

## The Indianapolis Times

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## FLOODS AND TAXES

WHILE the floods still are raging, we read estimates of property damages.

As the waters go down, the estimates go up—\$150,000,000, \$200,000,000, \$250,000,000. Of course they are rough estimates. We understand they pertain only to improvements on real estate—homes, store buildings, factories, bridges and wharves washed out.

Add to them the wage losses of those who were driven from their jobs by the floods. Add the loss in income on the money invested. Add the losses of soil. (It is estimated that year in and year out an average of \$400,000,000 worth of soil is washed or blown away. That is a destruction of a national asset. And it doesn't include what it added to the liability side of the national ledger where the soil comes to rest as sediment in the lowlands and silt in the river beds.)

THE Red Cross and government relief agencies, providing they get adequate funds, can do much to minimize the human suffering, starvation and disease which trail these floods. They can help the 200,000 made homeless.

But what of these things that should be done to minimize future floods?

The people of Cairo, Ill., for example, might request Pennsylvania after overflowing their property and leaving deposits of Pennsylvania mud. But no court can give them redress by declaring this transgression on property rights to be unconstitutional. Neither can the Illinois Governor nor the Illinois Legislature protect them. Even the Liberty League can't help them; it can't persuade farmers in Pennsylvania hillsides to re-plant and re-forest their lands and build reservoirs to hold the water where it falls.

ONLY the Federal government can do those things which need to be done to guard the people of Wheeling and of Cairo and of Memphis and of New Orleans against further Pennsylvania floodwaters and Pennsylvania mud. The Federal government can go up the headwaters of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers, and there carry out the soil and water conservation improvements that are needed to restore an orderly drainage of that area. It can do what it is already doing in the watershed of the Tennessee River. Another tributary of the Ohio River, another segment of the great Mississippi basin.

And it can do likewise in the Green Mountains of Vermont for the protection of the people in the lowlands of Connecticut, and in the uplands of West Virginia, for the protection of the people in the Potomac Valley.

The present national Administration is the first even to recognize this national responsibility of husbanding soil and water resources. It has begun in a small way. For the next fiscal year, it has budgeted an expenditure of \$28,000,000 for straight soil conservation work, and a similar amount for the forestry service. Conservation is the avowed and long-range objective of the \$440,000,000 farm program, although the immediate purpose is to balance crop production and sustain farm income. The CCC, budgeted to spend \$220,000,000 next year, already has made major contributions to the conservation program.

People who in the last few days have seen muddy floodwaters swirling around their homes and factories will not think these expenditures a waste of the taxpayers' money.

## RED INK AND RED DUST

MASSACHUSETTS ink manufacturer, inter-  
viewed in Portland, Ore., discloses that the sales of red ink, which were several hundred per cent above normal a few years ago, have declined abruptly in the last few months. Even the ink manufacturer is not disappointed, because the sales of other colors are mounting.

This symbolic statistic is confirmed by current financial reports of corporations showing profits where losses were recently listed, and in the trend toward fewer and fewer bankruptcies.

And it seems to provide some justification of the New Deal's fiscal policy of spreading red ink on the government's books to build up the purchasing power and balance the books of private business.

IT is appropriate, therefore, to ask what private business is doing to help solve the problem of unemployment and relief which forces the government to continue operating in the red. Private business is giving employment to three to five million more persons than it had on its pay rolls at the depth of the depression. Yet approximately 10 million are still looking for work. And the government's relief burden is no lighter.

Most big business spokesmen say that business started getting better the day the Supreme Court tossed NRA out the window. But there seems to be another side to this picture. The last A. F. of L. monthly survey of business reports that since the downfall of NRA's maximum hours and minimum wage guarantees, those who are employed have been forced to work longer hours at lower wages, although the average weekly wage and the total of private pay rolls are larger. If the NRA's shorter work-week schedules were still in effect, it is estimated, the increased business volume would provide employment for 2,000,000 additional workers.

Business men who are writing their own financial reports in black ink, and think the government should be doing likewise, might help the government a little by doing what they can to spread employment. It will be very difficult for the government to quit using red ink until the country as a whole gets in the black. The personal budgets of the 10,000,000 unemployed, and their dependents, are still very much out of balance.

ANOTHER thing more ominous than the government's red ink is the red dust blowing in the Southwest. For it symbolizes nature's unbalanced budget, an unbalance which came about because man, engaged in the private business of farming, tried to make big profits for himself by growing two blades of wheat where one blade of grass grew before. A protective soil which once maintained nature's balance was turned by man's plow into a pulverized topsoil, and the winds now whip it across the countryside. The dust bowl widens. Adjoining areas, even those thus mistreated, are made use of as the suffocating dust blanket spreads outward.

It is not possible, we believe, to exaggerate this

threat. For unless we replace the protective sod, restore nature's balance and check the desert's ruthless march, our whole civilization a few generations hence will be writing its finish in red ink as irreducible as that which records the passing of Nineveh and Tyre.

## INDUSTRY AND RELIEF

THE President's relief message, while placing responsibility on private employers for a reduction of the relief load, did not state how many men industry must take over if the government is to stay within its estimate of \$3,100,000,000 for relief in the next fiscal year.

Mr. Roosevelt said 3,000,000 of the 5,300,000 family heads or single persons now on relief are employable. He did not estimate the number of unemployed persons not on relief, who would compete for any increase in private jobs.

Conservative estimators place this "outside group" at four million. Others say six.

Increases in private employment since 1933, although large in many fields, have had little effect on relief totals. Out of each 10 jobs opened, only about three relief persons have been put to work; the seven others came from non-relief unemployed.

Following this experience in the past three years, relief officials today are skeptical about the ultimate effect of the President's plea for greater private employment. They argue that before half or even a third of the relief load could be absorbed, employers would by preference exhaust the non-relief possibilities.

The belief prevails among Senators, Congressmen and other officials that the part of private industry largely hostile to the New Deal will ignore the President's plea for more jobs.

What this would mean eventually is a matter of conjecture. The President said that "only if industry fails to reduce the number of those now without work will another appropriation and further plans and policies be necessary." Some read into these words a threat, not of greater relief appropriations but of another attempt by the government to regulate wages and hours.

The proposed \$8,100,000 relief fund for the next fiscal year is not sufficient on present schedules to last 12 months. None of the billion-dollar carry-over from 1936, nor the \$600,000 allotted to public works and the CCC, will be available for WPA.

A billion and a half is asked as a new appropriation for WPA, which is now employing more than 3,000,000 persons, and spending \$175,000,000 a month.

At best, the money now in sight for WPA will be exhausted after eight months of the fiscal year, or on next March 1—unless private industry comes to the rescue.

## 'STRIKE ME PINK'

A MAGAZINE once published a cartoon in which a coal miner was saying to a fellow digger, "Strike me pink, Bill, but here comes Mrs. Roosevelt!" Some months thereafter the cartoon came true when the ubiquitous First Lady did go down in an Ohio coal mine.

When the United Mine Workers met recently in Washington Mrs. Roosevelt invited more than a hundred women, who had accompanied their miners' husbands here, to a reception and tea at the White House. Everybody had a wonderful time in the informal atmosphere that Mrs. Roosevelt gives to all her functions.

And now Mrs. Roosevelt has written, by request, a special message to coal miners' wives. It is published in the March issue of the United Mine Workers Journal. She has drawn on her acquaintance with miners and their homes and families to urge the abolition of "what is ordinarily known as the company town and the company store."

"The mere fact," she writes, "that human beings in mine towns or mill towns have no choice as to where and how they will live, that they have no real choice as to where they will buy, destroys initiative."

"No matter how good the employers' intentions may be, the ultimate result is bad when people are not free to develop themselves."

This seems to be a case of a Roosevelt favoring another form of rugged individualism.

## A WOMAN'S VIEWPOINT

By Mrs. Walter Ferguson

THE feminine struggle for power goes on. It must go on because it is a part of modern progress, and gives evidence of growth. Here is a curious fact, however. Such progress seems to lag in the field where it seems most plausible it should advance, the field of religion.

We are lamentably behind in church leadership even though we have moved forward steadily in industrial, educational and political power.

Yet has religion not been our true forte? Good women have always been addicted to pious works. Their prayers have continually assaulted Heaven's gates. No creeds could have survived without their loyalty and labor. They, too, have died that the Faith might live. And certainly in the long list of Christian martyrs should be written the names of obscure spinsters who have sublimed earthly desires upon religious altars and of thousands of nuns who have toiled without thought or hope of any save Celestial rewards.

Actually, women have contributed immeasurably to the establishment and growth of every denomination. No man can deny it. Yet he has given us only a whisper of authority in his religious councils. The sisters bow weekly in their pews, or sweat in the church kitchens, toiling like beavers for every worthy cause, while the men continue to exhort from the pulpits and to sit upon the governing boards.

With few exceptions the bishops, elders and moderators are men.

No dictatorship has been so severe as the dictatorship of the male who considered himself God's representative, especially when he has spoken to woman. Even now the man does nine-tenths of the preaching, decides most of the policies and interprets the Word. In short, he delegates to himself the right to monopolize the spiritual and temporal power held by his particular denomination.

In this respect the modern church is our most medieval institution.

## FROM THE RECORD

REP. FISH (R., N. Y.): I stand with Bourke Cockran when he made the statement that "a second best navy is like a second best hand in poker—it is not worth a damn."

Rep. Burdick (R., N. D.): I think I am perfectly safe in asserting that there are not 10 members of this House who know what the word "communism" means.

Rep. Taber (R., N. Y.): They (Quoddy and the Florida Canal) will get their nose under the tent and then the Congress later may feel obliged to appropriate the rest of the money. I hope the Congress will have courage enough to refuse.

Rep. Moran (D., Me.): To date every shipping measure passed by Congress has been written by private interests, their attorneys or lobbyists.

## THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

Squaring the Circle  
With  
THE HOOISER EDITOR

THESE happens to be an A-1 newspaper man in town who is also a swell fellow. He went to a party the other evening and some one shoved a glass of ale into his hand.

Calmly strolling over to a companion, he gently thrust his full glass into his friend's hand, at the same time plucking away an empty one.

"I'm on the wagon," he mumbled, "but I've got to look like I'm enjoying myself."

THEN there is the story of the gentleman who finally squandered on a new automobile after driving his old one for almost five years.

He'd been driving around Indianapolis for almost 15 years and he looked very serene as he steered the gleaming new vehicle out of the showrooms and down Meridian-st.

At a stop-and-go light the new car stopped. He tried the starter, jiggled this and that, and did any number of things he'd learned over 15 years.

Finally, he called the auto dealer. "Quit stepping on the accelerator," said the dealer, "it's an automatic choke and you're flooding the thing."

The old auto driver went back, muttering something about "new-fangled ideas."

"Well, there's always something to learn."

THE boys were talking about the floods over East and a pretty good story popped out.

It seems that The Times sent a photographer down into southern Indiana by plane during those disastrous floods a few years ago.

The plane swooped over farm houses, drenched over miles of water, and the photographer click-clicked away, changing plates on his camera all the time.

Finally back to Indianapolis came the plane. Down clambered the photographer. And just as he reached terra firma, out of his hands dropped the precious plates.

Morosely, he sought out a box. He plumped himself down, cupped chin in hand and stared wistfully at the shattered plates.

"Well," ventured the pilot, "there's no use crying over spilled milk."

"Yeah," retorted the photographer. "I wonder what the city editor will say when I crack that one."

What the city editor said is not printed here for obvious reasons.

SPRING note:

The firemen were out today, looking over the side of the firehouse.

Probably wondering where to put the chairs.

CONTRIBUTION from J. S.:

Unsigned notes on apartment doors like half-heard conversations sometimes give rise to queer imaginings.

In our building several young ladies whom I have never seen have the disturbing habit of pinning little billets doux to the characterless face of their door. Usually they read:

"Dear Mabel: Get the groceries from Alice. I have gone to the library;" or

"Alice: I am staying at John's for dinner; be sure to call Mrs. H. before 9."

But this note Mabel, or perhaps it was Alice or John, for all I know, left the one which has been there for four days. It is going to make me force the door if they don't take it down. It reads:

"Stop for the laundry in the basement before you leave. I am getting the oranges and cake."

BY DAVID DIETZ

A RESEARCH laboratory devoted

entirely to the study of the soybean has been opened at Urbana, Ill., by the United States Department of Agriculture in co-operation with 12 states of the North Central region. The co-operating states are Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Amazing increase in the production of soybeans during the last few years is given by government officials as the reason for the new laboratory. Acreage devoted to the bean has risen from 2,000,000 acres in 1924 to nearly 5,000,000 in 1935. In 1935, 5,000,000 bushels of soybeans were produced. Last year's crop totaled 40,000,000 bushels.

Increased demand for the beans for food, animal feed and industrial uses coupled with the beans' immunity to chinch bugs and other pests are the chief reasons for the increase. The beans are also drought resistant.

The laboratory will be under the direction of Dr. O. E. May of the United States Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. Breeding work will be directed by W. J. Morse of the United States Bureau of Plant Industry.

Much of the credit for the present position of the soybean as a major American crop belongs to Mr. Morse, who, a few years ago, spent two years in the Orient in a successful hunt for better varieties of soybean than those then known in this country.

Soybeans are used today in the manufacture of many industrial products including paint, enamel, varnish, glue, printing ink, rubber substitutes, linoleums, insecticides, and plastics.

OTHER OPINION

On Temperate Speech

By D. Young

The radio transmission is one of the great central power plants of public opinion, and public opinion is the master of our politics. Yet, somehow, in the field of politics, we are demanding no greater responsibility than in the days of the fanning mill.



## GIVE!

INDIANAPOLIS CITIZENS HAVE BEEN ASKED TO CONTRIBUTE \$18,000 FOR RELIEF OF FLOOD VICTIMS

## Vagabond

from

Indiana

ERNIE PYLE

EDITOR'S NOTE—This roving reporter for The Times goes where he pleases, when he pleases, in search of odd stories about this and that.

NEW ORLEANS, March 21—The evolution of Frans Blom has been a queer one.

He was born and reared in Denmark, in an atmosphere of country estates, comfortable wealth, scholarship and art.

His evolution carried him out to grinding a filling station pump in Mexico City, and scrambling over mountains on muleback as an oil geologist.