the Russian Kulaks. We have worked ourselves up into a white heat over the confiscation of Russian farm lands by the state.

But we conveniently have overlooked the fact that worse conditions exist among many American farmers than among the bulk of the Russian peasantry.

The Russian state at least assumes the obligation of looking after the rural population and protecting it from starvation. In our country, foreclosure matches Russian confiscation in extent, while its victims are left to suffer by themselves, according to the canons of rugged individualism.

One of the best statements of the plight of the American farmers yet published is contained in an article by Walter Liggett in the American Mercury. Liggett is a trained journalist and an expert of long standing on western farm problems.

He presents some rather astonishing facts relative to the degree of incumbrance of our farms. Forty years ago no farms were mortgaged in Oklahoma; today 50 per cent are mortgaged. Iowa, the richest agricultural state in the Union, has 65 per cent of its farms mortgaged for a total of \$450,000,000.

Since 1900 a total of 29,000 farms have been taken over by foreclosure. In North Dakota more than a third of the farms are operated by tenants, and of those operated by owners some 64 per cent are mortgaged.

Moving to the eastward edge of the great western farming area, we find Illinois with 47 per cent of its farm land mortgaged for some \$400,000,000. The story is much the same from Oklahoma to Illinois.

Prices of farm products are down to an incredible degree. The spokesman for the Colorado Farmers' Union declared that "there is not a farm commodity today that is selling at the cost of production. The new wealth created in all agricultural states of this nation will not pay the interest charges and tax bills of this last year."

In some areas there has been a reversion to a barter economy. "In some sections farmers are driving to town in ancient buggies because they do not

have money enough to buy gasoline. Whole communities have gone back to barter."

The farmer trades butter, eggs, potatoes, or other products for clothing, store food, and whatever else he needs. Several middle west colleges are accepting wheat, pigs, poultry, and other farm produce in return for tuition."

Banks have failed. Farmers have lost their savings. The lack of banks impedes the financing of those farmers in a position to borrow money on decent security. Of 1,050 banks in North Dakota in 1920, only 255 have their doors open today.

What have been the causes of this demoralization of American agriculture which threatens to reduce the free American farmer to the level of the medieval peasant?

Mechanical farming, irrigation, and scientific fertilization have increased production. Wheat and cotton production in the rest of the world has made great gains. The result has been sharper competition and lower prices.

The price of American wheat is determined by the world price in Liverpool, though three-quarters of the American wheat crop is consumed in the United States. The farmer never has been able to gain any advantages from the tariff on wheat, while the tariff on materials he has to buy greatly has increased his expenses.

The western farmer has been the victim of all sorts of extortion—from loan sharks, bankers, elevators, insurance pirates, and the like. Fraudulent grading of grain has cost the farmers of North Dakota alone as much as \$10,000,000 in a single year.

High interest, extortionate hail and other farm insurance, and unfair grain grading and docking have taken from the North Dakota farmers as much as \$50,000,000 yearly, an average of \$650 a year a farmer. This often has exceeded the total annual profit from a farm.

After the war the farmer was deflated much more rapidly and extremely than any other group. He was picked on first because he was helpless through lack of organization. No other group could force society to concede justice so quickly as the farmers. Their inability to organize leaves them a most pitiful prey of well organized minorities.

Mr. Liggett believes that unless conditions are remedied, the American farmers will go radical. They certainly have the foundations for such policy and psychology. But their record belies the prospect.

A little spurt in the price of wheat and they probably would believe, as they did in 1896 and 1924, that God once more was showing his direct approval of the Grand Old Party.

Uncle Sam Obliges

In Girard, Kan., E. Haldeman-Julius prints a socialist monthly called the American Freeman, successor to the old Appeal to Reason. For years he has sailed into the "system," flayed capitalism, called Hoover a "racketeer" and other names and tried to catch the popular ear.

His circulation didn't boom. So last month he printed an issue with a provocative article entitled: "Why Don't the Workers Raise Hell?" This chided the unemployed for cowardice, recalled that the pioneers of fifty years ago took down their muskets when they wanted food, reminded the readers that neither beasts nor birds when hungry would hold private property sacred.

It was a foolish piece, but it worked.

The local postmaster complained. The postmaster-general at Washington "took steps." The issue was refused the mails under a couple of statutes that make unallowable any matter urging treason, insurrection, or forcible resistance to any law of the U. S. A.

The publisher picked up the chip that Uncle Sam had knocked off, and reprinted the offending article in this month's issue. Uncle Sam knocked it off again and denied that issue the mails.

The performance might be amusing if it weren't dangerous. The publisher gets what he wanted, free publicity and added circulation.

And whatever influence he has as a disturber at a time when cool heads are needed will have been extended to a larger audience.

It was apparent from the first that the Chicago gangsters had nothing to do with the Democratic convention. Otherwise, a nomination would have been made on the first ballot.

A physician points out that many city dwellers walk about with their eyes on the ground. We didn't realize that modern architecture was quite that bad.

A scientist has found that the sea is receding at the rate of ten inches a year. At that rate, most of our seaside cottages must be at least 10,000 years old.

Just Every Day Sense
BY MRS. WALTER FERGUSON

Transport Whips Subs
July 8

EARLY and Huey got their man, and the triumph represented some nice dovetailing in team play. Mr. Hearst, of course, pulled all the strings, but his post was more than a thousand miles away, and so the leg work was up to Senator Long.

Louisiana's Kingfish was easily the most colorful man in the convention. Alfalfa Bill Murray seemed pallid in comparison. To a certain extent Senator Long's advantage was a physical one. In the mere matter of mileage he outdistanced all competitors.

One second would find him busily

arguing in the aisles with the next delegation, and within the next he would have forced his way back to the platform again.

"We had to sweat them through a night session before they came around for him," he declared to his constituents back home after the nomination of Franklin D. Roosevelt. And it was generous of him to call it "we" for there were many times when it seemed as if he were both star and supporting cast as well.

Inspired by the chivalry of the old southland, he leaned across the rail in her direction and said, "How are you, baby?" Before she could reply, he had bounded off to bleed and die in the cause of Franklin Roosevelt.

It is these little touches of cavalier courtesy which endear the senator to the gently bred unconstructed areas.

Long Outlasts Them

MOREOVER, the lad from the red clay country has every right to be proud of the manner in which he took the city slickers in the all-night session. It might be supposed that the Broadway boys would have been more accustomed to the rigors of a dawn patrol, but as the rosy finger of the morning came through the great windows of the stadium and messaged about in the white thatch of Mr. Curry, it was the product of the canebreaks who looked the new day in the face a front of about two miles.

Australians, too, had a successful day, carrying their line forward along the Somme river for a depth of 600 feet along a front of about a mile and a half.

The informed individual who is brave enough to speak his honest convictions will admit that the United States is not in any real danger of attack from foreign powers. We know that we never shall be in such danger if we are fair in our dealings with the world.

We never have in the whole course of our existence been on the actual defensive. If we want peace, we will have it in spite of all the alarms by the military brigade.

And it is ridiculous for us to insist that we must be as well gunned as France, for instance, who sits amid her ancient enemies like a hare within a circle of hounds. We are guarded on the east by the Atlantic and on the west by the Pacific.

OUR danger lies within our own boundaries. Do you realize that we have an army of unemployed today that is three times as large as our World war army? Is it not terrible that while the ranks of our jobless, our hungry, and our homeless increase, we pour out floods of gold for cannon, battleships, and all the cruel accoutrements of war?

This very year, while many of our ex-soldiers are starving to death, our congress has appropriated large sums for summer military camps, where well-fed boys will go through their silly drills and for the R. O. T. C., which is a sort of sissified, flapperish adjunct to our national army, and which few taxpayers want.

America will have war on her hands, but not with an alien enemy. It will be with the jingos at home.

And we are off to a magnificent start. While the rest of us have taken from a 10 to 100 per cent cut in salaries, the military gentlemen gracefully adjust to our national army, and which few taxpayers want.

Was Al Capone born in this country?

He was born in Brooklyn, N. Y.

M. E. Tracy

Says:

The Whole War Debt Situation Has Been Tossed Into Our Lap by a Coalition of Former Friends and Former Enemies.

NEW YORK, July 7.—Average people hardly could be blamed for being confused by the news from Lausanne.

First, we are told of a treaty whereby Germany will pay a fixed amount into some kind of a European fund, instead of reparations. The fixed amount is reported as three billion marks, or somewhat less than 1 per cent of the sum originally demanded by the allies.

Then we are told of a gentleman's agreement whereby the treaty will not be ratified until a war debt settlement has been reached with the United States.

Again, we are told of an accord whereby the allies will not try to collect from Germany, and Great Britain will not try to collect from the allies until such settlement has been reached.

Finally, we are told of a letter whereby Germany will be advised of all this.

Thrown in U. S. Lap

TO sum it up, Europe has not only ended the reparations farce, but agreed to a moratorium on war debts until such time as a satisfactory bargain can be made with Uncle Sam.

This means that the whole war debt situation has been tossed into our lap by a coalition of former friends and former enemies.

Theoretically, the reparations settlement will not be put up to us as having a direct bearing on debt revision, or cancellation, yet it has become the real basis of European strategy.

In other words, European governments have made an agreement among themselves conditioned on what we do. Among other things, they have agreed not to pay each other until we act, which makes it logical to assume that they will not pay us.

Some think that we should adopt the former course, that our position in world affairs makes it incumbent on us to move first and that we would gain by doing so.

Others think that it is our duty to sit tight, and I agree with them.

Assuming that the debts owed us on account of the war never will be paid, why should we call it cancellation when it amounts to repayment? Why not conduct negotiations so that the record will be kept straight?

It is not our fault that Europeans can't pay. We did not overestimate German reparations, or take any part in the abortive attempt to levy them. We would not sign the treaty of Versailles.

We Gained Nothing

THE UNITED STATES not only financed herself in war, but loaned European governments an enormous amount of money. The fact that they used most of that money to buy food and ammunition for their soldiers has little to do with the matter. They had to buy somewhere and they could not have bought anywhere without our help.

When the war was over, we asked nothing, either by way of added payments, or by way of added help.

The allies took not only all the German colonies, but about all the German cattle, coal, and ships on which they could lay their hands. Besides that, they levied a preposterous tribute on the German people.

The fact that they overreached themselves should be no concern of ours. The fact that we have no idea of forcing them to pay us beyond their strength should not deter us from insisting that negotiations be carried out in such manner as will best posterity know who made the mistake.

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