

The Indianapolis Times

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RILEY 5551

Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way

HAIL, CAESAR!

DON'T belittle the completeness or the significance of the resounding victory just won by James Caesar Petrillo, dictator-president of the A. F. of L. Musicians union, in his 27-month "canned music" strike.

He has established for the first time the principle that employers can be compelled to collect money from the public and pay it, not to employees in higher wages, but into the treasury of a union which does not have to account even to the union's members for what is done with it. In so doing he has defeated:

1. The entire record-making industry of the United States. (The three largest companies have now capitulated to Mr. Petrillo's demand for payment of a fee on every record made. The smaller ones had already been forced into line.)

2. The national war labor board, which ordered the union to rescind its ban on musical recordings, and which Mr. Petrillo defied.

3. The President of the United States, who asked Mr. Petrillo pretty-please to obey the war labor board as a wartime contribution to industrial peace, and to whom Mr. Petrillo said nothing doing.

4. The public interest. The annual \$4,000,000 or more in fees now to be received by the union treasury will be, actually, a tax on the public—taxation without representation. Under his union's constitution Mr. Petrillo can spend the money, as he says he will, to "spread musical culture" and make jobs for unemployed musicians, or he can use it for any other purpose that pleases him. In any case, the public has nothing whatever to say about how it shall be used.

WHAT MR. PETRILLO has done officials of other unions can do, and many doubtless will. The result may well be that hundreds of millions of dollars a year will be taken from the public, in higher prices for goods, and paid into union treasuries. So, possibly, the public may be interested to know why it was possible for Mr. Petrillo to win his famous victory.

A month ago President Roosevelt said he was going to hunt for a law that might be invoked against Mr. Petrillo. It must be assumed that the search failed, if one was made. It could not succeed because Mr. Roosevelt's appointees on the U. S. supreme court have held labor unions immune to prosecution under federal law for almost any conceivable form of trade-restricting, price-boosting activity. And because Mr. Roosevelt has helped union officials to block all efforts by congress to correct the effect of the supreme court decisions.

THE LEGION AND THE SPEEDWAY

ONE of the subjects likely to come up for discussion during the meeting of the national executive committee of the American Legion here this week is the proposal of the Indianapolis Voiture of the 40 and 8 for the purchase of the Indianapolis Speedway.

Although the 40 and 8 is a subsidiary branch of the Legion, the parent organization naturally has an interest in this ambitious program. Under present plans, as outlined by Norman H. Coulon, chairman of the 40 and 8 post-war committee, proceeds from the 500-mile race would be devoted to the Legion's charitable activities and the Legion's name would be closely linked with the undertaking. Hence those who are conducting negotiations with the Speedway management on behalf of the 40 and 8 are hopeful that the national Legion officials will give the green light, either officially or informally, to their proposal.

The 40 and 8 now holds an option on the famous auto racing plant. That option expires this week, but it is believed that it will be extended to allow the local committee to obtain sanction of state and federal officials for a stock issue to finance purchase of the property.

Local citizens have been following progress of the negotiations with considerable interest, for Indianapolis, as well as the Legion, has a considerable stake in the plan for resuming the 500-mile race.

This race has long been one of the traditional events of this city. Each year it has brought thousands here and has focused world-wide attention on Indianapolis. If it again becomes a sporting fixture under 40 and 8 auspices, it will be assured of whole-hearted local support.

THE POST-WAR BUS

PERHAPS it is an unhealthy sign of conservatism or mental sclerosis, but we find ourselves much less intrigued by promises of revolutionary miracles in the post-war world than by possible improvements of existing institutions.

Take, for instance, the bus. It is a handy but by no means perfect vehicle. Yet the Mack truck people tell us that we may hope for something nearer to our heart's desire. And if their prospectus pans out we shall most certainly agree.

Among other things, the Mack people say, there will be a degasser to banish those noxious engine odors that smart the eyes and nose, cause the head to ache, and generally revolt the senses. Also anti-slip doorsteps and heavier insulation.

AND THERE will be uniform, circulating-air heat instead of the pre-war inadequacy which scorched the shins of the front-seat passengers and froze those in back. The new bus will also have automatic transmission and a torque converter that should banish bumps and grinds from gear-shifting.

But perhaps best of all is the thought that has been given the standee. He will have his own oblong windows at his own eye level, above the regular windows. Think of it—no more cricks in the neck, no more constant bowing to see if you've reached your stop.

Ah, strap-hanging were paradise now! Lead us to it.

REFLECTIONS—

Old Ickes Custom

By John H. Sorrells



WASHINGTON, Nov. 14.—As a prompt New Deal gesture toward making friends, influencing people and healing wounds, Secretary Ickes waddles out with his pet—wheelchair—after the results of the presidential elections proving the declining influence by the American press.

In support of his contention, Mr. Ickes asserts that approximately 68 per cent of the American press activity supported Mr. Dewey; 14 per cent were neutral, and only 17 per cent actively supported Mr. Roosevelt. That might prove that the collective wisdom of the American people is greater than the wisdom of a majority of American editors, but that is a verdict history will write, not Mr. Ickes.

Does Not Prove Editors Are Blind

IT CERTAINLY does not prove, as Mr. Ickes implies, that American newspaper editors are blind to public opinion. Instead the newspapers in both political camps were more interested in expressing their convictions than in picking a winner. Happily there are still many American newspapers, both New Deal and Republican, possessed of the courage and independence necessary to collide head-on with public opinion, when they believe that opinion to be ill-advised or uninformed.

Mr. Ickes ignores the transformation in newspapers that has evolved since he started in politics. Then most newspapers were chiefly organs of intensely partisan opinion, because the facilities for news gathering were primitive. During campaigns, either so-called political "news" was confined almost wholly to the activities of the party championed by

probable the greatest improvement worked in American journalism has resulted from the increased and improved facilities of the two Great American press associations, the United Press and the Associated Press. No hint of political coloring touches the news of these two great non-partisan organizations, both of which deal in facts as distinct from opinions.

Public Makes Its Own Decisions

THE PUBLIC has learned to trust these facts and has acquired the habit of making its own decisions, on the basis of all the facts. As a consequence of this greater emphasis on news as distinct from editorial opinion, American newspapers today play a greater role in the formation of public policy than at any time in the history of our journalism. That the public does not always accept the editor's interpretation of the facts may tend to diminish the stature of the editor, but it is no indication of any diminution in the people's faith in or dependence on the daily press.

These popular sweeps for Mr. Roosevelt in the face of strong newspaper opposition, is reassuring evidence that the people are capable of making up their own minds.

It would be an unhealthy condition if, as Ickes seems to desire, the whole people voted, sheep-like, as they were advised by the press. We know of no editors wise enough to be entrusted with such a responsibility. We believe the newspaper has done its job when it has presented the facts fully and understandably, and expressed its convictions honestly and forcefully. We believe that the public prefers it so, Mr. Ickes notwithstanding.

WORLD AFFAIRS—

American Plan

By William Philip Simms



WASHINGTON, Nov. 14.—A conference of the foreign ministers of the 21 American republics is likely within the next 60 days to discuss the future of hemisphere defense.

Argentina has requested such a meeting to discuss charges that she has failed to comply with her inter-American commitments. But Argentina will not be the principal item on the agenda, for Dumbarton Oaks has raised more important issues. Chapter VIII of the Dumbarton Oaks formula specifically states that nothing in the charter should preclude the existence of regional arrangements for dealing with matters relating to the maintenance of international peace. On the contrary, it says, such arrangements should be encouraged.

Big Four Must Complete Blueprint

THE PRESENT position of the United States and the other big powers is that the proposed new league of nations shall be set up as soon as possible. Before that can happen, however, the Big Four must complete their blueprint and submit it to a full conference of the united nations for consideration and adoption.

Sometime in the interim, therefore, it would seem highly important that the nations of the western world hold a regional meeting of their own—if, that is, they wish to continue to play a regional role within the framework of the larger organization.

Already hemisphere defense has reached an advanced stage among the Americas. Less than 30 days after Pearl Harbor, nine Central American and Caribbean republics declared war against the axis. And at Rio de Janeiro, in January, 1942, the foreign ministers of the 21 republics met and unanimously recommended the severance of relations with the enemy and reaffirmed their previous stand that any act of aggression on the part of a non-American state against any one of them would be considered an act of aggression against them all.

It was then that Argentina set up the course which has led to the present bitterness. She and Chile failed to act upon their own recommendations. But while Chile shortly made good her pledge, Argentina stubbornly held out until this year when she broke with the axis under conditions which, many fear, largely nullified the act itself.

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Meeting Could Serve Several Purposes

TODAY THE United States and a majority of her sister republics refuse to recognize the Farrell-Perron regime at Buenos Aires. Argentina is accused of failure to live up to her commitments. Article II of the Rio resolution said: "The American republics reaffirm their complete solidarity and their determination to co-operate jointly for their mutual protection until the effects of the present aggression against the continent have disappeared." On its face, certainly, Argentina appears to have reneged.

But Buenos Aires denies the accusation. She has asked for a hearing before an all-American conference. Meanwhile Argentine propaganda suggests that what the United States really objects to is her form of government and this she contends is none of our business.

A meeting of the American republics at this time could kill several birds with one stone. And discussion of the future of hemisphere defense, under Dumbarton Oaks would automatically necessitate a review of the Argentine case to determine whether or not she has honored her present commitments. If she has not, her signature to future pacts would be equally worthless—unless, of course, she belatedly makes amends.

To The Point—

A RESEARCH institution has proposed control of Jap and Nazi electricity. We want no more shocks from them.

The Devil's Disciple



The Hoosier Forum

I wholly disagree with what you say, but will defend to the death your right to say it.—Voltaire

WE ASK YOU, ARE YOU FED UP?"

By H. E. H., Indianapolis.

Wouldn't it be a good idea if someone took a poll to ascertain what percentage of the people were tired of dramatized, particularly the singing, commercials of radio?

If such a poll found 75 per cent of the listening audience fed up, (which is by far too small a percentage) what do you suppose the broadcasting companies would do? The income from these stupid, asinine in-between program transcriptions of what is supposed to be up-to-date advertising must be enormous. Let's figure it out, just for fun: We have no way of knowing what is paid for these one-minute-in-between saraches, but let's imagine \$10 to be the absolute minimum. Many hours out of 24 there are four 15 minute programs; that means \$40 an hour. Let's call 18 hours a day, and we have \$640. Just four of the big networks bring that to \$2560 a day, which ought to pay some dividends.

We may be old fashioned as to advertising strategy; but when one company uses the same singing commercial four times an hour on four networks, for over six months—we ask you, are you fed up?

"WHY NOT FORM A CONFEDERACY?"

By Sgt. F. G. F., Somewhere in France.

I have been able to read some scattered news of world peace organizations both in the Stars and Stripes and army supplied periodicals on current events.

I do not pretend to be an expert on international affairs, yet I feel impelled to make some comments on the type of organizations which have been proposed.

From my viewpoint this is how the people back in the states are thinking about policing the world.

One group believes that four great powers should dominate an organization that it will maintain peace in the world.

An opposing group thinks that we should have some modified version of the league of nations, with each nation, regardless of size, having a voice in

the business and affairs of the peace organization.

Actually, I cannot feel enthusiastic about either plan. One is a novel experiment with power politics as its inspiration and actually is nothing new. The League of Nations idea, on the other hand, again offers no cure for war. It merely a carbon copy of the old league and cannot contend with the vices of greed, opportunism, politics and the conglomeration of diseases that brought the violent and bitter world war II.

I see hope in a plan based not only on geographic but economic entities.

Why not form a confederacy on the continent composed of Spain, Great Britain, France, Belgium, Portugal, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, and the western states of Germany (I propose the breaking up of Germany into two parts, one industrial, the other agricultural).

This confederacy would have for a beginning three councils.

One would deal with economics and commerce exclusively, the other

would handle diplomatic problems; the third would be a defense or war ministry.

There would be no discriminatory

tariffs. The productive capacities of these states would be so harmonized as to improve the standards of living. The new German state eventually would get the idea and never again would a German

state be No V-Day Joy.

Men in the Pacific is a deeply

stirring editorial. It has impressed

me, and since human nature is

more or less identical, I suppose it

has impressed many others, too.

The best way to achieve a civi-

lized viewpoint—one of tolerance and

understanding—is to put yourself

in the other fellow's place.

There's no need for further ex-

cerpts from the editorial. That first

sentence is sufficient. Put yourself

in the place of a marine, a soldier,

or a sailor in the Pacific war and

see how you would like it, should

you learn that the people back