

The Indianapolis Times

(A SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPER)

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Member of United Press,
Scraps Howard Newspaper
Alliance, Newspaper Enterprise
Association, Newspaper Information
Service and Audit Bureau of Circulations.Owned and published daily
(except Sunday) by the Indianapolis Times Publishing
Co., 214-220 West Maryland
street, Indianapolis, Ind.
Price, 5 cents; Sunday, 2
cents; a copy; elsewhere, 3
cents—delivered by carrier, 12
cents a week. Mail subscrip-
tions: rates: U. S. \$3 a
year; outside of Indiana, \$5
a year; outside of Indiana, \$6
a year.

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1933.

G. O. P. OBSTRUCTION

I^N announcing the old guard Republican effort to block the Roosevelt-controlled inflation program, Senator David A. Reed of Pennsylvania said his object was to give time for public sentiment to form. It has formed, all right. But not the way the Reeds and Mellons predicted.

Instead of supporting Senator Reed, the messages pouring in upon congress from the country since the Reed announcement have attacked obstruction and demanded quick action on the Roosevelt bill.

Perhaps the old guard is not really surprised. Despite its demonstrated ability during the Hoover administration and in the last election to misread the signs of the times, it must know that the national demand for controlled inflation is real and widespread.

We suspect that the G. O. P. leaders are not speaking for what they believe to be public opinion, but merely "talking for the record."

They seem to be taking a long gamble on the chance that the Roosevelt program will fail; in which case they want the defeated Republican party to be in a position to say "we told you so."

The country in this time naturally has very little sympathy with partisan political maneuvers.

We are not in the habit of questioning the motives of those with whom we disagree. But if the Reeds want to persuade any one of their sincerity in this fight, they will rise above the absurd arguments they have used to date.

There is room for honest difference of opinion. Particularly in this situation there is a valuable function which the Republican opposition might fulfill. Intelligent criticism might result in writing into the bill further control factors.

The President does not want uncontrolled inflation, and therefore has proposed a measure filled with checks and limits. If the Republicans can suggest other safety devices they will be serving the country and will get all the credit due them.

Instead of such constructive opposition, or any intelligent attack on the measure for what it is, the Reeds content themselves with shouting about the dire fate of the old German mark. This is not an argument; it is a red herring.

The conditions in the two countries are not comparable. Germany had a gold shortage; we have the world's largest gold reserve. Germany had an unfavorable trade balance; ours is favorable.

Germany balanced her budget with printing press money; we are balancing ours with economies. Germany was a debtor nation; we are the world's creditor.

Even if the Republicans get around to legitimate criticisms of the Roosevelt program, they will not be able to defeat it unless they can provide something better in its place.

The country is in the position where something must be done. The do-nothing deflation policy of Hoover, Mellon, Reed & Co. wrecked the nation.

Two alternatives are left. One is wild, shotgun inflation. The other is carefully controlled inflation—an honest dollar. The President has chosen the latter.

His measure may not be perfect, and it probably will not bring the millennium. But whatever its dangers and uncertainties, they are small compared to the risks of unlimited inflation or the suicide of more deflation.

THE GOLD STANDARD

FOR more than a year a dreadful specter has been held up before our eyes—the unspeakable danger that we might, if we were not careful, some day be forced off of the gold standard.

We shuddered when told that at one time, a year ago, we actually were within a few days of such a development; we gave devoted lip service to the plea that this dreadful calamity must at all costs be prevented.

Well, now it has happened—and every one seems to be happier. A new atmosphere of confidence has arisen. Commodity prices seem to be ready about to swing back upward.

The action which once was dreaded as a catastrophe now is being hailed as a master stroke.

What brought about the change? Bitter experience, largely, which taught us that the price we were paying for our gold dollar was too high.

A good many things look quite different today than they looked a year ago. One of them is the gold standard.

NOW UNCLE SAM DOES IT

IT is nearly two years since Gerard Swope told an industrial audience of a far-reaching plan he had devised by which industry might try to stabilize employment and production and remove the fear of destitution from the workers' horizon.

When he made that speech, Mr. Swope was introduced by Owen D. Young; and Mr. Young warned his hearers that unless business found a way to solve the problems arising from overproduction and unemployment, it could expect to see the federal government tackling the job.

Mr. Young's warning was praised widely and Mr. Swope's plan was commented on extensively; but nothing very definite in the way of results was obtained by either man.

And today Mr. Young's prophecy is coming true, while Mr. Swope's notion that unrestrained competition blights a highly developed society has been abundantly justified.

The parallels between Mr. Swope's plan and the program being devised by Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins are striking.

Mr. Swope demanded stabilization of pro-

duction and of employment, co-ordination of production and consumption on a broad basis, establishment of a series of trade associations to make such steps possible, and a widespread system of unemployment and old-age insurance.

Miss Perkins calls for very much the same thing, except that her plan lays more emphasis on hours of labor and rates of pay and so far, at least—pays little attention to the insurance feature. But her plan in the main is similar to Mr. Swope's.

The chief differences between the two arise from the fact that Mr. Swope's program was to be initiated voluntarily by industry, while Miss Perkins' is to be forced on industry by the government.

And to those industrialists who are objecting to Miss Perkins' plan, it need only be said that they let Mr. Swope's plan collect dust for a year and a half without making the slightest effort to give it a trial.

They were warned at the time that something of that kind was inevitable, but the warning went unheeded. They refused to take Mr. Swope as a leader; now they can take Miss Perkins—and like her.

BEER AND YOUR FIGURE

ONE of the minor issues of the day seems to be the question of whether the consumption of beer will add unwanted pounds to the figures of women who want to be slender.

Professor Lafayette B. Mendel of Yale predicts that it will.

A quart of beer, he points out, contains 545 calories—only 105 less than a quart of milk. Consequently, if you add a quart of beer to your regular daily diet, and don't cut down on anything else, you are pretty certain to take on weight, just as you would if you drank an extra quart of milk every day.

Of course, you can get around that by leaving off the menu a sufficient quantity of some other food to balance the diet. And if you are a feminine beer drinker, and you want to keep your figure, it looks as if that is about what you'll have to do.

OUR NEWEST DIRIGIBLE

THE airship Macon has gone aloft at last, and every one who watched her as she slid effortlessly along the sky must have felt a sharp pang of regret at the thought that these exciting and magnificent dirigibles are not, after all, quite as practical as we had supposed.

What the Macon's future is going to be only time can tell. She hardly was launched under auspicious circumstances. The Akron was destroyed in a gale just as the Macon was made ready; then the Macon herself had to wait in her hangar for more than a week until mild weather came.

The net result seemed to be just so much added proof that the big dirigible must be a fair-weather bird.

But she is a beautiful sight to watch, for all that—beautiful and thrilling. A lot of people will continue to hope, for more reasons than one, that this ship will be able to return the reliability of the giant airship.

PERSISTENCE WINS

(From Current History)

Harold L. Ickes, secretary of the interior, has been for years the chief ferret of Chicago. He lay at the entrance of the local railroads of corruption and could wait for decades till the rats came out to be devoured and destroyed.

He was among the first Chicagoans—perhaps altogether the first to declare a Carthaginian war of extermination upon Samuel Insull. He was—and is—a Republican.

He never was able to gather behind him more than the tiniest fraction of the Illinois Republican party. In 1932, he wanted Hiram Johnson for President. Then he wanted Gifford Pinchot. Only afterward did he want Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

In supporting Mr. Roosevelt, he supported his first big winner in his whole uncorrelated maverick political life. The reward was a cabinet appointment.

It is explained by the desire of Mr. Roosevelt to please Hiram Johnson. There is a much deeper reason, a psychological reason. Mr. Ickes simply captivated Mr. Roosevelt's fancy.

Mrs. Ickes' protracted quixotic assaults upon all the most towering strongholds of Chicago and Illinois inquiry qualified him in Mr. Roosevelt's mind, as being a protagonist of some sort of new deal, or some sort of upsetting of the stodgy Philistines, of some sort of passing of a Jordan into some sort of promised land.

So Mr. Ickes, moral hero, and totally unsuccessful Republican politician, now is a Democratic cabinet officer and a collaborator of Mr. Roosevelt's in the search for whatever the new deal ultimately may turn out to be.

MATERNITY DEATHS

AT the time draws near for the annual observation of Mother's day, the Maternity Center Association of New York points out that the best way to celebrate the day would be to crystallize public opinion on the vital need of improving maternity care.

Every year some 16,000 American women die in childbirth—a record that is disgracefully worse than the records of many other countries which some of us like to feel are not as far advanced as our own.

Experts assert that at least half of the 16,000 deaths could and should be prevented.

"There is a biting irony," says a statement from the association, "in the fact that in several countries where Mother's day is unknown, motherhood is twice as safe as in America."

There is, indeed. Our Mother's day celebration ought to include a new drive to reduce the maternity death rate.

THE NEW D. A. R.

HOW the winds of America's new liberalism have swept away some old mental cobwebs is shown by what happened at the Washington convention of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Up to now the Daughters have been heavy joiners. Red baiters, heresy hunters, blacklists, star-spangled patriots with or without axes to grind never bugled the charge without finding the Daughters eager to follow.

This time they determined to do their own fighting. They voted to back their president-general's policy of cutting loose from propaganda organizations. They declined to take

part in a mass meeting sponsored by Representative Ham Fish to oppose Russian recognition.

They listened to Amelia Earhart tell them they should not fight for armaments unless they are willing to bear arms themselves. They heard Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins tell them that "out of the welfare of the workers flows the welfare of the country."

Of course, the Daughters have not gone radical. But apparently they are willing to concede that their organization does not hold a monopoly of the national patriotism.

INFLATION ISN'T A CURE-ALL

WE Americans seem to be an incurably hopeful people. And there are times when our excessive optimism is apt to flip around between our ankles and trip us up.

For some reason the nation's departure

from the gold standard has raised a new crop of hopes. To a certain extent these hopes are justified. We are getting bold and decisive action, at least; for better or for worse, we are on the move, and there is every indication that the rise in price of commodities and basic securities will have a deeply beneficial effect on the life of the country.

We simply shall nullify these gains if we take it for granted that the controlled inflation plan is going to solve all of our troubles.

Senator Thomas, commenting on the proposed issuance of United States notes to retire government bonds, remarked:

"If this amendment goes into the farm bill, it becomes the chief element. The rest of the bill will be forgotten. Inflation in itself will be farm relief and bank relief. In my judgment this amendment solves every problem we have, so far as a money policy can solve them."

This statement probably is true enough—provided that its final words always are remembered. The new scheme will solve our problems "so far as a money policy can solve them"; but it must not be forgotten that some of them can not be solved by a money problem, and that the reform and recovery program previously outlined by the administration still needs to be pushed ahead.

The problem of direct relief for unemployment is still with us, for example. The affairs of the railroads need straightening out. The measures designed to rectify the glaring faults in our banking system are just as much needed as ever.

The federal "blue sky" proposition is as vital as ever. The plan to float a huge bond issue for public works still needs to be pushed.

A start has been made, and there is plenty of reason to believe that it is going to do us a lot of good. So long as we don't get so optimistic that we assume there is nothing more to be done, we ought to make out splendidly.

Dispatch from Germany says an editor who cartooned Hitler unfavorably has been taken into "protective custody" by the Nazis. Who, we presume, will then give him a bevelent beating.

Heavy thinking, says Dr. Bruno Oetteking of Columbia, is no cause of baldness. But the opposite is true when your wife notices that thin spot.

By C. E. W.

How to "Continue" the Depression:

Consolidate Railroads—Discharge 350,000 employees, thereby removing that much buying power, as well as curtailing the buying power of remaining employees fearful of being discharged later.

Consolidate Insurance Companies—Let the government provide insurance at half cost by closing all insurance offices and buildings and discharging hundreds of thousands of employees.

Consolidate All Down Town Stores—Let one of the large chain stores serve all. In this manner most of the downtown districts can be closed completely. No expenses, such as rents, utilities, etc., to pay. Discharge hundreds of thousands of employees.

Stocks certainly fell down far enough. It oughtn't to be a surprise to see them go "Boom!"

Bill aims to save the government \$4,000 a day by cutting down free copies of the Congressional Record now given members. Say, who made that crack, "Talk's cheap?"

J. P. Morgan passed the plate as senior warden at church service on Easter Sunday. Probably didn't find it necessary to ask for a second helping.

Hawaii is out of beer already, and the nearest brewery is 2,000 miles away. Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink!

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