

## Inside Indianapolis

By Ed Sovola

AS LONG AS a guy is dreaming of automobiles—why be a piker? There's no use trifling around with business coupes, 116-inch wheelbases and the \$1200 price range. The best is none too good.

With that idea in mind I invaded the 148-inch wheelbase show rooms. My face and hands were clean, the half-soles on my shoes were brand new and my assets (\$1.79) were safely out of sight. How was a salesman to know he wasn't dealing with a "man of distinction"?

A Lincoln Continental seemed to fit in well with the mood I was in. It fitted in even better as I slowly walked around the pea-green jockey on the display floor. Unlike the old days when salesmen used to drag people off the streets to see the latest in riding comfort, I had quite a long time to myself.

Open highways, four-car garages and 28-room mansions revolved around "my" car by the time a voice was asking, "Can I help you, sir?"

Since there wasn't any use of beating around the bushes on this deal—"How much as it stands?"

"\$230."

### Something to Grab, Please

THERE SHOULD be door handles on Continentals. Something you can grab when the fainting spell comes on.

"Anything wrong, sir?" the salesman asked solicitously.



\$230—Is that all for this wagon? When can you deliver six, all different colors?

"No, not really. I have these heart attacks quite often. One of the reasons I'm looking at this Continental," I lied, "is that I want to live rich before I die rich. There's not much time."

While my friend of astronomical figures was telling me about the features a Continental owner enjoys, my head cleared. My weight was steady on the half-soles.

Evidently it wasn't clear enough because I made the mistake of offering \$100 down. "When can I get the car and how much would the payments be?"

It was his turn for a heart attack. When he steadied himself, in quiet tones, he explained 100 bucks would just about cover the cost of putting the papers into operation.

"Besides, at the rate you're going to plunge, you can't hope to own a Continental before your grandchildren are ready to go to college," he droned.

### What—No Raccoon Tail?

THE SMELL of new automobiles always was sweet to my nose but I needed fresh air. We didn't do any business.

Further down automobile row, my spirit way up again, I asked a mild-mannered salesman: "Is this the biggest Packard you have?"

"At the present time, yes."

With a firm hold on a streamlined door handle I nonchalantly struck again. "How much?"

"As it stands, \$4065. That includes radio, heater, overdrive, electromagnetic clutch and wheel shields," he answered.

"What?" For effect I made my blood boil. "At that price I don't even get a raccoon tail!"

The man explained that a raccoon tail wasn't the type of thing a man put on a Custom Eight. Then he mentioned several hundred items he could put on a car. And—if I especially wanted a raccoon tail he could get it.

"Thank you, I'll think it over."

The Cadillac people were congenial but unfortunately the 48's weren't in. Didn't make any difference to me. In a folder I picked a Fleetwood 75. A five-passenger touring sedan. The seven-passenger was a little too big for my purposes.

The man said it would run "around" \$5000. I didn't tell him but for \$5000, I'd run around the world. Since he didn't have anything I could drive home, I let it be known I'd be back. He wasn't impressed.

At a Buick show room I told another easy-going gentleman what I wanted. A yellow Buick convertible to go to basketball games, winner roasts and an occasional trip to the grocery store.

"A Roadmaster like this one at \$2800 wouldn't do, would it?"

With disdain I looked at the four-door, white sidewalled heap. It was gray. I don't like gray.

"How soon can I get a yellow convertible?"

"What are you driving, now?"

You know, I'm getting pretty good at throwing fainting spells. Now, if only a bus would come along, I could get home.

## Cry Some Place Else

By Robert C. Ruark

NEW YORK, Feb. 5—The excessive wailing and boasting of some railroads, ever since the planes started cutting into their business, flowered the other day into a full-page magazine advertisement.

The Association of American Railroads bought the page to make a poor-mouth over taxes, inflation, and the pitiful lot of the roads which are being forced to improve themselves. It wound up as a still for higher rates.

Go some place else and cry, fellows. Yours truly has quit listening. I've exhausted my capacity to weep into the pillow over the troubles of the airlines and the railroads and the Pullman Co., especially the Pullman Co.

I know times are tough and help is hard to come by, but let us knock off this smug recital of how wonderful and long-suffering we are. The airplane people have sinned plenty against the customer in recent years, but they haven't been so self-righteous about it as the railroads.

The Pullman folks have made a big thing about the infallibility of railroad schedules. They point out, with a sneer at their competitors in the sky, that they get you there on the button, come fog, snow, sleet or a marian invasion. They have stressed comfort and courtesy, intimating that they had a corner on those commodities.

### Sponging Pullman Conductors

IN THE recent cold weather—and I don't mean snow problems—I've been three, four, five, even seven hours late on the infallible railroads. A friend of mine traveled from New York to Cleveland the other night with no lights at all on the train. The only illumination was a lamp in the club car. This they shut down at 10:30 p. m. because the working shift had knocked off and there was no other shift available. The cold customers, sitting in the dark, howled. But they howled unheard.

The last Pullman conductor I dealt with was a shameless panhandler, flatly demanding a tip for changing space, although the change was to more expensive quarters. Three of the last four I've dealt with hung around the club car, openly sponging drinks.

My last three Pullman porters—those genial, kindly, white-haired old factotums of the slick magazine ads—have been surly incompetents who grumbled and groused and shuffled aimlessly until you caught the pitch and crossed the palm. My last club car boss was a shakedown artist who wouldn't provide glasses for first-class passengers riding in compartments, unless a heavy purchase of whisky went with the order.

### Hotel Prices, Barbecue Service

I HAVE EATEN cold and gummy food off crusted forks in diners, at New York hotel prices and with the sullen service of a slatternly barbecue stand. I have taken lip from waiters who seemed to regard my presence as an affront and an interference in their worrying about a three-horse parlay.

This I will absorb without a whimper if we can just knock off the alternate weeping and boasting. I know that railroads have trouble in cold weather, losing engines and running off schedule. A certain quota of accidents is expected. I know about labor and inflation and high costs and ramshackle equipment and war-spoiled hired help which still regards the bribe as a basic wage.

But it seems to me that this is not my problem, or any customer's problem, if the line is in the business of providing transportation for people who pay money to be transported. I don't worry you with the headaches of column writing, railroads—quit bleeding onto my rug about your troubles.

And this above all, I would like some surcease from your outspoken self-esteem. Brag if you can deliver, boys. Pipe down if you can't.

## Blue-Plates Bluer

By Frederick C. Othman

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5—Noticed how you haven't had to stand in line lately to get a seat in a restaurant? How the head waiter greets you with a smile? And how his assistant brings you the first-time the food you ordered? Boy! I hate a ghost, but:

Service in America's restaurants is getting better, while their business is growing worse. The cost of eating out is about to skid and all soon will be well in the greasy spoons and the restaurants Rita of this best of all possible worlds. Me full of opium fumes?

My word comes from George R. Lesauvage, himself, in a double-breasted blue flannel suit. When he says "blue-plate special," the bosses of 435,000 restaurants jump in union. They may jump to give him an argument, but still they jump.

They're banded together in the national public feeding industry advisory committee of which Mr. Lesauvage is head man. As such he keeps an eye on the 62 million people a day who eat out and wonder whether to leave the waitress 15 cents, or only a dime. These days she's grateful for 10 cents. Business is that bad.

Mr. Lesauvage, who feeds no-telling how many fruit salads daily to New York's matrons at Schrafft's, gave the Senate Banking Committee a jolt. He said it was barely possible that old-fashioned capitalism wasn't such a bad thing. If the lawmakers in their wisdom decided to do nothing at all about reviving rationing and price controls, maybe things would work themselves out.

### Drop-Off Began Two Months Ago

TAKE RESTAURANTS, he said. About two months ago their business began to fall off. Every time their prices inched up, a few more customers decided to eat at home. Now business is off around 15 per cent from the beany in the Bronx to the \$6 steak emporium on Hollywood's Sunset Blvd.

### Old-Fashioned Way Best of All

SEN. HARRY F. CAIN of Washington couldn't believe his ears. Did Mr. Lesauvage say he thought the old-style American way of doing things after all was best?

The Senator is a Republican, and I believe he was sincere; I think his question indicated his amazement rather than any back-handed crack at the Truman Administration. Mr. Lesauvage said he believed just that. Even if some restaurants went bankrupt, he still believed it. "You mean," cried Sen. Cain, "that natural laws are achieving the same effect as government controls?"

"I do, sir," replied Mr. Lesauvage. The Senators almost looked starry-eyed.

There was one thing Sen. Cain couldn't understand. He ate breakfast on a train the other day and his grapefruit, toast, coffee, bacon and eggs cost him \$1.40. It was a good breakfast, but he could remember when it would have cost 80 cents. How come?

Mr. Lesauvage said that was what he got for eating in such flimsy places. He said he supposed the lawmakers wouldn't even believe him, but the average meal check in an American restaurant before the war was 26 cents.

"Now it is 30 cents," he added. "That is true." All right, mine hosts. I'm waiting for the 10-cent ham sandwich and the second cup of coffee free.

## The Quiz Master

??? Test Your Skill ???

Why is Colorado known as the Centennial State? Colorado is known as the Centennial State because it was admitted to the Union in 1876, just 100 years after the United States Declaration of Independence.

Does sound travel faster through the air or water? Sound travels through water at the rate of 4700 feet per second and through air at the rate of 1080 feet per second.

Where is the old biplane which Orville Wright piloted in his first successful flight in 1903? At the present time it is suspended from the ceiling of the Science Museum in London.

What is the official name for the White House? The Executive Mansion, meaning the residence of the head of the executive branch of the government.

Why is a traveling salesman sometimes called a drummer? It was formerly the custom for salesmen to announce themselves by beating on a drum, hence the term drummer.

What is the name of the man who was the first to fly across the Atlantic Ocean? Charles Lindbergh.

What is the name of the man who was the first to fly across the Pacific Ocean? Charles Lindbergh.

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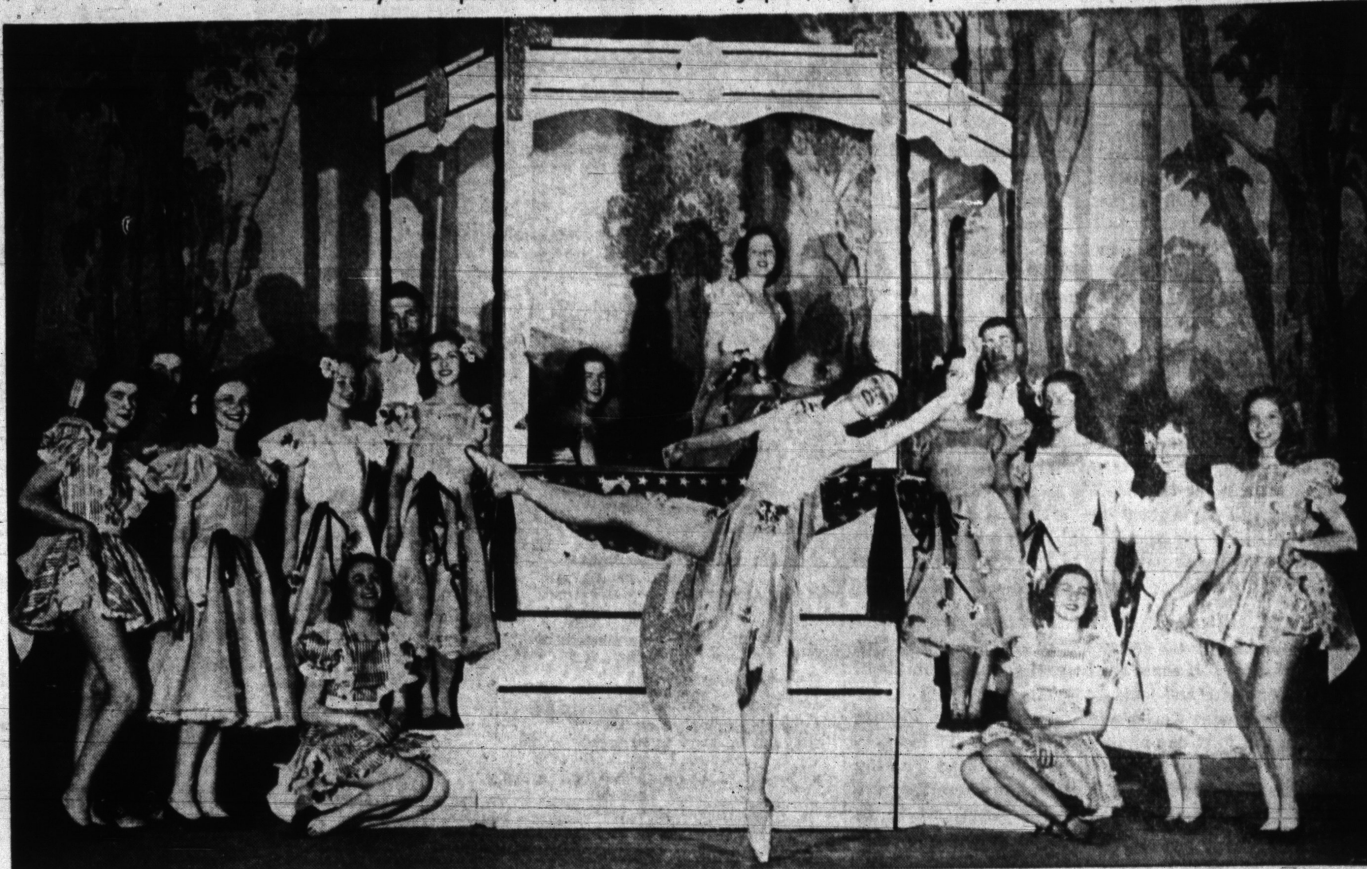
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## Tune-Happy Feet To Scorch Boards In Shortridge Variety

Photos by John Spickelmire, Times Staff Photographer; Captions by Henry Butler.



MUST BE SPRING—Dottie Webb (center) does her "Miss Springtime's Dance" in "It's Springtime," Act V of this year's Shortridge Junior Vaudeville. The Junior Vaudeville opens its three-day run at 8:30 p. m. today in Caleb Mills Hall. Some 300 members of the Class of '49 have contributed to the five-act variety production.



FAST-STEPPERS—JoAnne Ebner and Patty Ellig are two of the five dancers in "High Brown," one of the colorful production's intermission numbers.



"BONGO-BONGO"—Putting plenty of zest into that "Civilization" song are Ellen Norman and Pat Shadelow, two participants in Act IV, an African jungle fantasy called "Taboo."



TOYSHOP BALLET—Dancers in the "Parade of the Wooden Soldiers" number in the Act II toyshop sequence are, left to right: Don Skehan, Jeannine Billau, Jack Werner, Wilma Sexon, Neil Strickland, Carol King, Bill Hershmann and Ann Reimer.

### Dance to Feature 'Security Week'

Indianapolis Chapter, Reserve Officers' Association, today advanced plans for a military ball in observance of "National Security Week," Feb. 12-22.

Capt. Jess E. Montgomery was named chairman of the observance committee at a meeting of the chapter's executive board. Maj. Roger Elliott heads the radio section, Capt. Edward Overman, window display section; Lt. Joe Edmundson, military ball section, and Maj. Vernon E. Clark, publicity.

### Scout Troop Plans 'House Warming'

The troop committee of Boy Scout Troop 116, Holy Name Catholic Church, will hold a "house-warming" Monday at 6:30 p. m. at the church.

### Moderator Named in Rent Debate

Prof. W. G. Gingery, principal of the George Washington High School, will serve as moderator of a debate tomorrow night on "Resolved: That Rent Control Should Be Continued After Feb. 28, 1948."

The debate will be held at 8 p. m. in the World War Memorial Auditorium. James Robb, district director of the United States Workers of America and a member of the rental advisory board, will speak on the affirmative side. A. E. Wrenmore, president of the American Home Owners Union, will take the negative side. The debate will be open to the public.

### Allisonville Civic Unit To Elect Directors

Allisonville Civic Association will hold an annual meeting at 7:45 p. m. tomorrow in the John Strange School. Directors will be elected. Morace Abbott, county agricultural agent, will speak.