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ROY W. HOWARD President
TALCOTT POWELL Editor
EARL D. BAKER Business Manager
Phone Eddy 5501



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Give Light and the
People Will Find
Their Own Way

SATURDAY, SEPT. 15, 1934.

THE LEAGUE'S SORE SPOT

THE sore spot of the League of Nations has been touched again by Poland's attitude to repudiate the minorities treaty.

With the proper indignation the self-righteous great powers—Britain, France and Italy—pointedly reminded Poland yesterday that she had accepted the minority and other treaties “in exchange for her independence.” Poland has no legal right to kick over the treaty on her own motion and without consent of the other parties to it. This objection to Poland's move is especially pertinent because the international treaty protects minorities who are too weak to protect themselves.

Nevertheless, there is no justice in subjecting Poland and certain of the other “new” countries to supervision and regulation from which the older and larger countries are free. There is an issue of obvious and unjustified discrimination. Similar discrimination has been used against Germany, of course, in the matter of disarmament.

From the beginning, the league has been rigged in favor of the great powers, who too often have exercised arbitrary dictatorial control of the international machinery at the expense of the weaker powers.

Poland and other smaller nations have a case. But they will have to use more intelligent and effective methods than Poland has used in the minorities dispute if they hope to win their fight for a more democratic league.

PAT PLAYS SANTA CLAUS

PROBABLY it is nothing more than political pander when Senator Pat Harrison announces at the summer White House that the next congress may not have to pass a new tax law.

The astute senate finance committee chairman knows there are mounting billions of deficit that must be met. He knows these huge bills for relief and recovery must be paid.

It is true, as Senator Harrison says, that the federal revenues are increasing. Taxpayers turned in a billion more dollars for the last fiscal year than they did for the entire year before. But much of this new revenue came from the pockets of consumers, in the form of excise and processing taxes on food and clothing. Only \$70,000,000 represented increases in taxes on incomes.

There will have to be higher income taxes up and down the line, based on capacity to pay. It is only fair that those who have profited by incomes through better business should help meet the cost of the recovery program. This has been done in England and other countries, and Americans are no less patriotic.

But Senator Harrison apparently has his eye on the November election. He probably recalls Al Smith's remark that people don't shoot Santa Claus just before Christmas, and he is putting on whiskers. It is unlikely that he will fool the political grownups of either party.

A STRONGER LEAGUE

NEWS that the council of the League of Nations is ready to welcome Soviet Russia as a member of the league means that this unwieldy and sometimes rather unreal international organization is ready to take a step which should properly have been taken several years ago.

Whatever the league may or may not amount to as an international force, it is at least obvious that it could never realize its full potentialities so long as it excluded one of the strongest nations on earth from membership. With the United States staying out, of its own desire, and Soviet Russia excluded like a card-sharper from an exclusive bridge club, the league was doomed from the beginning to be only partly effective.

Admission of the Soviet union does not, of course, mean that the league will immediately become all that its founders hoped. But at least it will be operating on a sounder basis than it has in the past. Part of its peculiar element of unreality will be gone.

TALK AVOIDS TROUBLE

THE English seem to have thorough knowledge of the way in which free speech serves as a valuable social safety valve.

British Fascists had a big mass meeting in London's Hyde park the other day. Thousands of Fascists paraded; thousands of their sympathizers gathered to cheer them; thousands upon thousands of bitter foes of Fascism gathered to heckle them—and, finally, five thousand bobbies were present to see that no blood was spilled.

There are civic authorities who would have been alarmed at such a demonstration and would have ordered all speeches called off and all mobs dispersed, to prevent trouble. But not the British. They let everybody talk. The bobbies had little or nothing to do. No heads were broken, no noses were punched, and everybody went home happy after it was over.

By letting the discontented talk their heads off, the British very frequently escape serious trouble.

REAL ROMANCE

THE word “romance” is a strange one. It usually conjures up visions of men who live lives of danger and action—soldiers, cowboys, explorers, sailors, and so on; too often we forget that the greatest romance of all is sometimes to be found in a life which, to all outward seeming, is prosaic and uneventful.

One is reminded of this by news of the recent death of Dr. William Campbell Posey, noted Pennsylvania ophthalmologist.

Dr. Posey spent his life combating diseases of the eye; and a short time before his death he wrote a short article for the Life-Saving

Review, telling of the romance he had found in the long fight to keep people from losing their eyesight.

He told of the German physician, 150 years ago, who first suspected that infection in a child's eyes at birth could be the cause of blindness, and who vainly tried to persuade his colleagues of the truth of his theory. He had no success.

Physicians kept on explaining to harassed parents that their children had lost their sight because of peculiar atmospheric conditions, cold drafts, unbalanced conditions in the alimentary canal, and the like—and new-born children kept on being stricken with blindness.

Then Dr. Posey went on to carry the story down through the years. He told how the old German doctor was vindicated, some eighty years later, when another German doctor showed the world how to have the sight of thousands of infants annually by dropping a 2 per cent solution of silver nitrate into the eyes of new-born babies.

He told how other specialists devised equipment to make happier and easier the lives of people born with weak or defective eyes; how special methods of care and training were drawn up to fit those who did lose their sight for useful, normal existence; how hospitals and clinics were founded to prevent blindness; how means were found of preventing many injuries to the eyes; how a vast mass of knowledge of disease of the eye was compiled to make the task of saving eyesight progressively easier.

And in all of this Dr. Posey found an absorbing, romantic story—as the rest of us can do, also, if we get rid of our preconceived notions about what romance really is.

In the age-old struggle to make the hard lot of human beings a little brighter and happier there is romance enough to satisfy the most ardent. All we need is some one like Dr. Posey to make us see it.

A CURE FOR NERVES

OVER in London they are trying a new traffic system. Autoists are forbidden to sound their horns after 11 at night. The theory is that when a pedestrian steps off a curb, the motorist won't reach promptly for the horn, but will slow down and stop. This, London believes, will reduce traffic accidents. Too, London wants to sleep and horn-blowing isn't the best thing in the world for a good night's rest.

We in Indianapolis might take the hint for most of this city's automobile drivers are afflicted with toot-itis. Toot-itis, it might be explained, is a peculiar disease.

It's not limited to any particular class. Old and young both have it. Perhaps we should say that four out of five have it. Here's how toot-itis works! You're driving up the street; the traffic light half a block away turns from green to yellow, then to red; you slow up, come to a stop. Cars stop behind you. Then the light changes from red to yellow and although you're supposed to start on the green, not the yellow, you are immediately urged to get along by a blast of toots from behind you.

Or perhaps it's a halt at a downtown corner. If the traffic officer doesn't switch the traffic in ten or twenty seconds, somebody back in the line lets out a weak toot. The fellow in front of him lets out a bolder beep. Suddenly, the chorus starts, honks, beeps and toots. It's all toot-itis.

Let up on that horn, Mr. Indianapolis. We'd like a little peace and quiet for a change.

MANUFACTURING DEFIA

THE National Association of Manufacturers cast itself in a questionable role when it advised all employers to ignore the Houdre case decision of the National Labor Relations Board upholding qualified majority rule in collective bargaining.

Unless and until the courts upset it, the labor board ruling stands as the highest interpretation of the collective bargaining law passed by congress in Section 7A of the recovery act and in Joint Resolution 44. It is not in the spirit of orderly government for private citizens or organizations to defy law agencies by such methods. Employers have much to lose if defiance of law becomes general in the country.

One wonders what the gentlemen of this association would have said if the American Federation of Labor advised all workers to defy the National Labor Relations Board and its decisions. Wouldn't the cry of “revolution” be raised against labor?

Americans who do not like the laws, or their interpretation by duly constituted authorities, have recourse to the courts and congress.

The National Association of Manufacturers can afford not to encourage Americans to resort to less orderly methods of change.

MODEL OF GOOD WILL

THE United States and Canada joined hands recently to dedicate restored Fort Niagara, at the foot of Lake Erie; and while the colorful ceremonies drew much public attention, the whole occasion really should have been impressed on our attention even more strongly.

For this celebration emphasized a familiar but still profoundly important fact; namely, that the long frontier between Canada and the United States has been unfortified for 117 years.

In a world that bristles with international fears and rivalries, here are two great nations so supremely confident that they will keep the peace with each other that they let their joint frontier go entirely undefended.

It is a unique achievement in international relations, and restoration of the old bastions of Ft. Niagara is simply a symbol of it. The people of the two nations have a right to be exceedingly proud.

Count and Countess Armand, big landholders from France, were pictured smiling during their trip around the world. In the face of new deals and higher taxes.

Major Angas certainly is right about the coming American boom—at least it's coming for Major Angas.

The bones of a man born 12,000 years ago were found in Minnesota. If he would only talk, the investigation committee might get some more munition information.

No hurricanes or floods should be scheduled during October. All the Red Cross people will be away at a convention in Tokio.

Maybe we wouldn't mind taxes so much if we could pay them through those “marble game” machines.

London collects taxes through a \$10 fine on auto horns blown after midnight. But our politicians must keep some pleasures.

Liberal Viewpoint

BY DR. HARRY ELMER BARNES

A READER in Cincinnati takes me for a rough ride with respect to some things he alleges I have said about collective bargaining and labor unions.

Whatever his strictures, I admire the man because he has had the nerve to sign his name to his letter, something which is altogether too rare with correspondents who have something unpleasant to say. He writes as follows:

“Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes,

“Dear Sir:

“For some time I have been reading your pink—dark pink—stuff syndicated in the Scripps chain.

“One wonders about just how such a mind as yours works—if at all.

“Any one who deigns to write for the public should have as his first clear principle intellectual honesty. You show none of this.

“As an example you relate the killing or wounding of strikers by the police and national guard. Why do we have police and the national guard if not to preserve the peace and protect life and property? Such stuff as you preach is a direct incentive to anarchy.

“You do on the divine rights to strike. Why not a divine right to work unmolested?

“To be fair, why didn't you tell about the Toledo strikers not only going into property not their own and destroying and bombing? Why didn't you tell of the brutal beatings of those who wanted to work, and the destroying of over three hundred cars belonging to their fellow workmen?

“Few men of any character of intelligence or honesty can write such stuff, unless you think it is more salable because it stirs up class prejudice.

“Why not visualize employers charging with stones, and clubs and guns and bombs the headquarters of an A. F. of L. local? Or destroying the laborer's individual property because the laborer would not come to work on the employer's terms.

“You and the other reds and anarchists would howl to the high heaven at this. My only hope is that you may be the personal victim of the lawlessness you condone and approve.

“Damn you! I hope you need police or national guard protection for your life or property and can't get it.

“You and your ilk are too damned big cowards to go to Russia, but you ought to be sent. Yours, C. W. DAVIS.”

“I MAY misjudge Mr. Davis' sentiments, but if I read between the lines of his letter correctly it somehow seems to me that he doesn't like me and possibly be opposed to labor unions and collective bargaining.

If he believes that I ever have written anything condoning the wanton violence of the labor unionists, his spectacles have done him a signal disservice.

Indeed, if he had flattered me enough to be a “constant reader,” he could not very well have missed a number of columns devoted to a scathing denunciation of labor racketeers and gangsters.

I never have gone further than to maintain that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. So long as employers invite and practice violence, they can not very well complain if their employees begin to play at the same game, especially when the police are far more solicitous in protecting employers from laboring violence than they are in coming to the rescue of employees threatened by company gunmen, deputy sheriffs and police.

Suppose, however, that I were for a moment to espouse wholeheartedly the cause of property. Unless we have ample mass purchasing power, capitalism is bound to fold up, to be followed by an economic system which will have slight respect for property rights. We know well enough from more than a century of experience, that without labor unionism employees voluntarily will not pay wages sufficient to supply this necessary purchasing power.

Alert and vigorous labor unionism is the surest bulwark against the ultimate extinction of private property in the United States.

Mr. Davis apparently does not like Russia, but those who share his philosophy are doing more than any one else to make Communism inevitable in the United States.

“I have just received from Irvin (Parachute company) some scarfs to distribute among the pilots here. I am afraid that the propaganda was sent too late, because I was informed definitely that the government had ordered the consul to place orders with our competitors (Switlik) for the parachutes they are in need of”

Artemis Denasas of the Societe Financiere et Technique de Grece, at Athens (in a letter to Export Corporation officials):

“I have succeeded to persuade the air minister through a common friend to give his preference to your material. . . . Write to me a private letter saying . . . you will allow me a commission of 5 per cent. I shall transfer this letter to the friend of the minister in order to guarantee him that he shall get his profits without this transaction being disclosed. . . .”

“. . . .”

C. W. Webster, agent of Export Corporation for Latin-America (in a letter to Captain C. K. Travis, his representative at La Paz, Bolivia):

“In selling this Falcon to Peru, please advise this, if possible, in the same manner as the other Falcon and Hawk we sold. Payment to be made to me personally and not to the company, as I have certain commissions that will have to be paid.”

“. . . .”

“I have succeeded to persuade the air minister through a common friend to give his preference to your material. . . . Write to me a private letter saying . . . you will allow me a commission of 5 per cent. I shall transfer this letter to the friend of the minister in order to guarantee him that he shall get his profits without this transaction being disclosed. . . .”

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