

STATE POLITICS . . . By Robert Bloem

# Fleming Tries To Catch Truckers With Their License Tags Down

SECRETARY OF STATE Charles Fleming is a hard man to discourage. Some trucking firms have been doing a fancy job of juggling residences, license plates and semi-trailers may find this out the hard way.

Mr. Fleming has more than just a vague idea that some of the interstate haulers and some who haul entirely in Indiana but live somewhere else are juggling themselves out of paying a lot of taxes.

He asked the attorney general's office about it. That office replied in polite but unmistakable terms that collecting taxes was pretty much none of his business. Particularly, the opinion said, were taxes due townships and counties out of his line.

THE OPINION then went on to discuss his duties as Secretary of State with relation to licensing of trucks.

Mr. Fleming then explained

who pay no property tax on vehicles at all.

AT LAST reports, Atty. Gen. Emmett McCalla has agreed that his staff didn't quite answer Mr. Fleming's question. He is going to have another try.

Regardless of the outcome of this new attempt to answer Mr. Fleming's question, it can't be denied he's breathing down the necks of some trucking outfits. It also can't be denied that although it is probably the township assessors' job to get trucks on the tax lists, they are handicapped.

Tracking down intricate methods of living one place, registering trucks another place and keeping them in a third place isn't easy.

Fleming is intentionally going beyond his express duties to grab truckers by their license plates and hold them down while the little government units give them a good taxing.

IF SO, it seems likely a sincere effort on his part could work out nicely for everybody. Taxpayers can hardly lose by having their local officials given some help in collecting what may amount to substantial sums of tax money—a suspected \$17,000, for example, in the case of a single firm in a single Indiana township.

From Mr. Fleming's standpoint, his mistakes in office seem to have been a popular target for his critics. If a record of doing a job he wasn't necessarily required to do should

turn out to produce a few votes next year, he probably won't complain.

In fact, Mr. Fleming may have stumbled onto a way of doing something politicians have been promising—and failing—to do for years. That is to help smaller governmental units out of some of their financial difficulties. He might make some truckers pretty sore, but since the ones he's aiming at live outside the state it probably won't affect the voting much, anyway.

SPEAKING of help for overburdened units of government, there doesn't seem to be much help forthcoming from the courts.

Superior Court Judge John Niblack this week ruled, in ef-

fect, that it isn't up to the courts to tell the legislature it must obey the constitution. We know this is what he said, because Judge Niblack departed from the legal jargon usually used by judges to write opinions. He wrote his in English.

He quoted the opinions of many other courts at many other places and times. The result, in this particular instance, was that Mr. Claude Cline of Huntington lost his argument that everything the last General Assembly passed after the clock was stopped was unconstitutional.

What seems more significant of the courts that it's not their concern if the legislature wants to take a few liberties with the Constitution. One unit of gov-

ernment shouldn't be going around telling the other how to do its duty—that seems to be the substance of the court views.

COURTS HAVE been known to tell legislatures that certain laws were unconstitutional for other reasons. If we fail to see the logic of this, the courts must forgive our lack of understanding of deep underlying government fundamentals.

Anyway, Judge Niblack left little doubt that courts have no intention of enforcing upon the legislature the only law by which it is bound—the Constitution. If the legislature fails to obey the rules laid down for it, that's the Legislature's worry.

The courts suggest that the voters enforce the rules them-

selves by just throwing the rascals out. It leaves us wondering what the Hoosiers who live in cities and represent the majority of the population can do to enforce another constitutional requirement.

That noble document requires that legislative representation be based on the number of male voters. Since cities have a minority of the representatives and senators, they can't of course throw out anything but a minority of the representatives and senators.

That leaves the majority of legislators still elected by a minority of the voters. The majority voters thus are helpless to force the legislative majority to carry out the constitutional promise. The courts say they aren't going to do it either. What do we do now?

## Washington Calling—

### FBI Checks Ship Crews As Safeguard Against Spies and Deserters

WASHINGTON, May 21—FBI and immigration authorities are double-checking crews of all vessels arriving at New York.

Desertion of seamen has been increasing, especially from Polish, Greek and Italian ships. Officials think a majority just want to get away from home countries, but some could be spies—particularly among those jumping Polish ships.

Two Polish ships set to New York, the Batory from Poland (on which Gerhart Eisler fled) and the Sobieski from Italy. It's rumored on New York waterfront that both carry communists.

Sixty-two crew members, including the first mate, deserted from the Sobieski a few months ago, later surrendered to a Polish society in New Jersey saying they stood the ship was to be sold in Italy. Immigration Bureau has paroled them.

Others who have jumped ship in groups of two to 10 have not surrendered. When the Batory docked last, FBI suspected 120 of crew were planning to desert, held all aboard ship.

Vice president of Gyndia America Line in New York has been ordered deported and is out on bail—increased last week from \$1000 to \$5000.

## GOP Eyes Idleness

REPUBLICANS are watching unemployment, wondering if that's their issue for 1950 elections.

So far, 81st Congress hasn't provided GOP with much campaign fodder. Economy in government is being talked up by some Republicans, but they've tried that before, and it's never proved effective.

Sen. Homer Capehart, one who has to run in 1950, wants to link unemployment with foreign policy. He's already saying, in Indiana speeches, that if we continue building European industry, we'll get more unemployment here.

Truman administration, aware of GOP desire to hang "depression" label on it, will take strenuous measures to keep unemployment from getting out of hand.

Congress is now lining up public buildings program as depression backdrop. Senate has passed bill authorizing \$40 million for buying sites and drawing plans. That's enough to get a half-billion-dollar program ready. House may consider bill next week. It's also readying big flood control program, which would make more jobs.

## Tab on Red Policy

GOP'S ALSO watching developments in what it charges is Atomic Energy Commission's "soft" policy toward Communists. It may try to keep that issue alive for next year.

However, a Texas Democrat, Rep. Albert Thomas, was first to start formal inquiry into AEC's fellowship program and to threaten limitations in law if free education for Communists isn't stopped.

Mr. Thomas is chairman of appropriations subcommittee that handles annual Atomic Commission supply bill, and he is also taking steps to find out whether atomic secrecy is hiding waste of commission funds.

AEC is getting about a billion dollars for next year. Mr. Thomas has told AEC, budget bureau and general accounting office to break this down from lump sum—which was asked—into at least five categories, each covering a major activity of the commission.

It's time, he says for Congress to know more about what the money's being spent for—and how.

## Urged for U. S. Post

PRESIDENT TRUMAN's urging Tom Morgan, president of Sperry Gyroscopic Co., to be chairman of National Security Board, so far Mr.

Morgan has turned him down. Hitch is that Mr. Morgan is a Communist, says E. R. Gillmer, vice president of Sperry, who served as NSRB vice chairman under Arthur M. Hill. When Mr. Hill's successor, he told Mr. Gillmer he'd have to leave; that he wanted the job for someone else.

Privately, President Truman has sent word that Mr. Gillmer probably got a raw deal, but that Mr. Morgan owes it to his country to overlook that.

## May Join Campaign

PRESIDENT TRUMAN may do some campaigning in Ohio next year when Sen. Robt. A. Taft is up for reelection.

## World Report—

### Success or Failure of Paris Conference on Germany Depends Upon Whether or Not Russ Try to Get Tough

#### Soviets Anxious To Promote Trade

By GORDON CUMMING

Compiled From the Wire Services

A long, hard and complicated bargaining session ending in a temporary working agreement over Germany, but falling short of complete agreement, is generally expected to result from the sixth post-war meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers opening at Paris tomorrow.

The key to the proceedings will be provided by the Russians when Andrei Vishinsky, the Soviet's foreign minister, states their position.

This position has been kept absolutely secret and it is anybody's guess whether it will be very conciliatory, lukewarm, or rough and tough. Most of the experts are inclined to think that it will be somewhere in the middle.

#### Eager for Trade

They do not think that the Russians will go completely overboard to get agreement on the unification of Germany. They do expect, however, that the Russians will do everything to secure a working arrangement between their own Eastern zone of Germany and Western Germany.

The Russians are expected to do everything possible to revive and increase trade between Western Germany on the one hand and Eastern Germany and the Iron Curtain countries on the other.

Their aim will be obvious, to re-establish Germany's economic reliance on Eastern Europe and, thereby, on Russia.

In other words they will endeavor to secure by legitimate commercial means what they have so miserably failed to do by roughhouse tactics such as the Berlin blockade.

The Western Allies will hammer on the need for greater political freedom in Eastern Germany. If the Russians press for the amalgamation of Eastern Germany and Western Germany they will be told that Eastern Germany must be prepared to accept the principles of the Democratic Bonn Constitution, which is to govern Western Germany.

#### All Guesswork

They will probably also be told that it would be impossible for the two areas to be joined as long as the Eastern zone is practically Sovietized industrially and economically.

Thus, if the majority of the experts are correct, there will still be two Germanys, Western Germany under the Bonn constitution and Eastern Germany under the so-called Peoples' Congress.

A strong majority, including many French diplomats, thinks the contrary, that the Russians will be prepared to make many concessions that it will be difficult for the Western powers to avoid the unification of Germany. It is all guesswork so far.

Western diplomatic chiefs have declined comment so far on progress of their preparation talks at Paris, but said they would meet again tomorrow forenoon.

## France

WHEAT, always a major barometer of good government or bad to the ordinary Frenchman, is probably the biggest stick currently available to opponents of France's moderate coalition government.

Consensus gives Premier Quetlet and his cabinet a small chance of survival should they continue to ignore the insistent demands of that class of voters always most courted by French governments, the farmer.

The French farmer wants the price of wheat upped. The farmers union is pressing for lifting of the price of the quintal to 3300 francs (\$10), arguing that the price of fertilizers, gasoline for tractors and farmhand wages have greatly increased.

A quintal—220.46 pounds—is equivalent to 3½ American wheat bushels of 60 pounds each.

The government has taken a definite stand against any increase in prices at present.

The wheat problem is one which must be solved soon or the unappealing grey bread associated with the war years and the three lean years that followed will be back on French tables. This would be highly unpopular with the ordinary Frenchman who is particular about his bread.

## Great Britain

WINSTON CHURCHILL yesterday asked the Liberal party, Britain's "third party," to join his Conservative party in its battle to oust the Labor government in the 1950 general election.

"We know that Socialism will cripple the very enterprise which has made us a great people and provided the funds for social progress," he said in a message read at a conference of the Na-



Nationalist artillery was reported today as having repulsed Red attempts to cross the Whangpoo at Shanghai in the Hungkoo area (1). Four miles south of downtown Shanghai the Communists made another thrust (2). Lugwha airport (3) was under shelling of the Reds coming in from the southwest. In the Wusong area (4), Shanghai's exit to the sea, fighting continued.

men in cars with uniformed Russians following in jeeps to make sure that passersby are frightened out of intervening.

Czechoslovakia THE Czech government has declared an "amnesty" for all holders of unregistered foreign currencies.

Czech hoarders of foreign currencies now are able to buy high-quality merchandise hitherto reserved for export only, and the government is filling its tills with unregistered currency and gold.

Six "Darex" shops, originally introduced to sell export goods to foreigners and for legally-obtained dollars and Swiss francs, now have been opened to current residents of all Marshall Plan countries and also Hungarian forints, no matter how obtained.

During the first few days, the shops were crowded. Apparently the government was keeping its amnesty promise. Czechs with long-boarded gold pieces (some of them family heirlooms), greenbacks and pounds have brought them out of hiding to buy perions (Czech nylon), radios, shirts, refrigerators and automobiles.

## China

POINT-BLANK artillery and machinegun fire from government batteries shattered a Communist attempt to storm across the Whangpoo River into Shanghai yesterday.

Artillery duels across the river shook the city and fires blazed for many miles. At one point the

latest disappearance is that of Austria's champion diver Wilhelm Napolz.

Mr. Napolz had earned his honors descending into the Danube in the service of the Soviet-owned Danube Shipping Co. When he went down, he always came up.

But when he made another descent, into the office of the Soviet police the day after he won a diving contest, Mr. Napolz did not re-emerge. Immediately afterward the Russians threw his wife out of their apartment.

Mr. Napolz has been "underwater" now for about three weeks. It is thought the Soviets may have placed some charges against him, then offered him a chance to prove his "loyalty" by going to the Soviet Union to work.

The most recent kidnappings have been made by plainclothes-

#### West to Hammer On People's Freedom

Communists were raining artillery and rifle fire into Shanghai. The Communist crossing attempt came when the raiders tried to cross the river in 20 boats under cover of darkness from the Pootung area.

They were spotted by Nationalists and met with a withering fire. "Many" Communists were drowned, a government communique said.

The Nationalists did not mention location of the crossing attempt—the second this week—but it was believed to have been in the Yangtze district, eight miles north of the business district.

It was in the Yangtze district that the Communists were loosing artillery shells and rifle fire, possibly as a prelude to a larger scale crossing attempt.

## Burma

STRONG Chinese Communist forces are massing in southwest China for an attack on Burma along the ancient Burma road, government sources at Rangoon said today.

They charged Kachin tribesmen from the mountains of eastern Burma were preparing to meet the assaults. The fierce and rugged Kachins fought on the side of the Allies during the war with Japan.

Eye witnesses from Tengchung, last year's Chinese border town, said some 4000 Chinese Communists have combined forces with Nationalist army deserters for the attack.

Government sources said they believed the Communists were moving to the Kachin border valley which crosses the border near Bhamo, about 50 miles below Myitkyina, the northernmost town in the Kachin States of Burma.

It was in this area that Gen. Joseph Stilwell's American troops, working with Kachins and Chinese soldiers, forced open the old Burma road late in the war.

## Japan

AFTER Japan's nearly four years of demoralization its Emperor remains the greatest single force in the country—for good or evil. Hirohito's current tour of southern Japan—his first in 15 years—is offering conclusive demonstration of that fact.

During the last three days he has been given the greatest ovation of his life.

Hirohito has been seen and cheered by nearly 3 million persons, or practically the entire population of the mountainous, strike-ridden, coal-mining northern region of Kyushu Island.

Wherever his imperial maroon Mercedes-Benz has gone, through impoverished mining villages, past mountains of slag along country roads flanked by manicured rice paddies, it's been the same.

Among the most prominent worshippers are members of the Chrysanthemum Flag Society, the largest ultranationalist group in Japan. This organization, rocked by purge, is riding to a comeback on the "Communist menace."

At Nogata, Communist stronghold which elected a Communist to the diet, Emperor Hirohito drew tumultuous acclaim. Officially the Communist party hates the emperor. But privately many members cheer him.

## Australia

IMPORTANT straws have recently been blowing in the wind hereabouts indicating that more American businessmen may be forced out of the Australian market through further tightening of the already stringent import restrictions.

There was for example the remark of Minister of Trade and Customs Sen. Benjamin Cawston, which seemed to show a peculiar lack of regret on the part of the Australian government over a possible dearth of American imports. He said:

"It is gratifying . . . that development of Australia's secondary industries is making us more independent of American imports."

The fact is Australian companies, whose rough-hewn products undoubtedly could not hope to compete on an open market with United States goods, are growing behind the protective barrier of dollar import restrictions.

Moreover, there is a noticeably expanding market here for goods from nondollar European countries, in addition to Britain, with trade marks such as "Made in Czecho-Slovakia" increasingly in evidence.

The British Commonwealth's dollar shortage is, of course, largely responsible.

## Our Fair City—

### Sheriff Has Some Bad Dreams at Night About Phone System

#### Inter-Communication Setup Interferes With Line Needed to Call Outside

ANYBODY WHO calls the Marion County Sheriff's office very often gets to know a familiar "buzzing" sound—the busy signal.

For one thing, three outside telephone lines aren't enough to take care of the heavy flow of calls. The office's inter-communication setup is arranged so that a call within the jail ties up a line needed for outside calls.

To ease the load, Sheriff Cunningham is installing a new inter-office communication system which will connect all parts of the

jail, independent of the telephone system. It'll take a load off the mind of the sheriff, who has had dreams at night about emergency calls being held up by the busy switchboard.

Under the Surface

THERE IS more than meets the eye in the suicide of 10-year-old Donald Harris in the Lawrence County jail at Bedford three weeks ago. He is another result of the State Welfare Department's "foster home" system. Indiscriminate placement of children under the Department's program led to another tragedy two years ago in northern Indiana when a 13-year-old foster child shot and killed his foster mother.

Donnie Harris was precocious. He was far ahead of his age mentally. School work was so easy for him to grasp he became bored. But no effort ever was made to advance him. Circuit Judge Chester Davis who committed Donnie to the Indiana Boys' School—the apparent reason for Donnie's action in hanging himself—said the lad was smarter than a good many adults who pass through the court.

Donnie's parents were divorced. The court awarded him to the custody of his father. His father sent him to the State orphan home at Knightstown where Donnie was whipped for running away to see his mother. Finally, he was returned to Bedford and placed in a "welfare" home.

Rejected by both parents, Donnie in a burst of defiance set fire to wastebasket in the basement of the Lincoln School. He was arrested, sentenced to the Boys' School and confined in a dirty cell in the Lawrence County Jail. That's where he hanged himself with his own belt.

No investigation of this case has yet been made by the State Welfare Department, except a routine report. But Welfare officials privately declare the case of Donnie Harris is a commentary on the disposition of difficult children by the State of Indiana.

Fifteen years ago, an Indianapolis woman had an operation in Louisville. Last week, she underwent a second operation in St. Vincent's Hospital. . . to remove what was first thought to be a scissor and later was found to be an artery clamped from the abdomen. The clamp was left there from the first operation. The second operation was successful. The surgeons, however, were anxious to keep the second operation secret. Might discourage persons who need operations from having them, they said.

## Flurry of Adoptions

THERE'S A flurry of "adoptions" going on at a State Institution which has nothing to do with children or child placement—the State Mental Colony at Ft. Harrison.

A good many Indiana residents were shocked a couple of weeks ago when they read in The Times how calloused relatives park in mental hospitals and forget about them. They were particularly aroused by the case of "Grandpop" Smith, a dying man who hasn't been heard of the relatives who committed him for 35 years.

The letters and cards poured in, asking to be allowed to do things for the helpless old man. But director Faye Hall pointed out in letters to these people that "Grandpop" was too far gone to appreciate the belated kindness; he suggested that as an alternative these people direct their kindness toward other lonely patients, deserted by friends and relatives, who had sufficient com-

prehension to appreciate the gesture. The response was more than he had hoped for.

The 10th Air Force Band hurried over to give a band concert last week, the first time any organization has staged entertainment for the men stayed forgotten. Another man wrote and arranged to take several more rational patients riding in the country. Still another woman, a semi-shut-in herself, organized neighbors who each "adopted" a patient to mail cards and packages to and to visit whenever possible. And one business woman who was leaving on a trip thrilled her adoptees by sending them pictures, post cards from Salt Lake City, the first mail some had had in years.

The problem of the "adoptions" is difficult, however, since Mr. Hall in most cases must give designations other than patients' real names. It seems relatives who never come out to see their people in the institution or offer to help are the first to "scream" about any leak of information concerning the relatives' they'd rather forget.

A nomination for the "nearest-trick of the week" in Our Fair County was the state police report that they took \$835.11 from confiscated slot machines. That sum jarred a few mathematically-minded citizens when they read on that the sum was taken from quarters, dime and nickel machines. Police had an explanation, though, there was a large number of pennies—about 51 in all—found in the dime machines. Now the big question people are wondering about is, did they work?

## Greatest Wealth

TWO WOMAN clerks in the city's legal department are convinced that "the greatest wealth is contentment with a little."

And they say they would be content to share just a little of the \$1000 legal fee City Attorney Mike Reddington and Corporation Counsel Ed Knight are charging the Indiana Municipal League for handling the \$6.5 million gas tax fight against the State Conservation Dept.

Last week the attorneys collected half of their fee, earned on city time and with the assistance of attorneys from Southport and Vigo County.

Despite the \$600 advance, the Indianapolis lawyers neglected to share their "cut" with the office clerks who prepared the briefs, typed and re-typed long pages of the suit.

OUR FAIR CITY ODDITIES The police accident prevention white car making a U-turn on E. Washington St. in rush hour traffic.

Safety Board President Leroy Keach and Mayor Feeney tentatively approved an application of the National Negro Council of Washington, D. C., to obtain signatures to a Civil Rights petition at eight locations throughout the city.

Edgar G. Brown, director of the council, was in town Friday to see Mayor Feeney. Final approval rests with the Board of Public Works.

THE JOEY Maxim-Gus Lesnevich light heavyweight title bout in Cincinnati tomorrow has attracted scores of political and gambling figures from Indianapolis. The local sporting fraternity will be clustered around the ring-side, seated in de luxe \$200 ducat locations.

## That's No Yoke Son!

