

## The Indianapolis Times

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## THE ARMS EMBARGO

**T**HE President is to be commended for promptly invoking the neutrality law and embargoing munitions to Italy and Ethiopia.

Without waiting for either belligerent to declare war, or the League of Nations to decide whether an aggression had been committed, he sanely declared that "a state of war" prevails between the two countries, and acted accordingly.

A more timid chief executive might have held up the ban on arms indefinitely, until the United States had been formally and officially notified that a war was on.

His future course, however, may not be so easy. The present embargo was mandatory "upon the outbreak or during the progress of war between two or more foreign states." But should other nations enter the fray later, according to the language of the act, he "may" do the same to them. It does not say he "must."

Should the League use force to stop Italy, it would, of course, be war. Accordingly, it would be up to the President to decide whether arms could be shipped to Britain and such other powers as might become the League's instrument. The President has already indicated this country would not hamper the League's efforts to halt an aggressive war—provided America agrees who the aggressor is.

Yet, should a "League war" develop out of the present conflict, the preponderant sentiment of Congress and the American people doubtless will be for the strictest neutrality—hands off both sides, neither hampering nor helping either.

## THEY PULLED A KNIFE

**N**EXT, the statesmen will invent cheap lies, put the blame upon the nation that is attacked. And so we arrive at another phase.

Remember the White Papers and the Red Papers and the various other colored documents that blossomed forth immediately after Armageddon broke in 1914? Each nation diligently declaring that another had started it?

And now we have what was to be expected. Poor little Italy was picked on.

"The bellicose and aggressive spirit developed in Abyssinia among the chieftains and soldiers who have been demanding action for a long time constitutes an immediate and direct menace to the Italian troops," says a Mussolini secretary. "This aggression has taken on a volume of importance which manifestly involved more serious immediate danger. In the presence of this situation the Italian government has found itself compelled to authorize the supreme command in Eritrea to take necessary steps in defense."

And in Geneva, the Italian delegate, Baron Aloisi, tries to declare solemnly to the League Council that Ethiopia had been "a constant and progressive menace to which Italy was obliged to answer by appropriate measures of defense."

Did Italy's defense consist in repelling an invasion. No. But in blazing away at everything in sight at Adwa—many miles beyond the border—preliminaries to the "defense" having been the shipping for months across the sea of a quarter of a million troops and munitions, and then waiting for the rain to stop in order that the "defense" might begin.

It's the same old plea that shows up after every murder.

Ever hear the story of the two medical students who were inclined to rather rough practical-joking?

They dressed up a corpse that had been obtained for laboratory purposes, and one student supporting the dead man on either side, succeeded in reaching a saloon. Leaning the corpse against the bar in a way that indicated an obvious case of extreme drunkenness, one student ordered three drinks. After the two had consumed theirs they pointed at their friend to indicate that he would pay, and retired.

The bartender waited a few minutes and seeing no signs of cash forthcoming, reached over and touched the customer on the shoulder. This was repeated two or three times and brought no results. Whereupon the bartender picked up a bung stinger and tapped the visitor on the head so hard that he fell to the floor.

Whereupon the two companions dashed in, leaned over and cried, "You've killed him!"

"Well," answered the bartender, "the — — pulled a knife on me."

## TIMELY—BUT WILL IT TAKE?

**W**HAT will win the war?" Remember that? There is plenty of timeliness in Secretary Wallace's warning not to let what's happening over in Africa run us into another such farm land speculation as that which followed what was started in 1914.

Timely, yes. But we doubt whether the warning will be observed if the price of wheat which is already rising keeps on going up, and other farm prices follow. For it is human nature to speculate when a boom is on, whether the boom be in Florida lots or Goldman Sachs or Iowa soil.

But it may be of some value in a cautionary sense, to the extent of restraining speculative impetuosity and at least delaying the evil day, to recall now that the recent mortgage riots in the farm belt stem right back to the World War.

Wheat went above two dollars, cotton around 40 cents, and other prices more or less in ratio. The best farm land got to selling as high as \$500 an acre, in, for example, Wallace's home state. Some 50 million acres hitherto uncultivated, and once locked to mother earth with hoops of grass, was plowed up and put to use, much of which we have wiped out of our eyes during those dust storms in the last few years.

Finally came the sudden end of the big bulge. Peace was restored. Battleships went back into agriculture. Millions who had been fighting returned to work. And we don't have to look any farther to find the birthplace of the farm problem which plagued Harding, Coolidge, Hoover and Roosevelt, which finally brought forth the AAA, and made the over-enthusiastic potato grower of 1935 dream of the jail house.

War is mother of many more things than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

## RILEY'S BIRTHDAY

**I**T is singularly fitting that today, anniversary of James Whitcomb Riley's birth, should be chosen for the dedication of the new therapeutic pool for crippled children at the hospital which bears his name.

The prattle of childish voices and the patter of little feet were music to Jim Riley. His poems are deathless tributes to his love of children.

His love of children was an intensification of his love for all humanity. His affection for his fellows was all-embracing. It shone through his poems like the beneficent rays of an altar fire.

Perhaps the most appealing character of Riley's poems was their homely quality. They struck responsive chords in the breast of every Hoosier because their humor was a part of Indiana's daily life.

His was kindly humor for the most part, but Riley had a "stuffed shirt" and was ever ready to deflate an overwhelming ego with a barbed witicism.

Although he occasionally made fun of others, he didn't hesitate to make himself the butt of his own humor. In letters to friends, he made a joke of the virtuous which might have made him equally famous as an actor or musician.

His intimates remember Jim Riley for the gamine-like streak in his makeup. Perhaps an incident that happened long after his death is illustrative of this side of Riley.

There is a statue at Greenfield, Riley's home, built with the penny offerings of children. Each year, that statue is garlanded with flowers strew over it by childish hands.

On one occasion child after child deposited an offering until finally a dirty little urchin approached the statue. Clutched in his hand were two straggly blossoms so wadded together that they looked like a snowball.

Instead of laying it reverently on the statue, some impulse led him to let fly with it and score a direct hit on the graveled Riley countenance.

One of the poet's old friends standing by observed softly:

"That's the one of the whole lot that Jim would have liked best of all."

## THE HOOVER ATTACK

**T**O Herbert Hoover goes credit for the best political attack on the Roosevelt Administration yet made by a Republican spokesman.

Although still in the uninspiring role of a political Jeremiah looking for grass in the streets, the former President voiced challenging truths in that part of his Saturday night speech which dealt with the inherent menace of expanding bureaucracy and the inevitable consequences of continuing national deficits.

Democratic incumbents can not dismiss with a shrug his statement that the so-called lower and middle classes, now carrying most of the burden of the government through invisible taxation, will shoulder even heavier burdens when pay-day for the New Deal's expenditures arrives, whether the reckoning be in "taxation, or repudiation or inflation." And the tax-the-rich law enacted by the last Congress makes that no less inevitable.

Yet it would have been a better speech, had some one else made it.

Mr. Hoover's record in regard to bureaucracy and deficits is not spotless. In at least two respects President Roosevelt's is much brighter.

The bureaucracy under Mr. Hoover was a sluggish thing which fumbled futilely with the depression. In contrast, the Roosevelt Administration has been one of enough vigor and direction to rekindle the people's faith in the strength and purpose of their national government.

Deficits under Mr. Hoover swelled yearly. When he left the White House, tax receipts and commerce were shrinking so fast that it seemed neither the government nor millions of Americans victimized by the depression would ever again know balanced budgets.

Today, with the business outlook better than at any time since the 1929 cyclone hit, with an economic lift that has enabled millions of Americans to balance their personal budgets, the government's revenues are mounting because more people have something with which to pay taxes, and a balance in the nation's fiscal books will soon be possible.

For these hopeful circumstances, it would seem, credit should go not to the policies of Mr. Hoover, but to those of his successor.

## DEFINING A LIBERAL

**L**ABELS are always inadequate, slogans fail to satisfy, and catch-phrases never tell the whole story. Yet we live on labels.

One person calls himself a liberal. Another, a conservative. Another, a reactionary. Still another, a radical. And usually the fellow who doesn't agree with you goes into the particular category you despise the most. "Irreverence," as Mark Twain said, "is disrespect for the other man's God."

We have seen some, priding themselves on their conservatism, who under the skin were downright Bolshevik, and we have seen others who proudly wore the liberal label turn out in a pinch to be the most hidebound of bigots.

So when we can, it is well to elaborate a label into a definition, and we think the President did pretty well when he gave this as his conception of a liberal:

"The faith of a liberal," he said, "is profound belief not only in the capacities of individual men and women, but in the effectiveness of people helping one another."

We'd be interested in seeing any definition that seems better.

## A WOMAN'S VIEWPOINT

By Mrs. Walter Ferguson

**A**SURPRISING thing has happened. A smart, up-to-the-minute moving picture comedy, which promises to be a box-office success, without a single kiss! I felt groggy with bewilderment when I left the theater where I had seen Claudette Colbert in "She Married Her Boss," for at first I couldn't think what it was about the show that had been so different. Then it struck me. What a friend of mine so eloquently called "lallygagging" had been entirely missing.

Whether this presages a new trend in pictures would be a wild guess, but the innovation is welcome. A good many patrons are in the mood for change. The inevitable clinch and kiss at the end of every show are just a little too inevitable.

It is also interesting to speculate upon what this deletion may do to the life and habits of the younger generation. Perhaps both youngsters and adults would be more chary with their public displays of affection if the moving picture stars set the fashion. Perhaps necking would become the private enterprise it used to be. Perhaps spotlight kissing would even be considered a little vulgar in the best circles.

And I hope you're not going to accuse me of old-fogeyism for these remarks. Kisses are grand things in their place. But the exercise of some discrimination as to time, place and duration is now in order.

Kissing has steadily lost caste since it has been indulged in openly on the highways and in plate-glass restaurant windows. The meaning of a caress is entirely lost when you're willing to practice on every third person you meet.

That's why I hail Miss Colbert and her director for their restraint.

**TIMELY—BUT WILL IT TAKE?**

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## THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

## "When the Frost Is On the Punkin"



## Forum of The Times

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

## He Condemns Our Neutrality

By J. G. Burton, Mobile, Ala.

**T**imes readers are invited to express their views in these columns. *Controversies excluded. Make your letters short, so all can have a chance. Limit them to 250 words or less. Your letter must be signed, but names will be withheld on request.*

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## SHIRLEY TEMPLE "LOVE" STORY DRAWS FIRE

By B. C. N.

Moving picture press-agency never was distinguished by its good taste. But an all-time low seems to have been set with the propagation in Hollywood of a story I have just read in The Times to the effect that Shirley Temple is having a love affair with a 10-year-old boy.

Some one put over a picture of these two children, with a caption stating that they are principals in Hollywood's latest "romance."

Shirley, we are assured, "fell hard" for the curly hair and dark eyes of the lad.

Nothing more disgusting than this has ever come out of Hollywood. We expect bad taste in the press-agency of the adult stars. After all, they are presumably old and intelligent enough to stand it.

But that any one, even in Hollywood, should be so abysmally crude and stupid as to think that an obviously faked talk about a "romance" between two 10-year-olds would either please the general public or make life decent and pleasant for the children themselves—that, even in a land used to the imbecilities of movieland, is hard to believe.

The total cost would be the fuel

to be burned in the Mediterranean and return and we would emerge as world saviors.

Such action by us would undoubtedly have a salutary effect on other aggressively ambitious dictators and postpone to a dis-

tant date the world conflict which we all are so anxious about.

I believe that Theodore Roosevelt would have recognized this opportunity and have acted before this. Had Wilson made a similar gesture in July, 1914, undoubtedly the Kaiser would have hesitated.

Aside from the question of self-protection there is the moral issue.

Has our national code reached a level where we can un-

concernedly stand aside and watch a bully's murder of a weakling without even offering assistance when other help arrives?

Our present incumbent prob-

ably considers any action politi-

cally unwise unless driven to it by public opinion.

I am a pacifist if pacifism means

an abhorrence of all that modern war involves.

I am the father of two sons ap-

proaching cannon-fodder age.

I am simply writing this to you

as a thought which so far I have

not seen voiced by any paper, as

it seems to me to be the responsi-

bility of the nation's press to

guide public opinion toward any

movement which might avert the

possibility of our again becoming

involved in a world-wide confu-