

## The Indianapolis Times

(A SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPER)

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Scripps-Howard Newspapers,  
Alliance of Newspapers, Enter-  
prise Association, Newspaper  
Information Service, and Auto-  
dit Bureau of Circulations.One copy and postage paid  
(except where prohibited) by The In-  
dianapolis Times Publishing  
Company, 214-220 West Mary-  
land street, Indianapolis, Ind.  
Price: in Marion county, 2  
cents a copy; elsewhere, 3  
cents—delivered by carrier, 12  
cents a week. Mail subscription  
rate, in Indiana, \$3 a  
year; outside of Indiana, 65  
cents a month.Give Light and the  
People Will Find  
Their Own Way

MONDAY JANUARY 28, 1935.

## SAFETY AT SEA

WHEN the liner Mohawk sank off New Jersey and left 45 dead or missing, she did more than add a third disaster within five months to a single company's log. She and her victims became pleaders for a more adequate system of American safety-at-sea laws.

It is unthinkable that ship owners' lobbies should block such legislation any longer. Last fall when the Morro Castle burned, causing the 134 deaths, hearings revealed that her crew included many untrained, poorly paid and overworked aliens. At the same time a report to the National Labor Relations Board criticised many American lines for low wages, short crews, long hours and bad working conditions. Some of these lines are heavily subsidized by the taxpayers.

This week congress will receive a set of measures prepared by the Department of Commerce and covering all phases of ship safety. This program would provide that all plans for new American ships meet rigid government requirements, that maximum loading standards be applied to coastwise as well as trans-ocean vessels, that other safety standards be fixed and rigidly enforced by an enlarged inspection personnel.

Daniel C. Roper, Secretary of Commerce, is urging ratification of the 1929 international convention for safety of life at sea. Had the Mohawk been as strongly constructed as this treaty requires, it would not have sunk, according to Joseph B. Weaver, chief of the United States Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection Service. But the labor provisions of the treaty need careful scrutiny.

## NEEDED CUBAN REFORMS

BOTH the Havana and Washington governments are put on the spot by the Commission on Cuban Affairs in its report on conditions and its recommendations for reform. Since the commission was appointed at the request of President Mendieta and consists of leading non-partisan experts, its findings can not be ignored.

The report has the scientific poise and informed courage to be expected from such men as the commission chairman, Dr. Raymond Leslie Buell of the Foreign Policy Association, Professors Fetter, Graham and Jenks, Director Gruening of the U. S. Division of Territories and Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Wilson.

In its conclusion that the Cuban revolution, which overthrew the Machado dictatorship, has since been prevented from producing most of the promised political and economic reforms, the commission confirms the findings of virtually all unofficial investigators who have written on the subject. Likewise, it agrees with the opinion of other investigators that Washington's partisan diplomatic interference was partly to blame. Deserved praise is given to the Roosevelt Administration for its enlightened trade policy, for withholding Marine intervention, and for abrogating the Platt amendment.

Among the commission's economic recommendations the most important call for development of non-sugar crops, taxation of unused land, government development of small holdings, a public health and social welfare program, and government jurisdiction over public utilities. Only after sweeping economic reform of conditions which now keep many Cubans in a state of illiteracy and semi-starvation, does the commission expect the island to achieve real political democracy and stability.

Of even more interest to Americans are the recommendations for changes in United States policy. These include:

1. Cease using diplomatic recognition as a partisan club.

2. Surrender the Guantanamo naval base lease and use other harbors such as Vieques Sound.

3. Restrict future intervention to evacuation of foreigners from ports in disturbed areas.

This enlightened policy would pay big dividends in Latin-American friendship. It deserves the most sympathetic consideration by President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull.

## COLLEGE YOUTH

FLAMING youth may have built a pretty hot fire on our college campuses during the frenzied post-war decade, but the fire has gone out now and the ashes are cold and forgotten.

So, at any rate, says Dr. Charles W. Gilkey, dean of the University of Chicago. The present collection of undergraduates, Dr. Gilkey says, is "the best generation of college students I have seen in 30 years of contact with students."

The Chicago dean finds the improvement manifest in several ways.

For one thing, there is a greater attendance at chapel services, and a wider expression of interest in religious discussions. For another, students are serious-minded and realistic in their attitude toward current events. They are at last awake to the fact that something must be wrong with a social scheme which offers them so little.

"Students are not at all convinced about the solution of our situation, but they are convinced that something is wrong," says Dr. Gilkey. Yet they are not turning red on us.

Communism, the dean reports, attracts the smalls of all campus groups, "because it is a dogma, and if there is one thing a college student can't stand, it is a dogma."

All in all, then, this college generation seems to be in much better health mentally and spiritually than any of recent years; and that, when you stop to think about it, is simply

a reflection of a corresponding improvement on the part of the older generation.

For young people in college are not a race apart, born in some cloudy vacancy beyond the stars and transported suddenly to earth to perplex the graybeards. They are, in the main, what we have made them.

They have grown up in a world for which we older folk are responsible, and the things we do and think and say simply mirror conditions which we have created.

If they acted in a distressing way during the great boom years, so that higher education became more or less of a mockery on some campuses, they were just doing as we might have expected them to do—for we older ones likewise acted in a distressing way, and we're still paying for it.

Flaming youth became a by-word, the fault really lay with flaming youth's elders.

So if college youth has grown quieter, more serious, and more thoughtful of late, it is a sign that similar change has been coming over the nation as a whole.

The depression has been a hard school, but we all have learned something in it; one of the surest and most hopeful indications is this new spirit that Dean Gilkey finds on the university campus.

## A MACHINE-AGE CONSTITUTION

THE country is again indebted to the bold thinking of Secretary Wallace. The Iowan who heads the Department of Agriculture is a firm believer in democracy. He challenges the people to do their own thinking and their own governing.

Having introduced democracy into the economic affairs of agriculture, Mr. Wallace proposes in the current issue of Collier's that this principle be extended in the affairs of the nation as a whole. He would give the people the direct power to amend the Constitution, by referendum on questions submitted to them by a National Economic Council.

His method may be no better than a dozen others that have been suggested. For many years progressive leaders have recognized that our horse-and-carriage system of government is a clumsy instrument for handling the problems of an era dominated by machines and monopolies. Thomas Jefferson, foreseeing the need for flexibility, suggested that the Constitution be revised every 20 years.

Our present methods of amending the Constitution are very cumbersome. The Child Labor amendment, for example, has been pending before state legislatures for 11 years. Yet there is little doubt that a vast majority of the American people have long favored its ratification.

Mr. Wallace's plan, or some other, we trust, will some day be adopted to make our government more responsive to the wishes and needs of the people.

## PAROLE BOARDS

MOST of the criticism of paroles for prisoners, so widespread recently, can be traced to blunders of parole boards which have turned loose confirmed criminals to prey upon society.

Humanitarians and persons experienced in the rehabilitation of casual criminals brought the parole system into being, but in too many states incompetent politicians have been given the job of administering it. Such a system can be successful only by intelligent administration.

The Federal parole system is often held up as a model. Its success is due to the high caliber of the personnel of the United States Parole Board. Disquieting reports that political spoilsmen are looking enviously at these jobs should be answered by a firm statement from the attorney general that he will not yield to the patronage mongers.

A report that Dr. Amy Stannard, an outstanding psychiatrist, will be eased off the board to make room for some deserving party worker should have no foundation in fact. Dr. Stannard's record of fine service could never be duplicated by a political job-seeker.

## WHERE BUILDING STOPS

NEITHER more ample credit nor direct government stimulation will restore health to the building trades until rents go up or building costs come down. So says a bulletin issued currently by the National Industrial Conference Board.

Building costs today, says the bulletin, are somewhat lower than they were 10 years ago, but rentals are a great deal lower. Ten years ago a man could put \$6000 into a new house and lot and could rent it for \$360, or a net return of 6 per cent.

Today the same house and lot would cost him \$4950, but the rental income would be only \$168, a net return of 3.8 per cent. To get a 6 per cent return, the original cost would have to be reduced to around \$3100, or a net return of 38 per cent below present levels.

That, adds the bulletin, is why private capital is loath to invest in new building. Unless rents go up or costs come down, its reluctance will remain unshaken.

## SCRAMBLE FOR PORK

IT is never safe to render an appraisal on an action by Congress until you appraise the motives back of the action.

The congressional rebellion against the "gag rule" in connection with the Administration's \$4,800,000,000 war relief bill might be a very praiseworthy thing indeed, if it were based on a determination to exercise the full powers of representative government in an untrammeled manner.

Unfortunately, however, it is commonly reported from Washington that the rebellion was designed chiefly to open the way for log-rolling tactics of the traditional type, so that a proper amount of "pork" could be injected into this measure.

Viewed from that angle, the rebellion is less a symptom of congressional good health than of political greed. There are valid arguments against the gag rule—but the desire to dip both hands into the pork barrel is not one of them.

No doubt Dr. Townsend means well, but he can guarantee that all the homes for the aged won't become hilarious night clubs and gambling joints?

The World War cost us nearly \$42,000,000,000, and the world has still to be saved for democracy.

It's said you need a vocabulary of 10,000 words to understand the day's news, unless you confine your reading to the funnies, of course.

## Liberal Viewpoint

BY DR. HARRY ELMER BARNES

THE decision of the Supreme Court voiding a part of the oil code and the prospects of other adverse pronouncements on the New Deal by this august body bring sharply to the fore the whole question of Constitutions and their purposes. It raises the issue of whether or not we shall save the country or save the Constitution in the vain supposition that the Constitution itself can be preserved if the present economic system in the United States collapses.

In the first place, just how did Constitutions arise in the modern world? With the exception of certain post-war Constitutions, most notably that of Russia, our modern Constitutions have one dominating purpose, namely, to put property beyond the reach of law.

The movement of Constitutions began in the seventeenth century in England when it was sought to make English property and business secure from the arbitrary influence of a would-be absolute monarch. The middle class formulated its great slogan of the natural rights of man—life, liberty and property—and the greatest of these was property. The movement spread into the English colonies in America and into France during the latter part of the next century.

In this country we adopted a whole flock of state Constitutions following 1776 and a Federal Constitution in 1789, all of which embodied the fundamental ideas of the British middle class. The French brought a series of Constitutions out of the French Revolution. In the course of the nineteenth century, the movement for Constitutions spread throughout the rest of the major countries of continental Europe, hitting Russia at the opening of the present century.

ALMOST everywhere this first era of Constitution-making was motivated by the desire to protect the middle or capitalistic class from arbitrary confiscation of their property by the royalty and aristocracy which stood above it in the social scale. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, however, the challenge from the proletariat below was taken into account, and some of the later Constitutions were so formulated as to protect capitalism from the mob.

In this country we did not adopt a second Constitution to safeguard us from possible radicalism of the masses, but perverted the Fourteenth Amendment, from its supposed role as a bulwark against the exploitation of the Negro into a defense of corporate property. Incidentally, this amendment vastly facilitated the power of the Supreme Court to set aside threatening laws as unconstitutional.

Now there is nothing at all sacred about a Constitution. It is merely an organic document which defines the type of government under which the country must live and enumerates the immunities which property and the citizens may enjoy against possible invasion by this government.

The major reason for the mystical and sanctified attitude which has grown up about Constitutions is the fact that the custodians of the vested interests have recognized clearly enough that the Constitution is the chief bulwark of the economic system under which they operate.

IN other words, it has been the economic rather than the political foundations of Constitutions which have promoted Constitution worship, and have supplanted the divine right of kings by the theory of the divine right of Constitutions.

It is now pretty well recognized even by enlightened capitalists that the old system of rugged individualism and predatory finance which has been supported in the past by the Constitution and the Supreme Court is on its last legs.

The alternatives are either gradual but resolute reform on the one hand or collapse and revolution on the other.

If the road to reform is steadfastly blocked by the Constitution as interpreted by the Supreme Court, the country as we understand it today is headed for a disaster which will engulf not only the Constitution, but the court itself.

The only way of saving the Constitution is first to save the country. This is the fundamental issue which is involved in the Supreme Court decisions of the present season. These may play a very decisive role in the future of our country—exceeding beyond all comparison in their broad implications specific character of a particular decision.

## Capital Capers

BY GEORGE ABELL

BRILLIANT stars and orders, blue-and-gold china recently bought for the White House for \$9000, pink carnations, pink roses and Andalusian tangos by La Argentina, featured the diplomatic dinner given by President and Mrs. Roosevelt.

All the chiefs of foreign diplomatic missions in Washington attended.

Shrewd Soviet Ambassador Troyanovsky flew from Los Angeles by speedy plane to be there in time.

Japanese Ambassador Saito, not to be outdone by any Russian maneuver, hastened back from Athens, Ga., just in time to dress for dinner.

The new Belgian ambassador, Count van der Sten-Ponthoz, a charming gentleman, was on hand with his affable countess.

Minister Finot of Bolivia and Minister Bordeau of Paraguay, whose countries are at war, did not bow to each other as they glanced across the table. Fortunately, they didn't sit side by side. If any one except the Roosevelts invited them to the same table, he'd be looked upon as a square.

You state that you are in the Reserve. You don't know what military training is.

I have been wounded twice. I get \$10 a month. Maybe I could loan you half of that to help you pay your taxes.

MONSIEUR LELY, who used to be chief of the monks of Mount Athos, went as the chargé d'affaires of Greece—no new ambassador having been sent here to replace Charalambos Simopoulos. The long, curly mustachios of the lamented Charalambos will live in Washington diplomatic history.

Mexico was represented by Charge d'Affaires Campos-Ortiz, who has been doing diplomatic honor for his embassy for some months.

His severe highness, Prince Damros Damros Devakul, the Siamese minister, looked like a midget next to big Sir Ronald Lindsay. He's the tiniest diplomat in Washington—just as Sir Ronald is the biggest.

Protocol was as strictly adhered to as in Dolly Gann's heyday.

First marched the bulky British ambassador, Sir Ronald Lindsay, dean of diplomats. (Lady Lindsay stayed in New York.)

THEN the Peruvian ambassador, Mr. Freyre, who talks with more of an Oxford accent than Sir Ronald. If something happened to Sir Ronald (euphoniously termed "His Britannic Majesty's ambassador") Freyre would take first place.

After Freyre came the much-lionized Ambassador Espil of Argentina, with his pretty American wife, who used to shoot lions in Africa.

Ministers followed the ambassadors, with Marc Peter of Switzerland as dean of ministers. Envoy Peter has been here since the day when beards were fashionable, and, in fact, he used to wear one.

Sandwiched between ambassadors and ministers was Secretary of State Hull, making a new sort of diplomatic sandwich. After the ministers came Senator Key Pittman, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Rep. Sam McReynolds, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Then—all the good d'affaires, finishing with the chargé d'affaires of the Dominican Republic.

The Roosevelts came at the top and the bottom of the list. President and Mrs. Roosevelt headed it and the Elliott Roosevelts ended it.

Nowadays a college is rated by the number of professors it has on President Roosevelt's brain trust.

Better think it over, Junior. An-

## THINGS ARE LOOKING UP!



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

## Ludlow Accused of Hampering President

By George Gould Hine.

I note that Mr. Ludlow is now busily engaged in frustrating the President's desire to substitute jobs for doles.

As this is the first important request the President has made of Congress at this session, this is Mr. Ludlow's first opportunity to fulfill the promises he made to the voters of Marion County in his victory statement after his election. It renews our interest in that statement.