

## The Indianapolis Times

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## THE SYMBOL IN THE BELL

WE can think of nothing more fitting for the Fourth of July, 1936—all present issues considered—than the following, written by Raymond Clapper after a visit to Independence Hall:

"How like the history of our national experiment in liberty is the story of the Liberty Bell. It is a perfect symbol of the struggle through which this new concept of the American people has survived.

"The Liberty Bell is small, not more than three feet high. It was cast in London, ordered for the new Pennsylvania Statehouse in 1752, a quarter of a century before the Declaration of Independence. As if with prophetic insight, the order for the bell specified that it should bear the biblical inscription: 'Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto the inhabitants thereof.'

"Upon its arrival from England, the bell was hung in the Statehouse yard. It cracked upon the first ringing. Then it was melted down and recast, with the addition of more copper to make it less brittle. Anything, be it bell or Constitution, is apt to crack if its structure is too rigid. In this world, as in the construction of a giant ocean liner or a bridge, there must be provision for flexibility, for expansion and contraction, so that the structure does not break under daily stresses. Still the bell was not satisfactory and it was melted down and recast for a third time.

"Then for many years it served very well. In 1776 it was rung on July 8—not July 4—to proclaim the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. It did not crack then. For exactly 59 years, to the day, it continued to peal out its reminder of American liberty in the quiet of Independence Square. But on July 8, 1835, when the body of Chief Justice John Marshall, who had died two days before, was being removed to Virginia for burial, the Liberty Bell was tolled. It cracked beyond repair.

"Metallurgists say that this fatal crack had been long in the making. Molecular crystallizations were taking place inside the bell, unobserved to the naked eye, as under interpretations of John Marshall crystallizations were occurring in the Constitution which were to have fateful consequences in the years to come.

"Finally, these flaws caused the open crack in the bell.

"So, today your mind wanders back to that small bell, the totem of our liberty—and you wonder what it is trying to tell us in this Year of Our Lord, 1936, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred sixtieth."

## BACK TO WARFARE?

THE United States Supreme Court in its Guffey Coal and New York Minimum Wage opinions has said in effect that neither Federal nor state governments may regulate the hours and wages of industrial workers.

There is left in the law, therefore, only one instrument for working men seeking to improve their conditions. This is collective bargaining, bulwarked in the Wagner-Connery Act that defines fair and unfair practices affecting commerce and sets up the National Labor Relations Board to adjudicate disputes arising in the process of bargaining.

Now the Sixth United States Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati has ruled that this board has no power over such relations in the auto industry, since the making of autos is an intrastate operation.

Previously the Fifth United States Circuit Court of Appeals had said from New Orleans that the board had no power in steel factories, shortly following which decision the powerful Iron and Steel Institute told labor organizers that it would fight their efforts to unionize steel plants.

With the lower courts seeking to narrow the government's sphere so as to exclude it from the big auto and steel factories, and with the "economic royalists" of the steel empire challenging the workers' right to unionize peacefully, the question arises: What will the Supreme Court do?

If it locks the third and only remaining door, it will put the workers right back where they started from, with the strike as their only weapon against a return to a servile status.

Before Congress enacted the Wagner-Connery law American workers had created through years of strife certain effective unions. Into the building of those unions went fear, class hate, social disorder, all of which was paid for by employers, workers and the public in treasure and in blood.

Must the workers be turned back to that by the Federal courts?

## LABORER AND HIS HIRE

WHEN the rights of labor are mentioned, most persons think of those who toil in mills and mines and transportation; the organized groups, and others in similar lines.

There has been news lately to remind readers that the labor problem is not all for the cities, the mill towns or the mining camps. An Arkansas paper, the Earle Enterprise, condones, if it does not point with pride, to the fact that flogging has curbed disturbance among sharecroppers and forced field-hands to toll long hours for 75 cents a day, instead of the princely \$1.50 wage they had demanded.

At Hammonton, N. J., those on relief have been told to pick berries at a rate of pay so low that an average toiler can earn but 50 or 75 cents in 11 hours of strenuous toil.

No reasonable person pretends that 75 cents a day can be counted a living wage, if gauged by any wholesome standard. Yet any investigator will learn that these examples taken from the news of the week nearly reflect the plight of farm labor the country over.

Farmers will reply that their own economic condition permits of no better pay. In many instances that may be true, but it shouldn't be. Actually, farm wages have long or always been unjustly low, and the working days slavishly long. Farm labor has lacked anything like effective organization, and there has been much of drudgery in the whole tradition of agriculture.

Now both parties are promising to help the farmer, and one of them has. Moreover, both are strong in protestation of friendship for labor, and articulate labor leaders should think beyond their own crafts, and insist that farm workers, too, should share in the sort of progress that makes for civilization.

## THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

## THEY MEAN BUSINESS

PREPARATIONS for establishment of merit systems in the Indiana Public Welfare Department and the Unemployment Compensation Insurance Department indicate that those working on the program mean business.

There are enough loopholes in the new state social security legislation to permit spoils politics to dominate.

Some of those in authority have not been looking for loopholes. They have been looking for sound methods of public personnel management. And they are finding these methods. Preliminary studies have been made by capable committees. Other expert outside counsel has been enlisted.

Now the United States Social Security Board is to lend a hand. Mrs. Mary Hutchinson, liaison officer between the national board and the Department of Labor, is to be sent here later to consult on the program.

This is an excellent beginning.

IN some state departments the methods of selecting personnel have been improved. In too many others the costly patronage system rules. State platform pledges by both major parties for a strong state merit system is frank recognition of its need.

The merit plan for these two departments should be drafted with a view to having it fit into an administrative personnel system for all departments. Legislators already are being canvassed on this broader proposal by the Indiana League of Women Voters. The 1937 General Assembly will be asked to write it into law.

Indiana can make a name for itself by thus introducing sound methods of efficient public personnel into its state government.

## JULY 4TH MOVIES

ONE of the more sensible things being done to promote a sane celebration of Independence Day is the moving picture party put on for youngsters by Indiana Inders of Photoplays.

As a result, about 2000 children are spending part of their time today watching Shirley Temple in "The Little Colonel." This kind of Fourth-of-July party has been an annual event for 15 years. Its success has been such that a permanent organization was formed this week to assure its continuance.

## PRACTICAL CHURCH WORK

THE decision of the Mormon Church to resume the responsibility of caring for its own needy strikes a new note in the national relief discord. The working out of its plans will be watched with interest.

Few other churches are as well equipped as the Mormons to remove destitute members from government-supported relief rolls and provide for them through tithes and co-operative enterprise.

The Mormons are a disciplined group. They have a background of wide experience in successful management of the church's extensive properties and businesses—an experience which will serve them well in directing the co-operative farms and factories and community warehouses through which they plan that impoverished members shall earn a livelihood, aided only by the tithes of more fortunate members.

In some ways the Mormon plan is similar to the Upton Sinclair EPIC plan which the voters of California turned down, and similar to the Ohio FERA plan which the government abandoned when it found that in the production and exchange of relief workers' goods it was creating an economic system within and to some extent competitive with our larger economic system.

If the Mormon Church succeeds in taking care of the 80,000 members now on local direct-relief and Federal work-relief rolls, it may point a way for other private endeavors toward solution of this great national problem. But it is hardly a pattern which government itself will want to apply in a large-scale program for the whole 20,000,000 now dependent on government jobs and doles—at least not until every possible effort has been made to reabsorb these millions into our one economic system.

## CHILDREN OUTDOOR ADULTS

TRAFFIC accidents are no respecters of age.

Yet since 1922, when the national child safety education movement began, children of the elementary school age—from 5 to 14 years—have led the way in traffic safety.

School Superintendent Paul C. Stetson reports no fatal accidents occurred where patrolmen were on duty during the 1935-36 school year. The accident rate for Indianapolis school children was 2 1/2 per cent lower than for the nation as a whole, he says. The nation's child death rate from traffic last year was 11 for each 100,000 population; for all ages it was 29.

If everybody had been as careful as the children, we would have had 14,000 traffic deaths last year instead of nearly 37,000.

## A WOMAN'S VIEWPOINT

By Mrs. Walter Ferguson

TODAY is the Fourth of July. And the Fourth, especially in campaign years, sees us in a fever of patriotism. We palpitate with love of country during presidential races.

And to listen in on political conventions is a liberal education in One Hundred Per Cent Americanism. The fellow who didn't know us very well might think we went a bit heavy on the self-praise, for according to the speechmakers the Party can do no wrong.

It may be that the committeemen discuss in private the mistakes of leaders and the shortcomings of platforms, but you never guess it from their spokesmen out front who almost burst their buttons while they recite the virtues of themselves and their side. Such chest thumpings! Such floods of compliment! Such absurd vainglory!

Instead of adult men and women who are come together for formulating plans for good government, we have such posturings as would do credit to a race of Zionchecks. No restraint, no serious appraisal, no humility for past mistakes.

We accept this sort of thing during campaigns because we have always accepted it, without analyzing its stupidity. And for exactly the same reason we accept the acclaim about our country's perfections on each Fourth of July, although it goes against every natural instinct, every grain of common sense, humor and racial tradition.

Self-praise is not only bad taste in the individual, but a sign of decadence. The man who is satisfied with himself never grows. Complete self-approval means the cessation of progress and neither political parties nor countries can practice the bad habit without suffering the bad results.

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Now both parties are promising to help the farmer, and one of them has. Moreover, both are strong in protestation of friendship for labor, and articulate labor leaders should think beyond their own crafts, and insist that farm workers, too, should share in the sort of progress that makes for civilization.

About nine years; but some dogs have lived 30 years.

Claims for prevention of soldiery or other similar medical claims, are not warranted.

## Our Town

By ANTON SCHERRER

THE deep hole at the corner of Washington and Meridian—the start of Wason's new store—once was the site of John Freeman's restaurant. That was back in the fifties, when the corner was known as the Bee Hive Building.

Mr. Freeman was a thrifty, hard-working Negro who came to Indianapolis in 1844. Nobody knew much about his antecedents or his background and nobody cared because Mr. Freeman was a gentleman all the time he was in Indianapolis.

He had married here and had four children. He had other property, too, the most important being four acres lying between Meridian and Pennsylvania-sts., south of the present St. Peter and Paul Cathedral. Here he lived in a cabin, part log, part frame, on the southwest corner of the tract, just about where Losey Motors does business on Meridian-st today. On this tract he "made garden" when he wasn't watching his business in the basement of the Bee Hive.

On June 20, 1853, Mr. Freeman was arrested. The news was enough to turn the town upside down.

ON that day, Pleasant Ellington, a Kentuckian, but then living in Missouri, showed up in Indianapolis and charged Mr. Freeman with being a fugitive slave. He said that the Negro had run away 17 years before.

Mr. Freeman was clapped into jail and had to stay there 60 days before the case came to trial.

In the meantime, John L. Ketcham, Lucien Barbour and John Coburn were retained to defend Mr. Freeman. Given 60 days to dig up what they could about Mr. Freeman's past, they discovered that the accused man told the truth when he said he had lived in Monroe, Ga., from 1831 to 1844, the year of his coming to Indianapolis. They also learned that Mr. Freeman never had been a slave, which was more to the point.

On the other hand, there was no question but that Mr. Ellington had lost a slave named Sam at that time.

Sam, it appears, had fled to Canada upon passage of the fugitive slave law and had passed himself off as Mr. McConnell, Attorney Coburn discovered when he went sleuthing in Canada.

Sam accommodated Mr. Coburn in every way he could and even showed him his scars. Sam had a very large burn on the outside of his left leg below the knee going down over the ankle. He also had scars in the back over the shoulders, a mark on his left wrist and another on the left elbow. Moreover, he had peculiarly small ears and large feet. All of which was of considerable interest to the defense because, according to Mr. Ellington's story, that was exactly the way John Freeman looked when he made his escape.

THE upshot of the matter was that Mr. Freeman was acquitted. But he was sore. Sore enough, in fact, that he started a suit against Mr. Ellington for \$10,000 damages. He followed with a suit for \$3000 against the United States marshal who arrested him.

The case was tried and resulted in a verdict for Mr. Freeman for \$2000 and costs. He didn't collect a cent and, as far as anybody knows, the judgment still stands on the Circuit Court dockets as unpaid.

After that, Mr. Freeman stuck around Indianapolis until the battle of Bull Run. When he heard what had happened he expressed some apprehension that the North might be conquered. Indeed, he went even further and predicted that in that event all Negroes would be put back into slavery.

Mr. Freeman sold what he had, packed his effects in a wagon and went to Canada to make sure.

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## NO LAP DOGS NEED APPLY!

## BEWARE OF THE WATCH-DOG!



## The Hoosier Forum

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

Times readers are invited to express their views in these columns. Religious and controversial editorial. Make your letter short, to the point, and have a check. Limit them to 250 words or less. Your letter must be signed, but names will be withheld on request.

## DISLIKES" PEGLER

AND SULLIVAN

By Pat Hogan, East Columbus

Just why an otherwise perfect newspaper like The Indianapolis Times should blot its pages and insult the intelligence of its readers with its cynicism and idiocy is beyond me.

Pegler broke into print about a year ago in his "hay-shaker" attempt to kid his "ray-shaker." He has since tried to kid his "ray-shaker" again.