

THE HOOSIER FORUM

(Times readers are invited to express their views in these columns, religious controversies excluded. Make your letter short, so all can have a chance. Letters must be signed, but names will be withheld on request.)

CHARGES SPANISH FASCISTS EXECUTED PRIESTS

By Agapito Rex, Bloomington

There has been a determined attempt to prejudice the cause of the legitimate Spanish Government on the charge that it persecuted religion. We cannot find any Government acts or measures to justify this accusation. The fact that long before the rebellion broke out some churches had been converted into Fascist arsenals and that the first shots were fired from them brought some intense feeling against the churches and some were attacked by irresponsible individuals.

But at no time did we find the Spanish Government antagonistic to religion or the Church.

The Basque are the most ardent Catholic people in Spain. Nevertheless, they remained loyal to the government of the republic.

They are fighting to preserve the autonomy of state rights which they obtained from the republic and which a dictator would take away from them. The Basque clergy, while not taking an active part in the war, remained faithful to its people. When some Basque towns were taken by the rebels the clergymen suffered the same fate as many other noncombatant Basque patriots. They were arrested by the hundred and a good many were executed without the formality of a trial.

On Dec. 2, 1936, the autonomous Basque government presented to a delegation of French Catholics a list of 31 priests executed by the Fascists. This list was reported in the London Times Dec. 3 and published with other details in the international magazine "Esprit." Let me extract from the official record the names of some of those martyrs of fascism.

Alejandro Mendicute, 45, priest of Hernani, executed without trial Oct. 23; Joaquin Arin, archpriest of Mondragon, and Jose Marquiegui and Leonardo de Guridi, both vicars of Mondragon, all three executed Oct. 24; Jose Sagornia, young vicar of Berriatua, executed last day of October; Father Otano, of the Immaculate Heart of Mary at Alosa, executed early in November; Joaquin Iturry Castillo, priest of Martin, executed on Nov. 6; Jose Penagari-cano, 63, vicar of Marquina, executed Oct. 28; Jose de Arizmuno, 39, prominent priest and writer, executed early in November, and Jose Adarraga, priest very advanced in age, executed about Nov. 18.

In addition to the details of the above executions, the official report of the Basque Government gives many other cases of persecution endured by the Basque priests at the hands of the Fascists. The military has no use for religion unless it can prostitute it to serve its aims.

SUPPORTS PRESIDENT'S COURT REFORM PLAN

By Charles M. Flaig, Richmond

We stand on the threshold of a great political struggle. It will decide whether this nation is to have a democratic government or whether it will continue to permit certain groups to rule through the reactionary wing of the Supreme Court.

In reality the President's message lays siege to a citadel of special privilege, in which our courts seem to be. Its enactment, if the President's appointments are wisely made, will transform the Supreme Court from an ultra conservative to a liberal body. It will make a New Deal possible.

The greatest depression in our history, in which our nation almost collapsed, saw a great people attempting to solve by democratic means the problems of modern economic life. The Court struck down one recovery measure after another.

Lincoln was faced with the same kind of a Court and he said: "The candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the Government upon which vital questions affecting the whole people are to be irrevocably fixed by the decisions of the Supreme Court, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent, practically resigned their Government into the hands of that eminent tribunal."

Faces set stubbornly to the past, despite the mandate of the people, the Court decided that industry, agriculture and labor were still in

civic pride, responsibility and interest in local affairs.

Our present machinery of county government was not planned to meet the needs and conditions of our day and age, but was an historical accident of the days of the stage coach, the exhort and the covered wagon, and was predicated on the principles and conditions of that hour.

Improvements Necessary, Claim

If the county is to survive as a unit of local self-government, and the growing tendency toward functional consolidation and state centralization is to be checked, then the county's government must be improved.

The counties of Indiana are now slowly fading into mere administrative districts of the State. With the growing State control over road building, fire prevention, sanitation, health supervision, the sale of liquor, prevention and punishment of crime and the care of the mentally sick, poor and unfortunate.

This tendency may be partially checked if the county becomes a unit for the maintenance of health, welfare, library and recreational facilities, fire protection and public works when, and only when, an efficient local government able to cope with these problems is developed.

Define Powers of Counties

The provision of the proposed amendment that requires legislative determination of the powers of counties will insure standardization and supervision in so far as counties are administrative subdivisions of the State for the execution of vital State functions. The amendment is correct in providing a self-executing plan since the experience in Ohio, Maryland, New York and other states has shown that any other plan may prove unsatisfactory.

The counties of Indiana are extremely diverse in size, population, valuation and degree of urbanization and no one plan of government can exactly fit them all. The amendment does not make the error of attempting to prescribe the county manager or the county mayor plan.

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a past age. It shut doors to one hope after another. President Roosevelt had no choice, after last fall's victory, but to fight judicial supremacy or permit a minority to rule with its packed courts.

DEMANDS ON OFFICIALS HELD TOO GREAT

By Hiram Lacker

Does The Times realize the significance of the demands which it makes upon Mayor Kern and Governor Townsend? In effect, you urge these officials to ignore the obligations of political friendships and to live ahead of their own times to make decisions independent of their friends—all to make the merit system real and practical for the common good.

It is interesting to study the lack of courage of The Times when faced with a similar problem in its own field of journalism.

The Times editor has professional fellow-editors whose misrepresentations and deceptions should be exposed for the public good. But The Times, as a rule, deletes all criticism that is written by readers to expose other newspapers.

COURT PLAN ENDANGERS LIBERTY, WRITER SAYS

By Carl Humble

I want to compliment The Times on its recent editorial expressing disapproval of the President's plan to reorganize the Supreme Court. To approach this grave question without political bias is a public service.

As this is a matter involving the continuance of the constitutional plan of our Government, it should be considered by all, without regard to politics or personalities. The experience of all history shows there can be no safety or human liberty unless we keep all three departments of our government separate and independent. It must be a government of laws, not a personal government.

Unchecked power in the hands of one man eventually means the tyranny of monarchy; in the hands of any group the tyranny of oligarchy. Even if we had a man who was all-wise and had the virtues of a god, such a man would soon come to the end of administration and be replaced by another who might be neither wise nor good.

Thus, eventually, selfishness and greed would ensue all. It is necessary to keep each department of government entirely separate and independent, each a check on the other, as provided by the founders of this republic.

TARKINGTON'S "DICTIONARY" HELD CONTRADICTORY

By Alden R. Bracewell, Shirley

Booth Tarkington opposes the President's Court proposal on the ground that it would destroy the dictionary of the Constitution. In his view, the justices are not concerned with the desirability of acts

SHOE REPAIR DEPT. HALF SOLES AND RUBBER HEELS

• GENUINE LEATHER SEWED SOLES
• SHOES MADE WIDER & LONGER
• COMPOSITION SOLES USED ON WORK SHOES

Thursday 79c

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of Congress but merely with the words of the supreme law. That is to say, they tell us that the word "white" means white, and the word "black" means black.

Some of the judges say a word is white and others say it is black. Obviously, it can't be both, any more than Congressional acts can be at once valid and void. Why does the "dictionary" contradict itself?

The answer is, of course, the Constitution is not a clear-cut document drawn up in simple definite lines of black and white. Nor can it ever be, so long as a group of men, no matter how learned or distinguished they may be, are given the right to split hairs about shades of meaning. Does not every man interpret things according to his own personal tradition? A Supreme Court justice is no exception.

Since the interpretation of the Constitution now depends on the opinion of the Court members, is it not as desirable to have a majority of justices whose sympathies favor the common people as to have a majority whose background leads them to twist the words for the benefit of high finance? Isn't there a saying to the effect that sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander?

URGES HOUSE RENTERS TO PROTEST INCREASE

By Mrs. H. L. S.

Open letter to house renters of Indianapolis:

The Times recently printed an announcement of a 5 to 10 per cent advance in house rents offered by rental agents of the Real Estate Board.

It seems to me that it is time for house renters to start some loud and vigorous protesting.

Last October rents were raised, some as much as \$5. I know, I heard the lamentations on all sides and many whom I know had to move. We should have been able to, but couldn't find a decent place any cheaper than what we now pay so we struggled along, with no margin.

The fact is that rents are too high already. If a house rents cheaply, it is a "dump."

Our income now is \$12 a week and if we are forced to pay more rent I don't know what we shall do. There are many people in a similar position.

It is decidedly unfair and unjust. Wages do not increase universally, especially not enough to warrant the

increase in rents. Tenants already pay taxes for the owner and if this dictatorial rise takes effect it will be the tenant who has to pay the increased taxes.

Prices are raised here and there until it is all shifted to the man at the bottom, who bears the brunt of all the burdens, who pays all the increases. And he is least able of all to pay.

The decent man at the bottom wants a fair chance to better himself and live, not merely exist. Usually he has a hard time doing this.

GEN. JOHNSON ATTACKED FOR COURT STAND

By E. F. Maddox

In spite of Gen. Johnson's frenzied squawking—and it has already hurt the President more than it has helped him—the opinion of a majority of the American people remains as The Times has stated it: "We believe the proposal is dangerous."

The slippery general facetiously admits that a vote on the judicial reform bill would be rejected by a majority ranging "from 3 to 1 to 56 to 1 against approval." But he says the cards are stacked.

He argues that the President's proposal to pack or unpack, as you wish, the Supreme Court, is strictly constitutional. It is the same method employed by Mussolini and Hitler to subordinate more and more one man's will.

The fears of the liberals are wholly justified, for if Gen. Johnson is right in his estimate of the people's opposition to the bill, what will happen if a man with dictator's itch is elected in 1940?

A man with the powers Mr. Roosevelt asks for could declare martial law and suspend the functions of the courts and the Constitution and

Bargain Week - End Trips

Next Saturday

CLEVELAND \$5.00

Leave 10:00 p. m. Return on any train until 2:35 a. m. Monday. Coach service.

DETROIT \$5.00

TOLEDO \$4.25

SANDUSKY \$5.00

Leave 10:00 p. m. Return reach Indianapolis not later than Monday morning following. Coach service.

Pay a visit to the Henry Ford exhibit at historic Greenfield Village in Dearborn, near Detroit.

BIG FOUR ROUTE

OTHER LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ON PAGE 14

the civil liberties of the people. . . . Mr. Roosevelt may not desire to be a dictator, but the powers he asks for must be passed on to another man in a few years and another packing of the Court might completely destroy the Constitution.

STINCHFIELD ARTICLE HAS REVERSE EFFECT

By "Aroused"

My first thought on reading F. H. Stinchfield's article on the Court issue was to nominate him for the Liberty League "tall story" club. On reading further, I was disappointed. His story was tall enough, but not cleverly told.

Mr. Stinchfield does a swell job of getting us aroused about Congress robbing us of our rights. In fact, he does too good a job of getting us

aroused. We can't help suggesting—Why not go back to 1803 and catch up with the amendments on the thousand-and-one rights that the Supreme Court has robbed us of?

Then the terrible truth dawns upon us that to attempt to keep up with the lawyers' interpretations of the Constitution through the process of amendment would be something like entering an armament race. Before long we would have to expand the Supreme Court building in order that it might hold the Constitution.

CATCHING COLD?

At the first warning sneeze—quick—a few drops up each nostril. Its timely use helps prevent many colds.

VICKS VA