

# The Indianapolis Times

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## THE NEW DEAL

Governor Paul McNutt left no doubt in the minds of the citizens of the state as to his definition of the New Deal.

His bold declaration that it is the business of government to so adjust conditions that men can live as normal human beings means that government must restore employment.

For it is only through jobs that the vast majority of our men and women can live normal lives.

Governor McNutt had the courage to face the facts when he boldly declared:

These are the immediate tasks: To provide food, clothing, and shelter for the destitute, the aged and the infirm; to lower the cost of government and simplify its operations; to reduce and redistribute the burden of taxes; to maintain an adequate system of public education; to promote the efficient administration of justice; to strengthen necessary social agencies; to remove special privilege from the seats of power; to offer every assistance in restoring economic equilibrium, and to regain confidence in ourselves and in our institutions.

The significance of his inaugural address is in the fact that he might easily have avoided making such direct and open declarations of war against things as they are.

He is now in office, not seeking one. In the past, Indiana has come to expect its officials to use platform pledges and campaign promises as means of obtaining office, to be forgotten when the ballots are counted.

The difference in this new day is that Governor McNutt goes beyond his own campaign utterances in his pledge of changes that will banish hunger and restore men to their normal ways of life.

The address has the ringing sound of the utterance of a sincere man who understands his job and does not shirk the responsibility.

## CONFIRMED OPTIMISTS

Once again in the forefront of crusades for just causes, the League of Women Voters will ask for a constitutional amendment to make amendments to the Constitution easier.

They ask that in future changes of that document, a majority of the votes cast on any question settle the matter, instead of a majority of the total vote cast in the election.

Even after adoption by two sessions of the legislature, the change could be brought about only under the very method they propose to abolish.

The truth is that in hoping to change the Indiana Constitution except by a constitutional convention, they are merely confirmed optimists who hope against hope.

Changes in the Constitution come only by evasion and nullification, such as was perpetuated by the supreme court in behalf of the legal fraternity.

Several attempts were made by the lawyers to change the constitutional provision which declares that every citizen may practice law before its courts. On each vote there was always lacking a majority of all votes cast, and the amendment was lost.

Then came the supreme court, and under a statute passed by the legislature fixed definite requirements of education for those who are permitted to appear in courtrooms. The argument was that any person who attempted to practice without these qualifications branded himself as lacking the good moral character, which is all that the Constitution requires.

The sincere women should take a tip from the court and discover some legal way of nullifying the admittedly obsolete and impossible shackles on progress.

## MORE DRY FOLLY

There is no excuse for the deceptive prohibition amendment approved by the senate judiciary committee. As pointed out when this measure was drafted by the subcommittee last week, it does not provide for outright repeal, but merely for a revision. Unfortunately, that revision would retain in the Constitution one of the worst root evils of prohibition, which is the federal police power over local enforcement.

The effect would be to drag the federal government into a new enforcement mess which in some ways might be even worse than the present folly. Meanwhile, of course, most of the dry states would leave it to the federal taxpayer and federal officer to enforce an unenforceable law, as the dry states do at present.

The provision of the proposed revision amendment which would write into the Constitution the Webb-Kenyon law protection of dry states against liquor shipments from wet states is unnecessary. That law still is valid, as affirmed by the supreme court, and will operate for this purpose automatically on outright repeal of the eighteenth amendment.

Perhaps the most unpardonable provision of the revision amendment is that specifying ratification by state legislatures rather than by the special state conventions advocated by both Republican and Democratic platforms.

The reason both party conventions turned down the ratification by legislature method is that a small dry minority—for instance, 134 state senators in thirteen states—can block ratification by all the others.

This is not merely a theoretic difficulty. It is a very practical invitation to dry forces to indulge in a riot of political trading in state legislatures, which not only would delay or prevent ratification, but sacrifice larger public interests—as always happens when legislative log-rolling operates.

The legislature subjected to this log-rolling could not express the voters' mandate accurately because they were not elected on this issue or for this purpose.

Indeed, those whose memories are not too short will recall that this same defect in the method of ratification of the eighteenth amendment was the first factor in undermining public support of the amendment. As stated by the Wickersham commission:

"The ratification of the (eighteenth) amendment was given by legislatures which were not in general elected with any reference to this subject."

many instances, as a result of old systems of apportionment, these legislative bodies were not regarded as truly representative of all elements of the community."

Neither the Republican nor Democratic party can permit this judiciary committee amendment to pass without deliberately breaking faith with the voters to whom they pledged the convention method of ratification.

## THE COOLIDGE PARADOX

Perhaps this is the explanation of the paradox of Calvin Coolidge, the careful, temperate, frugal man in whose administration grew the greatest Wall Street boom of all times, a boom that was encouraged by the administration despite the personal thrift of the man who headed it.

Calvin Coolidge, out of his New England environment, and through those very personal traits of care and caution, had learned to view finance in the terms of his own pocketbook. He understood personal thrift. He knew how to save and to economize as an individual.

But when he viewed Wall Street, with all its maze, with all its "wheels within wheels," with all its national and international aspects, and with all its apparently great success, it was something so foreign to Mr. Coolidge's individual financial experiences that he failed to recognize and appreciate the personal thrift of the man who headed it.

The Coolidge technique, running back through the years to New England, to boyhood and to early career, was a technique of shortened perspective. He whittled his problems to fit the limits of his own experiences. He used no large canvas, but instead worked in miniature.

That technique was effective in many things. But when applied to the maze of finance in Wall Street, things that were outside of Mr. Coolidge's personal experiences, that technique did not apply. And like many men who never have made money in large sums, he had a tremendous respect for the judgment of men who were able to do that, and who seemed to have a broad and comprehensive understanding of the "larger economies."

As the nation's chief executive, he was, generally speaking, content to accept the judgment of such men, to whom finance in a big way seemed a commonplace.

Thus it was that as an executive, Mr. Coolidge stood as an exponent of the New Era, while, as an individual, he practiced the good old virtue of thrift.

## INVESTIGATE

Senator Robert E. Wagner will appear soon before a senate committee to tell why his resolution for investigation of labor conditions along the Mississippi river flood control project should be passed.

That committee, and the senate itself, should get the inquiry under way immediately. Grave charges of the existence of "virtual slavery" in some contractors' camps along the project have been made.

These should be inquired into fully, and they will be, if Senator Wagner's resolution is approved speedily.

The chairman of the house committee on the disposition of useless executive papers says his committee could be abolished without doing much harm. Judging from the fate of the Wickersham report, there must be some other way of getting rid of them.

Lambasting the United States again, George Bernard Shaw, the playwright, says he has defined the 100 per cent American as 99 per cent idiot, and still "they just adore me." How flattering to Bernard, if he's right in both respects.

They used to kid the lightning rod salesmen pretty hard, but after all they gave the farmer more relief in a buckboard load of iron and two shiny balls than all our congressmen have managed for him since.

Al Smith boasts he still wears some shoes that are ten years old. Well, there's nothing that will detract attention from a fellow's feet like a snappy brown derby.

Whatever the flaws in technocracy, there's no question that the steam shovel has been the cause of a vast amount of unemployment—around the excavations.

There's nothing that will take the conceit out of a man quicker than driving through the wholesale section and bumping fenders with the truck drivers.

BY MRS. WALTER FERGUSON

**Just Plain Sense**  
If you think life is treating you shabbily, consider that unlucky wight, John Pettis of White Plains, N. Y., who, for nonpayment of back alimony probably will languish in jail the rest of his life.

Mr. Pettis doubtless does not see humor in the situation, but his viewpoint is warped, for it contains plenty. The scream is furnished by the supreme court judge who is studying the case. He announces:

"I have been convinced for several weeks that Mrs. Pettis' purpose is to keep her husband in jail. It appears that the imprisonment of Pettis will be ended only with his death, unless the court can find some way to give him relief."

Before such situations, courts are singularly helpless. This case is as good as a three-ring circus, provided, of course, you are not in Pettis' shoes. After scraping up a bit of money now and then to apply on the amount, the prisoner is released and steps forth timidly into the sunshine.

But each time, as he goes sneaking down the first alley, he is confronted by another paper, charging contempt, and back into jail he is popped.

THE injured wife, it seems, feels that ex-husbands have no business to roam at large, and before her determination the victim, the judge, the courts, society in general, stand powerless.

One can't help but sympathize with the judge, too. His heart so evidently is in the right place, but he is befuddled completely—as who of us is not?—by the intricacies of his own precious law.

He harbors a faint suspicion that Justice suffers, but, lacking a precedent to follow, what can a poor judge do?

Edward III of Old England started the unhappy custom of basing court decisions upon previous cases, and most of our lawyers go that far back into history for their inspiration.

Unluckily, however, there was no such thing as a law in Edward's day, which leaves the courts impotent and proves once again how widely separated are law and justice.

Indeed, those whose memories are not too short will recall that this same defect in the method of ratification of the eighteenth amendment was the first factor in undermining public support of the amendment. As stated by the Wickersham commission:

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## THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

### When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain!



### It Seems to Me . . . by Heywood Broun

I MUST get a Hiram Johnson schedule and find out when his turn comes on again. I mean the act in which he thumps his chest and shakes his fist at foreigners.

It is my plan to stow away in the senate press gallery and wait for the moment when he says, "To the last nickel." At that point I purpose to leap to my feet and shout, "How about my \$5,

For more than twenty years the gentleman from California has owed me \$5. It will be precisely twenty-one years come next October. It is true that this was not a loan, but a bet. I said the Red Sox would win the world series, and Senator Johnson said they wouldn't.

Hiram Johnson was running for Vice-President on the Bull Moose ticket at the time, and I was a humble reporter assigned to take down his speech each evening. It was an excellent piece of type casting on both sides. Senator Johnson always made the same speech, and I always wrote the same story.

They used to kid the lightning rod salesmen pretty hard, but after all they gave the farmer more relief in a buckboard load of iron and two shiny balls than all our congressmen have managed for him since.

One of the largest losers looked up reflectively and answered, "You go out and cover the story for us, and if that sunset says anything to Hiram I wouldn't be surprised to have my paper order fifty words."

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And pretty soon Hiram had me worried, too, although I didn't break into tears. He began to tell me how he had fought predatory wealth all his life. Seemingly he was the Southern Pacific railroad for breakfast every morning.

Other politicians in other parties were out for what they could get to line their pockets. Hiram wanted only the votes of the plain people. He said he was a plain person himself. He said that Lincoln was a plain person and that he, Hiram Johnson, would rather be Lincoln than a malefactor of great wealth.

Hiram Johnson, it developed, loved the American home. He said that it was the foundation of our republic and that he, Hiram, would give his heart's blood to preserve it and never even think of any reward.

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