



The Indianapolis Times

Cloudy with probably occasional rain or snow tonight and tomorrow; slightly warmer tonight, with lowest temperature near freezing.

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LIGHT CO. MERGER RECORDS MISSING, PROBERS DISCOVER

Gone From Public Service Commission Books, Investigators for Times Told by Government Aids.

'BACKGROUND' OF FIRM IS STUDIED

Entrance of Insull Machine Into Indianapolis Recalled; Appraisal Lists Also Said to Be 'Lost.'

BY BASIL GALLAGHER
Times Staff Writer

Missing from the files of the public service commission are the reports of proceedings of the merger of the Indianapolis Light and Heat Company and the Merchants Heat and Light Company, authorized by the commission Jan. 10, 1927, The Indianapolis Times learned today.

As a matter of law, these reports must be available. The law specifically states that all documents relating to mergers, et cetera, should be on file at the public service commission offices in the statehouse and available for public perusal at all times.

The present public service commission, appointed by Governor Paul V. McNutt when he took office last year, can not be blamed for the absence of the documents, for the present commission merely inherited conditions existing under former public service commissions, it is pointed out.

The present public service commission, headed by Perry L. McCart and composed of Samuel L. Trabue and Moie Cook, has prosecuted vigorously all abuses of public utility trust since taking office.

Sherman Minton, public counselor before the commission, not only brought the present action against the Indianapolis Power and Light Company to show cause why electric rates in Indianapolis should not be reduced, but also brought a similar action against the Public Service Company of Indiana. This action now is under consideration for the writing of a final order by the commission.

Investigation by The Times over a period of eight months discloses that these important records of the merger proceedings, involving millions of dollars worth or property, are missing.

TOLE Records Are Missing

Investigators for The Times have checked the files of the public service commission and made requests for the merger reports of Jan. 10, 1927, many times, only to be told that the records are missing.

Also missing from the files of the public service commission are seven of eight appraisals made by five appraisal engineers of the properties of the Indianapolis Light and Heat Company and the Merchants Heat and Light Company referred to in the order of Jan. 10, 1927.

Under the public service commission act (the Shively-Spencer utility act of 1933) Section 32 states:

"All facts and information in the possession of the commission shall be public and all reports, records, files, books, accounts, papers and memoranda of every nature whatsoever in their possession shall be open to inspection by the public at all times except as provided in Section 33."

Section Is Quoted

Section 33 of the act states: "Whenever the commission shall determine it to be necessary in the interests of the public to withhold from the public any facts or information in its possession, such facts may be withheld for such period after the acquisition thereof, not exceeding ninety days, as the commission may determine."

Section 34 of the act states: "No facts or information shall be withheld by the commission from the public for a period longer than nine days, nor be so withheld for any reason whatsoever other than the interest of the public."

When a representative of The Times requested the eight appraisals made by experts for the Indianapolis Power and Light Company, employees of the state insisted (Turn to Page Fourteen)

STRAUS DENIES STORY HE'LL QUIT PARIS POST

Ambassador in Washington, Com-
fers at State Department.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2.—Jesse Isidor Straus, American ambassador to France, today flatly denied published reports that he anticipated resigning his post.

Mr. Straus said he had not resigned and had no intention of doing so. He conferred for nearly an hour with Undersecretary of State Phillips and then went into conference with Assistant Secretary of State Carr.

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By United Press

OKLAHOMA CITY, Jan. 2.—Frank Russell Petroleum Company's No. 1 Reno oil well endangered east Oklahoma City today with a roaring fire after an explosion that sent one man to a hospital.

While listening to the radio broadcast of the game from Pasadena, Cal., King turned to a companion, saying, "I'm leaving you now," he died before medical aid could be summoned.

Thieves who broke into a restaurant at 1250 West New York street last night through a rear door ransacked the place of utensils and equipment valued at \$75. Charles Martin, proprietor, reported to police.

VIENNA, Jan. 2.—Jacob Wassermann, 60, famous German novelist, died yesterday at his country estate, an exile from Nazi Germany.

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