

The Indianapolis Times

(A SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPER)

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Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 1935.

TRUST LAWS WITH TEETH

THE proposals of the NRA Consumers' Advisory Board to protect the people and the nation's resources from business exploitation seem to have more merit than the old antitrust laws.

A weakness in the attacks of Senators Borah and Nye and others on the alleged monopolistic tendencies of NRA codes is their seeming reliance upon the myth that monopolies did not exist before the NRA. Yet nearly every one knows that 15 years before NRA, court interpretations pulled the teeth of antitrust laws.

The consumers' board candidly recognizes that "certain industries are permanently beyond the reach of anti-trust laws," and that "in those industries, monopolistic control is notoriously present; competition had passed away long before enactment of NIRA."

It proposes new and more vigorous methods of control—through codes that outlaw monopolistic price-fixing and are administered by authorities representing the public interest. It suggests taxing the monopolist's profits, revoking his patents, removing the tariffs that protect his markets.

It proposes that competition be given a free play in industries where it may still promote the public interest, that in such industries the codes merely guarantee collective bargaining, satisfactory labor standards to protect workers and satisfactory quality standards to protect consumers.

It proposes that natural resource industries be placed in a separate category, that they be given a public utility status and their profits regulated so that neither waste nor production control of resources will build up huge private fortunes.

It is a program that has the virtue of realism.

A PEACE PROP

DETAILS of the Franco-Italian agreement are hazy, and details count in such matters. If and when the texts of these pacts are published the public will have a better chance of judging their value.

It is not clear, for instance, whether the two powers have come to a definite understanding on the dispute between Italy and Abyssinia which the latter has appealed to the League of Nations. Again, Foreign Minister Laval denies that he and Mussolini have agreed to legalize the present re-arming by Germany provided Hitler returns to the league and joins the new non-intervention pact.

Despite these and other obscurities, however, it is clear that France and Italy have begun to work together. This is very important. For hostility between these two has been one of the major war dangers of Europe—hostility over naval competition, conflicting African colonial ambitions, and power in central Europe.

According to the news reports inspired by French and Italian officials, the series of new pacts include the following:

1. Agreement to consult on all questions involving the European interest, including threats to the independence of Austria.

2. A non-intervention treaty, which Austria and the Little Entente nations are also expected to sign—and perhaps Germany.

3. Three African agreements in which France and Italy make certain territorial and commercial concessions to each other, with Italy receiving much the better part of the bargain.

In general the play seems to have been for France to buy Italian support in Europe by granting Mussolini a fairly free hand for imperialist expansion in Africa. Of course the ghost at the feast was none other than Il Duce's imitator and former friend, Herr Hitler. The Nazi dictator, by trying to drive through Austria, has revived Italy's old fear of a Germany at her own border. So—for the moment at any rate—Hitler has forced France and Italy to come together against him.

Unseen and dangerous as all of this imperialist trading and balance of power diplomacy may appear to the international purist, who had hoped that the days of alliances and counter-alliances were past, the Franco-Italian agreements are at least a temporary prop for a precarious peace.

PUBLIC DISCONTENT

YOU can work up a healthy little nightmare for yourself, if that sort of diversion interests you, by sitting down quietly and imagining what would happen if, by some freak of chance, all the wild and woolly bills pending in Congress should become law.

Suppose, for instance, that the Townsend old-age pension plan, the 30-hour week bill, the greenback-bonus bill, and a measure providing for widespread unemployment insurance financed by a stiff pay roll tax should be passed and should be signed by the President or passed over his veto.

Simply to meditate on the resultant tangle in governmental and industrial finance is enough to make one start looking for the nearest cyclone cellar.

Of course, there is no use in getting steamed up about it, because, while one of these measures may get through the hopper, there simply isn't a Chinaman's chance that they all will.

But the important thing is to think of what these various bills represent, and not of what their chances for becoming law may be.

Behind these measures there is a great body of public sentiment which may be confused, misguided, and somewhat thoughtless, but which nevertheless represents the making

of a great decision by the American people. This decision is, simply, that the difficult times of the last four years are altogether too difficult to be endured again.

That is to say that the people generally do not intend to put up with a repetition of that era of declining pay rolls, declining living standards, declining bank accounts, and general all-round hardship.

They may have only the foggiest of notions how to prevent it, but they are determined to prevent it somehow; and the result is a demand for legislation which may be completely illogical, but which can not be defeated by mere argument.

Unless Congress and the Administration can agree on some program which gives a fair promise of protecting the average man from the cruelties of hard times, the sentiment which supports these measures will continue to gather strength.

That is the important thing to remember. There is very little real chance that our Government will adopt a law, for instance, paying \$200 a month to every American over 60 years of age.

But unless the Government understands why such a law is demanded, and does something about it, we may find ourselves passing a much worse law than that a few years hence.

THE TUGWELL MYTH

VERY little has been heard recently of mild-mannered Dr. Rexford Guy Tugwell, who was subjected last winter to a farcical trial on charges of political heresy before the Senate confirmed his appointment as Undersecretary of Agriculture.

The decline of the Tugwell myth was, of course, inevitable, for those who portrayed him as a "menace" and a "communist" did not know of what nor of whom they were talking. This the people soon found out by reading a few of the former college professor's speeches and magazine articles.

These speeches and articles, with some new material, appear in book stores this week under the title, "The Battle for Democracy" (Columbia University Press).

Here we find Dr. Tugwell indulging in such little quips of free speech as: "The world was not made for bankers—a lesson they have had to be taught by legislation."

It is a mild, philosophical volume, much of it written and spoken during the months when the New Deal was in ferment and he was its most publicized prophet. Read together, these treatises on questions of the hour reveal a man who believes firmly in democracy and is bold enough to suggest that it be given a trial.

What Dr. Tugwell thought of his notoriety as the big, bad wolf of the Roosevelt revolution is told in his report of a conversation with a friend following an especially bitter newspaper attack. Here are excerpts:

"The die-hards always have to have a goat. Unfortunately, through no fault of my own, I'm it. The game is, of course, to pick us off one by one, and gradually work toward the center. I'm vulnerable because Americans don't love pedagogues and I seem to be one."

"I can't make this Park Avenue, country-club life seem right, along with slums and bread lines. This fellow you complain of (writer of the newspaper attack) represents slums, bread lines, ballyhoo, speculation—all the elements in the last few decades that I can't make fit into my picture of American institutions. I'm for decentralization, for simplicity of life,

with a recognition of the complexity of industrial and scientific civilization. It seems to me that electricity, vacuum tubes, Diesel engines and all these other things ought to make it possible for all of us to approximate that no-riches, no-poverty kind of life in which I grew up."

In addition to "The Battle for Democracy," the same publisher has brought out another book edited by Dr. Tugwell and Leon H. Keyserling, titled "Redirecting Education."

This is a series of stimulating essays by men in Columbia College, who have been trying to co-ordinate social subjects into a comprehensive and related course on contemporary civilization. The idea is that education must be more than decorative, that it must be a preparation for and part of Twentieth Century life.

Dr. Tugwell, in the opening chapter on Social Objectives in Education, admits that "social science is not very far advanced as yet."

TRUTH IN FICTION

OSCAR WILDE, or somebody, once remarked that nature mimics art; by which, of course, he meant that whereas a writer of fiction may invent a happening which sounds utterly improbable and fantastic, if we wait long enough we shall see the happening duplicated in real life.

In a slightly comic strip, "Freckles," there has recently been an episode in which some one dropped revolver cartridges into the coal tender of a railway train. The fireman subsequently shoved some of these into the fire box along with the coal; they exploded, and a man was shot.

Did it sound somewhat improbable? Perhaps. But just the other day Baltimore police reported that a woman met her death in almost precisely the same way.

In some manner, a loaded cartridge fell into a wastebasket and was tossed into the furnace. When the woman went down to put coal on the fire, the cartridge went off and she was fatally shot.

Once more, life duplicated the seemingly far-fetched invention of the artist.

EXAMPLE FOR AMERICA

THE French, they are a funny race, according to a ditty the A. E. F. used to warble in its lighter moments. But in some fields these Frenchmen seem to have pretty sound ideas.

For example: The French Ministry of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones announced at the start of the year that hereafter no advertising will be included in any French radio broadcasts. This ruling was made after the ministry had received numerous protests from radio fans.

The luckless American, resignedly weary of soppy voices invading his living room to spout improbabilities about so-and-so's soap or whoozis' face cream, may be pardoned for feeling that the French aren't so doggone funny as the A. E. F. sometimes supposed.

The new 33-year-old president of the University of Rochester had better make himself known to the sophomores before they have him as a freshman.

Liberal Viewpoint

BY DR. HARRY ELMER BARNES

THE vote on Jan. 13 to settle the future political affiliation of the Saar promises to be the main international event of the immediate future. Hence it may be very useful briefly to summarize the outstanding political and economic facts which lie back of the impending plebiscite.

In the first place, where and what is the Saar? The territory and its importance have been very clearly described by Prof. Langsam:

"This Rhenish territory, lying directly east of Lorraine and belonging partly to Prussia and partly to Bavaria, is one of the world's greatest coal-producing sections. With an area of 723 square miles and a population of 713,000 (1922), it is an exceedingly valuable stretch of territory. In 1913 its coal output was over 17,000,000 tons—equal to 40 per cent of the entire French production. In that same year it also produced more than 2,000,000 tons of steel, as well as large quantities of glass and pottery. The estimated coal reserves of the Saar Basin are 17,000,000 tons—more than those in all France and equal to more than a fifth of Germany's pre-war reserves."

The demand of France for the Saar Basin was based upon the allegation that the Germans had deliberately wrecked many of the coal mines in northern France during the World War. Clemenceau demanded that much of the Saar be ceded outright to France, but this was denied. Instead, a special committee of British, French and American experts was appointed, and it arranged the settlement which was later adopted by the Peace Conference.

COMPLETE ownership of the invaluable coal mines was given to France. Moreover, France was conceded the right to establish schools for the children of the coal miners and to have the instruction given in French.

The government of the Saar was handed over to a Commission of the League of Nations. This was to control all aspects of the government or the Saar until its ultimate disposition was decided upon. At the end of fifteen years the inhabitants of the Saar were to have the privilege of deciding whether they preferred to remain under the control of the League, to go back to Germany or to go under French control. After the plebiscite the League of Nations must decide what the final sovereignty over the Saar region shall be, but the League is clearly to follow the wishes of the majority as expressed in the plebiscite. In case the decision is made to return the Saar to Germany, the latter must buy back the coal mines from France.

Like most other League products following 1919 the Saar Commission was decidedly pro-France in its make-up and conduct. The chairman was M. Rault, a zealous French patriot. Two other members of the commission were strongly pro-French, one Belgian and the other a Dane who had spent much of his life as a resident of Paris. The representative of the Saar on the commission, Herr Von Boch, resigned in disgust in September, 1930, as a protest against the pro-French makeup and policies of the commission. His resignation had, however, little effect at the time.

THE period from 1920 to 1928 was marked by much discontent on the part of the inhabitants of the Saar. The wishes of the representatives of the Saar were usually ignored by members of the commission. Various subtle attempts were made to induce the German children to attend the newly established French schools. The treaty stipulated that a local police force should be created to maintain order, but instead of this a French force was established.

The condition became so tense that England in 1921 the French troops were withdrawn and a small so-called "Railway Defense Force" was substituted to maintain order.

All of these things served to produce better feelings in the Saar area, and in 1929 France expressed a willingness to discuss with Germany the future disposition of the Saar with out waiting for the plebiscite. Negotiations were begun, but they dropped through.

Such are the essential facts lying back of the extremely important action of the present month. Those who wish to look into the matter more closely will find extremely satisfactory Dr. M. T. Florynsky's recent book, "The Saar Struggle" (Macmillan, \$2.)

Capital Capers

BY GEORGE ABELL

CONFUSION and hubbub reigned about Room 341, Senate Office Building. "Where is Senator Thomas?" demanded a messenger.

"He's moved to Room 326."

"But I was told Senator Thomas had just moved in here."

In a word, Senator Thomas had moved out and Senator Thomas had moved in. Senator Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma, who had been living in 341, moved to 326 and Senator Elbert D. Thomas of Utah moved into 341. What added to the confusion is the fact that both Senators have the same first initial. And Elmer is little different from Elbert, in spelling.

Outwardly, no one could mistake Senator Thomas for Senator Thomas. Or vice versa.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT jubilantly greeted correspondents who attended his opening 1935 press conference.

"You all seem to have survived," he remarked, beaming at the front row of reporters surrounding his desk.

"Yes, Mr. President," said a spokesman for the group, "but yesterday morning we were afraid we would live it."

MRS. ROOSEVELT has broken another precedent. She's changed the date of the annual dinner for the Vice President in order to assist the musical career of the White House Military Aid.

Originally the dinner for Vice President and Mrs. Garner was to take place tomorrow. Then Mrs. Roosevelt learned that on tomorrow evening Frances Nash (professional name of Mrs. Watson, wife of Col. Edwin M. Watson, Chief Military Aid at the White House) was expecting to appear as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra.

Since the wife of the Military Aid automatically would be forced to attend an official dinner as important as the function, Mrs. Watson was in a dilemma. So, Mrs. Roosevelt changed the date for the Vice President's dinner to next Tuesday.

Mrs. Watson is praised by connoisseurs as a person of considerable musical ability. She is widely known for her musical talent. She has reddish-blond hair, red fingernails, affects black Russian hats and yellow dresses. She has played all over the United States and in Europe, where, incidentally, she became a close friend of Dowager Queen Elizabeth of Belgium when her husband was stationed as Military Attaché at the American Embassy in Brussels.

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PICCOLO PETE!



The Message Center

[I wholly disapprove of what you say and will defend to the death your right to say it.—Voltaire.]

Recommends Governmental Revision

By Charles R. Fitzpatrick.

The modernization of our local government, in so far as this is possible without the necessity of amending our State Constitution, would result in greatly increased efficiency and enormous tax reductions.

To institute such a program we should abolish all, or practically all, township government, the county council, and the elective office of county assessor, increase the term of the county commissioners to four years, abolish their salary, and elect them from the county at large, on a non-partisan ballot. The commissioners, who shall be the policy-determining body of the county, shall appoint, on the basis of merit only, with regard to previous residence, and for an indefinite term, a county manager and supervisor of offices.

It may be advisable that the manager be selected from a list of names submitted by a qualification board, made up of the circuit judge of the judicial circuit in which the county is located, the county superintendent of schools, and two additional members, one to be appointed by these two and one to be selected by the county commissioners from without their number.

The manager shall have administrative control over all elective county offices; shall inspect and supervise the work and examine the books and papers of every officer and department and advise the board monthly of their condition; shall have charge of all assessments, and the centralized purchase, storage and distribution of all supplies; shall prepare and administer an annual executive budget, and shall have power,