

The Indianapolis Times

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Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1939

WE HAVEN'T BEEN ASKED

THE incurable American itch to solve other people's problems will cause a great many thousands of words to be written and spoken on this side of the Atlantic concerning Adolf Hitler's latest "peace offer."

There will be speculations on Der Fuehrer's assurance that Germany has no further territorial claims in Europe, recalling that he said the same thing after he annexed Austria, again after he invaded the Sudeten area and again after the absorption of Bohemia and Slovakia.

And there will be contrary arguments that a peace now even under humiliating terms would be better than war long continued at tremendous sacrifice.

But it would seem to be healthier and wiser for Americans to leave the speculating and recalling and arguing and deciding to the peoples of Europe—to remember that it is not our war and that if peace should come under present circumstances it will not be a peace of our making.

There may come a time when both sides will ask the good offices of the United States in arranging an armistice. If and when that time comes, we should be ready to serve. We can best prepare for that eventuality by keeping out.

OH, HAPPY DAY!

WE'VE been brooding over the current World Series and the sad results for our neighbor to the southeast. And we think we have a solution.

Next year let's have a World Series between the American and National League winners. The Yankees can play in their own league.

PHILADELPHIA STORY

THE City of Philadelphia, facing a financial crisis last year, "solved" its problem by pawning the municipal gas works. It borrowed 41 million dollars from the RFC and a group of private banks. Until that money is repaid, the RFC and the banks, instead of the city, will get all profits from sale of gas, about four million a year.

Now there's another crisis. The water and sewage systems are in bad shape. So Philadelphia is trying to borrow \$60,000,000 more from the RFC to make necessary improvements. This time it offers to hock the municipal water works and to repay the loan by giving up the \$5,000,000-a-year profit it now gets from water rents.

But still other crises are coming up. The city is spending nearly six million dollars more than its income this year and a deficit of 16 millions is predicted in the 1940 budget.

We're interested in the reason given for this mess by the City Controller, Robert C. White. He says it's due chiefly to political waste—to superfluous employees, inefficient methods and ridiculously short working hours in city offices. He cites specific instances of waste which he says have sent 30 million dollars "down the rat holes."

Making due allowance for the facts that most Philadelphia officials are Republicans, while Mr. White is a Democrat and a candidate for Mayor, we still suspect that there's truth in his charges.

For few are the governments—city, state or Federal, and whether controlled by Democrats or Republicans—that are free from political waste. Few cities can afford to sneer at Philadelphia's troubles. Indianapolis might well afford to profit by Philadelphia's unhappy example and go after political waste with real determination to cut it down before it reduces us to such desperate measures as Philadelphia is taking.

GOOD

THERE is a good-tempered discussion under way between the Indianapolis Bar Association and some of its members concerning violation of prisoners' civil liberties at City Jail.

The Association's civil rights committee reported it had found no violations. Andrew Jacobs, attorney, contends certain basic rights are being violated "with the placid consistency of custom."

Far from being miffed at the challenge, Association officials promise to look further into the situation. That's fine. It's encouraging to find a group big enough to re-examine its position on a question of this kind, and it's a healthy thing for the community that such a discussion is going on.

PEACE IN HARLAN

HARLAN COUNTY has long been considered one of the last places likely to set the world a good example, and even now a certain amount of skepticism may be pardoned.

But it does seem possible that both sides to Harlan's perennial war have learned at last that violence only begets more violence.

The State of Kentucky has dismissed indictments against some 400 Harlan miners and others, accused by the coal operators of various illegal acts. The Federal Government has dismissed 57 indictments charging mining companies and their officials with conspiracy to deprive the miners of their rights under the Wagner Act. And W. K. Hopkins, the special Assistant U. S. Attorney General in charge of these conspiracy cases, has announced:

"Industrial peace at last prevails. An impossible medieval industrial system, which the operators had sworn to perpetuate, is ended. The rule of the so-called 'gun thugs' is no more."

We hope so. Harlan County has thoroughly tested the theory that "rights" can be defended only by force. The men of Harlan, whether ranged on the side of labor or of capital, are intense in their individualism. Their method of settling differences has been to fight it out.

And that method has failed disastrously. Men have died, women have wept, children have suffered, countless dollars have been lost, "Bloody Harlan" has been made a by-word—and the differences have not been settled. But now, it appears, a new method is to be tried. May Harlan find, as the world must find some day, that both sides can gain peacefully what neither side can win by war.

Fair Enough

By Westbrook Pegler

Tip to British on Winning War: Drop Enticing Menus Instead of Those Pamphlets Criticizing Hitler.

NEW YORK, Oct. 7.—Oldtime Chicago reporters, to whom the truth was not always sacred, sometimes tell of a cruel and unusual stratagem by which the police wrung confessions from otherwise unyielding suspects.

At the old Harrison St. station or Desplaines or the Detective Bureau, the scene varying according to the mood of the narrator, the coppers would just about starve a man for, say, four or five days, and when they figured that they had him good and ready would start a pinocchio game outside his cell, in the course of which one of them would remark that he was hungry and how about sending out for a snack of something.

So they would send across the street for a waiter, who would presently appear with the menu and they would sit there reading out loud, like this:

First Cop—"How is the planked steak and french fried potatoes tonight, Gus, and does the mince pie come with it or is that extra?"

Second Cop—"I don't know. I had turkey for dinner with plum pudding after, but a man shouldn't neglect his health, so I might go for a little of that pot roast and dumpling and a big cup of coffee and a good 10-cent cigar."

THEY would finally order a long list of rare viands, and when it came would clear the pinocchio table and sit there lapping up the heavy gravies, sucking their fingers and mousting away like a cat over a fish-head until the prisoner, with a desperate shriek, would leap to the bars of his cage and offer to confess to all the unsolved crimes on the books from the founding of Ft. Dearborn right down to date.

The pathetic state to which this, let us hope, mythical victim was reduced, suggests possibilities which hereby are offered to the British and French War Departments in the interests of peace and democracy.

The British have been bombarding the German people with pamphlets faulting Adolf Hitler and appealing to their desire for peace, knowing that in Germany it is a chopping-block offense to possess any document in dispraise of the Fuehrer and a crime but little less grave to think, much less speak, of peace.

It is no offense, however, to indulge in dreams of wiener schnitzel or roast pork, enormous sheets of roast beef with baked brown potatoes and plenty of gravy, roast stuffed goose or goose liver dumplings, plum cake with whipped cream and great, high stacks of white bread and unlimited quantities of pure, golden butter. By all means, plenty of white bread and real butter, not that ersatz made from the blubber of sea gulls and fish. Help yourself to the white bread and butter, Fritz.

IT has been so long since the Germans even read a menu of such richness that, considering the almost lifelong, if somewhat intermittent privation of most of the Germans now living, a bombardment of menus would strike deeper into their souls than any stilted, professorial or editorial tracts on the perfidy of Hitler or the joys of peace.

Such inducements would reduce a whole group of armies to the surrender point, and yet the British, in their simple, silly way, attempt to speak to them unkindly of Adolf Hitler, whom they love, and enticingly of peace, which they hate.

I leave it to any oldtime Chicago reporter to say how long it would take to break the German morale.

Business

By John T. Flynn

Price Decline Due to Peace Rumors Recalls Experiences of Last War.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7.—The weakening of grain prices and of stock prices as a result of developments in Europe recalls strikingly the events of the last war.

We're simpler then and it was a long time before we began to understand fully what the war had been doing to our economic system. Before we knew it almost, the war had lifted up our whole level of prices, wages, profits and, indeed, our standards of living. But in good time we began to understand that the continuance of all this was dependent on the continuance of the war.

It was for this reason that the American Ambassador to England, Walter Hines Page, cabled the calling attention to the fact that if America did not get into the war and make the necessary loans to England and France, our whole transatlantic trade would collapse and we would be thrown into a terrible industrial panic.

At different intervals during the war, efforts for peace were made with great seriousness and rumors would float into the Stock Exchange that peace was imminent. Every time this happened the market would sink and once, at least, it practically collapsed.

We are seeing how this works already. The whole gamble that has been going on in Wall Street and everywhere for that matter, is on the war lasting a long time. If it lasts the gamblers will win. If it collapses they will lose their shirts.

An Interesting Debate

Yet it is strange how people are banking on the war to bring business. Coming through Danville, Ill., I found the following account of a debate at the Chamber of Commerce on the war. One of the speakers said: "I can't see why we shouldn't sell when we have such large surpluses and so many steel mills that are 'virtually idle.' Our whole recovery is based on the fact that we must sell our surpluses. The reason we haven't been selling them in the past few years is because other countries have attacked our economy."

He then pictured what it would mean to have the steel mills running full blast again, thus creating a big demand for coal from local mines. "We're five per cent of all the people are against Hitlerism," he said, "and at large a percentage of them don't want the war. The thing for us to do then is to bring this war to an end economically, and to end it so quickly that this country will not be embroiled. I favor repeal of the embargo because that will accomplish just that. Germany has no money to buy arms and munitions here and the British blockade will do the rest."

Thus the man's feelings and his business sense got curiously mixed up.

A Woman's Viewpoint

By Mrs. Walter Ferguson

WHILE wars rage abroad it's pleasant to know that peace hovers over the home front. We discover this, not from any unusual powers of observation, but from the energetic seven-year research of two professors who announce that 79 per cent of married women in the United States are happy ones. Take that, you weepers and wailers!

This discovery is important for more reasons than one. In the first place it establishes the truth of what a good many of us have always believed; that divorce only seems to be made necessary and because it invariably gets the lion's share of publicity.

So divorce has become one of our great social bogies. We talk and write of it in alarmist words. Is it possible, we ask, that two individuals of initiative and intelligence can adjust themselves to one another? We doubt it, and we doubt it so often and so loudly that most of our youngsters take it for granted that happy marriage is an almost impossible achievement.

Such a defeatist attitude is worse than wishful thinking, for if any institution on earth could do with some hypocrisies of optimism, it's matrimony. The person who believes in his heart that he can never be licked before he starts.

"You can't make it, you can't make it!" Imagine what would happen if we approached all our jobs with such woeful expectations. Yet, in effect, those are the dolorous words we pour into the ears of our young people.

Well, they can make it, and 79 per cent of married people in the United States stand ready to prove it. Having so few things to be cheerful about these days, the news from our fact-finding professors assumes extraordinary value.

Just a Question of Which Limb!



Gen. Johnson Says—

Evidence Abounds That We May Yet See a Repetition of Those Same Events That Got Us Into Last War.

NEW YORK, Oct. 7.—"Germany did not hesitate to sink our ships before we entered the World War and were at peace. She will not hesitate to do so now." This statement by Senator Tom Connally in the embargo debate is being repeated almost daily by many statesmen.

I refer to it partly to correct a sloppy statement of my own and partly, by that correction, to try to set the record straight on such statements as Senator Connally's, which comes as near leaving an erroneous impression as did mine.

A couple of weeks ago I wrote: "Nine out of 10 laymen will tell you that this (the sinking of American ships) was a leading cause for our getting into the World War. As a matter of fact only one American ship, the *Gulflight*, was sunk by German submarines in that way and only three American lives were lost."

The sloppy part about this statement is that it doesn't make it clear that only the *Gulflight* had been sunk before we severed diplomatic relations with Germany. After that, and when war had become inevitable, but before its formal declaration, the sub-sank several other American ships.

THIS loose wording, however, made little difference to the argument of the column in which it was made. That argument was that what got us into the war was not primarily our position on the sinking of American ships, but our equally strong objection to the sinking of neutral or even belligerent merchant ships where American lives and property were involved. It was literally true that before the break came on this issue only the *Gulflight* had been sunk and she happened to be traveling with a belligerent British convoy. In other words, up to that time the Germans had "hesitated to sink American ships."

The point is that, even after the Neutrality Law becomes law, if we take the same position we did in 1916 and 1917, we can have exactly the same cause for war if a German submarine should sink a neutral ship carrying Americans or their property. Thus 1916 and 1917 could be enacted all over again.

They are being re-enacted in other ways. Armed British merchant ships are coming into our ports and there being supplied. They are armed to fight and destroy German ships. In that sense they are warships. We so held during the World War—but we let the British get away with it.

WHEN the *Bremen* sailed empty, we held her up for long enough to permit an opportunity at least for her capture by a British cruiser. We held her up in a farcical sham search to see if she was armed, with an implication at least that we would have disarmed or interned her had she been armed. Yet we let British ships steam boldly into our harbors with their armament in full sight.

The British violated our "rights" at international law in the World War by interfering with our shipping. It looks as though they were preparing to repeat the same done. It remains to be seen whether we shall again let them get away with it.

If there is one thing certain, it is that our people don't want to take part in this war. I can't see that repealing the arms embargo is taking part. But there are plenty of other ways to be sucked in. We seem to be starting step by step down exactly the path that led us into war before.

Aviation

By Maj. Al Williams

U. S. Would Restrict, Then Take Over Commercial Airlines in War.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7.—Logic seems inadequate to convince some people that the transportation to be restricted first, and later taken over by the Government if we are pushed into this European war, will be the airlines.

May 1, therefore, submit the information that Civil Aeronautics Authority officials anticipate the Government will make this its first move to control the transportation deemed to be of first importance?

The records of World War procurement programs—covering material and contracts for the mass manufacture of fighting aircraft, present reasons for the contemplated move, if we again face the necessity of turning out thousands of military planes under an emergency program.

Bids can be requested and submitted by mail, but the transportation of that mail will have to be accomplished by the fastest means, namely, via air. This means a priority of Government airmail, and, if necessary to secure this priority, private air mail undoubtedly will be shunted to rail transportation.

In any event, the volume of Government airmail will be so increased that the airlines may well be taxed to the exclusion of carrying passengers. And, after the manufacturing contracts are awarded, experience teaches us that even in peace time the volume of correspondence incidental to ordering contract alterations will mean another airmail peak transportation problem.

Cause for Alarm

Just what this increased volume of airmail will amount to in war conditions can only be estimated, but those charged with making such estimates are alarmed—now.

To complete the picture of what may and can be expected, it is necessary to provide for the contingencies of thousands and thousands of Government aircraft inspectors and those charged with the detailed execution of the aircraft production schedule for making rapid contacts between the Government and the contractors.

The essence of war in any of its angles is speed. And the speed of manufacture and fabrication in war time is the speed of transportation. The facilities of the existing airlines are today just about capable of handling our peace time passenger traffic loads. A stepping-up of airmail volume and the obvious increase of emergency travel by Government representatives will dump a problem in the laps of our airlines that may well tax their capacities.

At any rate there is unquestionable logic in the anxiety of the CAA officials about how the Government will administer the airlines after they are taken over.

Watching Your Health</h2