

Inside Indianapolis

By Ed Sovola

"WHEN IS THAT high ball coming up?" (The conversation was not taking place in a tavern.) "Just as soon as we get air in the brakes and I get the sign from the front end," answered Al Abell, inspector, who was as anxious as I was to get the New York Central manifest freight train out of the Brightwood yards to Bellefontaine, O.

Mr. Abell was in the midst of his third joke when Paul (Bull) Woolf, engineer, pumped air through the train. "It won't be long now," so this Scotchman said to the Irishman.

Picks Up Orders With Hoop

I JUST STARTED to tell one of my favorite stories when Mr. Abell waved his white hat to someone on the other end of the 52-car train.

"There comes Jack and Fred," said Mr. Abell. "Have a good trip."

Conductor Jack Frost climbed aboard his caboose and went to work on his wheel report. Flagman Fred Orr hit the steps while we rolled at a speedy two or three miles per.

"What should I do? Can I help with anything?" I asked Mr. Frost. There I was in coveralls, white cap and an old timetable in my hip pocket. I was ready to be railroaded.

Right here and now I better say Mr. Frost isn't a very talkative man when he has a train on the move. He doesn't mix useless conversation with business.

"Sit by the window and see the scenery," the conductor told me. Mr. Orr shot a glance and a

smile in the direction of the window. I made like a railroader and waved to a telephone post.

While the two men busied themselves with the paperwork I kept hoping the train would pick up some speed. Later in the day, Mr. Woolf proved all the stories about him were not exaggerated.

Mr. Frost's caboose had all the comforts of home. There were two soft seats near the observation windows and berths along the sides. It was easy to tell by the dust where the two men usually parked themselves.

At Eastwood Mr. Frost dropped the consist papers and picked up his orders from a man with a hoop. Clever maneuver.

Once we hit the open road the whole business of railroading consisted of watching. You watch the wheels of the train for smoke, you watch section crews for signs of trouble on the train and towers. I soon learned friendliness isn't the only reason railroad men wave so much. Their signals and hand waving may mean the safety of the train.

I got a big kick out of getting the high ball sign from section crews. Every man working on the road has to look a train over and give the appropriate sign to the conductor or the flagman. High balls were what we were looking for. When a man holds his hand over his nose that means trouble. A journal box is on fire and that just isn't good.

Outside of Lawrence the train began to pick up speed. From then on it was bumpy-bump, bumpy-bump. I watched the countryside until my eyelids were in my lap. Mr. Orr suggested I try stretching out on the berth. I did.

When I woke up, Mr. Frost was still sitting by his window, watching the road like a hawk. Mr. Orr stepped inside the caboose and slammed the door. He had taken a high ball from the conductor on a passing passenger train. It seems I had been snoozing for over an hour.

"You're not a railroader," kidded Mr. Frost. "Sleeping on the job, the idea."

He Came Back Home in a Hurry

NOTHING UNUSUAL had happened while I cut logs. We stopped for water once in Ansonia, O. The manifest train rolled at a neat 55 miles per hour. It isn't exactly like a Pullman but a caboose is surprisingly nice, riding. Great life. Waving at people, making with an occasional whistle at a crossing when a pretty girl smiles and relaxing isn't the worst occupation in the world. I imagine it could get boring. But remember, I was making my first trip.

A few miles outside of Bellefontaine we all changed into street clothes. When the train pulled to a stop in the yards we were ready for the engine to take us back to the yards.

I got a lucky break. A diesel was ready to pull out for Indianapolis. Bull Woolf let me off alongside Charles Armstrong's locomotive. My papers were checked and I climbed aboard.

Road Foreman of Engineers C. E. Lucas, Mr. Armstrong and William T. Nagel gave me a hand. Those diesels are high, I'll tell you.

In railroad lingo the trip back can best be described. It's green light overhead. That means you're rolling with no stops for water, coal or anything. I think diesels are here to stay. I don't know about the cabooses.

COUPLE OF HIGH BALLS — Conductor

Jack Frost (dark clothes) boards his rolling office while railroader-for-a-day "Mr. Inside" observes.

'Off We Go'

By Robert C. Ruark

NEW YORK, May 11—We dash merrily off to the construction of a 70-group Air Force—and, eventually, a big, drafted ground force. So this seems a safe place to assume that there will be heaps of money spent. Such as about 3½ billion bucks for the flyboys alone.

There will be lots of contracts let—and lots of equipment bought. And to all intents we are economically back at war. Or at least pre-war.

I am wondering if we will drift into this one with the same old out-moded investigative system that allowed some officers to profit, procurement-wise, with the knowledge of the air force, from 1940 on?

Is there to be a repetition of the old cover-up, "for the good of the service"? Or will the military finally divorce its fangless watchdogs from chain of command and spring its inspectors completely out of the Army?

The additional congressional report on the investigation of the defense program says, in summary:

"Under this system (of placing personnel within the chain of command) there is bound to be a tendency to cover up or whitewash particularly in those cases reflecting on or involving command officers and others of high rank."

"During the war and up to the present time there has developed a widespread belief that high-ranking officers are not subject to the same investigative procedures as are men of lower rank.

"These impressions, justified or unjustified, can be removed by having independent, trained investigative units conducting impartial investigations in the armed services, regardless of rank or position."

Unfavorable Public Reaction

THIS REPORT makes clear to me what wasn't completely clear before—that the Air Force was not of dabbles . . . and was repeatedly notified thereafter that many were getting "legally" high.

Not only was nothing done about it, but the reports were entombed in dead-files without action. No attempt was ever made to investigate the stories.

Indeed, according to Col. William Nuckles, Air Force public relations, there was so much talk about stock speculation by procurement officers in 1942 that the PRO office had to take camouflaging action—in order to muffle the un-

favorable public reaction that these selfless patriots were creating.

As a result, several officers, including Gen. Benny Meyers, were ordered to make reports on their holdings in various aircraft companies. Gen. Meyers lied in his report. Bang went the reports into the catacombs, and the matter wasn't mentioned to the air inspector.

The congressional report says that even a preliminary investigation would have nailed Benny and his buddies, as far back as '42.

Our air inspector general, Maj. Gen. Junius Jones, the report says, was told by another general that Cousin Benny had his hand in the jam pot.

But Gen. Jones testified "he took no action in the matter because the officer was unfriendly to Gen. Meyers and the information involved a future fraudulent scheme."

Re-establish Flagging Faith'

OUR AIR FORCE officers seemed to have been bombarded with anonymous letters charging fraud, but the air inspector called them "crack pot" letters.

The Department of Justice's war frauds chief testified that the main letter in question was bulging with stuff that shrieked for investigation.

The committee says that the snooping system was only inadequate, but that the Air Force deliberately suppressed evidence—withstanding from the congressional committee.

This same letter was the subject of a conference between Gen. Spaatz, Gen. Jones and Ira Eaker. But the letter was buried all the same.

The congressional committee had to strong-arm it into evidence. And when they spudged it up there was a notation saying that Gen. Jones exec., Col. John Price, was reluctant to show it even to Army higher-ups—let alone Congress—since no action had been taken on it.

I have had some personal experience with the bone-burying that follows when they send out a blind bird dog to investigate abuses of personnel.

So I feel qualified to suggest that about the smartest piece of public relations our services could pull right now would be the announcement that the inspection setup had been sprung loose from the forces and delegated to a competent civil body.

It would re-establish a lot of flagging faith in military justice among the parents of potential soldiers.

And it might even make the taxpayers feel a touch more cheerful.

WASHINGON, May 11—Coming soon, because of a certain irresponsibility of our Uncle Samuel, is the radio set that shuts itself off when you snarl, "Oh, shad up." And also the stove that begins cooking with gas when you whistle at it.

Or so expects E. F. Pierson, the Kansas City soda pop vending machinery magnate. He's also the president of the National Automatic Merchandising Association meeting here at the moment. And that's how I happened to run into him.

His engineers developed shortly before the war a widget that bounced each nickel dropped into the soda pop slot. If it tinkled properly it got your bottle of pop. But if it went thud, it was a phony nickel and the machinery threw it back to you.

Thousands of dollars Mr. Pierson and his three brothers spent developing the apparatus that listened to counterfeit nickels.

"It was a wonderful electronic machine, if I do say so," reported the gray-mustached Mr. Pierson. "But after a few months it went completely haywire. Began throwing away perfectly good nickels. It turned out that the mint had changed the metal formula for nickels, altered the ping of the falling coin."

How sore Mr. Pierson was at the government I leave to your imagination.

Whistle—Garage Doors Open

BUT ALONG came the war and he forgot about bogus nickels. He soon was using electric ears to spot defective shells.

As these moved along the production lines, they'd bump into an anvil. If they went "bong," the machinery lef 'em ride by. If they went th-rump, the apparatus 'em aside before they killed the wrong people.

When the war ended, Mr. Pierson decided to listen to no more nickels. His is a world-wide business, and governments, he concluded, are too doggone irresponsible with their money. Always

putting new stuff in it and making it sound different when dropped.

So he turned his ears to a new use. He now manufactures (and has sold several thousand of them) garage doors that open themselves when whistled at.

Nobody can hear the whistle, except the door. It has a microphone which picks up the homecoming motorist's whistle. This pulls a relay, which snaps a switch, which starts the motor that opens the door. Price: \$235. installed.

"And a very handy thing it is, too," said Mr. Pierson. "Though I have been kidded about manufacturing a gadget for inebriated people."

This is only the beginning. He figures his ears in a box have unlimited industrial uses.

Throw Away Your Door Key?

AND WHEN he gets same in one small package for household use, gosh! the millennium.

Snip your fingers at lights after you get in bed, and obediently they turn themselves off. Whistle down the stairs in the morning at the electric stove—and percolates the coffee. Sneeze at the refrigerator when you want it to defrost itself.

Announce in a firm voice that you feel too hot and the fan turns itself on.

Hook the Pierson ears to the front door and throw away the key. These ears, incidentally, can be adjusted so that they are sensitive only to a series of musical notes. That makes a combination that nobody could pick unless you choose some simple tune like maybe "Yankee Doodle."

Mr. Pierson doesn't like to talk about the effect of his ears on the radio. After all, he's a big businessman, too. But he is forced to admit that any radio receiver equipped with his machinery can't help but go dead when you snarl at it. And it won't turn itself back on until you speak kindly to it.

Announce in a firm voice that you feel too hot and the fan turns itself on.

As these moved along the production lines, they'd bump into an anvil. If they went "bong," the machinery lef 'em ride by. If they went th-rump, the apparatus 'em aside before they killed the wrong people.

When the war ended, Mr. Pierson decided to listen to no more nickels. His is a world-wide business, and governments, he concluded, are too doggone irresponsible with their money. Always

The Indianapolis Times

SECOND SECTION

TUESDAY, MAY 11, 1948

PAGE 11

Juvenile Offenders Often Find Institutions Better Than Homes



CONFERENCE HOUR—Charles Boswell, chief probation officer for Marion County Juvenile Court, makes suggestions at a weekly meeting of the court staff. During these sessions office problems are ironed out and new methods for handling delinquents undergo a thorough study.

Quarrelling Parents, Lack of Spending Money, Supervision Lead to Crimes

Last of Two Articles

By JACK THOMPSON

TO SOME OF the youngsters in the never-ending line that files past Judge Joseph O. Hoffmann's bench in Juvenile Court the reform school is a better place to live than home.

Never before have housing conditions been so acute. Today several families are jammed into a house hardly adequate for a single family.

Many old dwellings where people are forced to live are infested with rats, mice and bugs. Toilet and cooking facilities are inadequate. There is no yard in which children can play.

Inevitably family relations become strained. Parents cannot give proper care to their children. And the children, left to their own devices, begin to get into trouble.

LAST MAY 15 a youngster who had been guilty of several offenses, returned from the Boys' School at Plainfield to his family which lived with two other families in a house with a total of three and half rooms.

The boy's mother and his 11 brothers and sisters occupied one and a half rooms in the structure.

Shortly after his return to these crowded conditions the youth again turned to crime and committed a couple of minor burglaries.

When he was apprehended and brought before Judge Hoffmann the judge said:

"Don't you know that the commission of burglaries is a violation of your parole conditions?"

"Yes, sir," was the prompt reply.

JUDGE HOFFMANN advised him that his conduct meant he would have to be returned to Plainfield.

"I don't mind, sir," the youngster answered. "At the school I had a place to sleep, a place to play and plenty to eat."

"Out there I was a member of the baseball team and I love to play baseball."

He is back at the Boys' School. Chief Probation Officer Charles Boswell, who told the story, had this to say:

"It is sad commentary on a society which fails to provide opportunities for a boy to play ball in his own neighborhood yet at the same time, gives him all he wants at a reform school."

No one questions the advisability of having adequate facilities at a correctional institution.

But society would profit if decent housing, recreational opportunities and wholesome food were provided for these youngsters and spent with each other and spent a little

more time in trying to make their family life pleasant.

Now juvenile authorities presented with the problem of determining Harold's future, are holding him in Juvenile Center while attempts are being made to strengthen his family life.

Youngsters who receive no parental supervision and are allowed to do as they please many times stumble into a career of crime.

ONE SUCH YOUNGSTER, whom we shall call Jimmy, was a member of a large family. His father was ill health and his mother was a vacillating and overbearing

person with serious economic worries.

Jimmy's police record opened in 1941 when he was caught beginning on the streets, an act which his parents apparently sanctioned.

He was recently recaptured by police as they moved in on a juvenile gang of six boys and three girls who were playing Mars Hill residents.

Exhausted as he was, he was recently recaptured by police as they moved in on a juvenile gang of six boys and three girls who were playing Mars Hill residents.

He was recently recaptured by police as they moved in on a juvenile gang of six boys and three girls who were playing Mars Hill residents.

Exhausted as he was, he was recently recaptured by police as they moved in on a juvenile gang of six boys and three girls who were playing Mars Hill residents.

Exhausted as he was, he was recently recaptured by police as they moved in on a juvenile gang of six boys and three girls who were playing Mars Hill residents.

Exhausted as he was, he was recently recaptured by police as they moved in on a juvenile gang of six boys and three girls who were playing Mars Hill residents.

Exhausted as he was, he was recently recaptured by police as they moved in on a juvenile gang of six boys and three girls who were playing Mars Hill residents.