

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 who 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 the line.

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

verbally to his "advisers" that while it was a very precise opinion, it didn't answer his question. He wasn't asking about the duties of the Secretary of State, he said.

In fact, all he wanted to know was whether these trucks which bear Indiana license plates but are owned by out-of-staters or operated interstate should be on the tax duplicates. It seems he fails to see the logic of making a Hoosier produce his tax receipts before selling him a set of plates, then selling them by the dozen to outsiders

It seems possible that Mr.

who pay no property tax on vehicles at all.

AT LAST reports, Atty. Gen. Emmett McManaman 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 in another place and keeping them in a third place isn't easy.

It seems possible that Mr.

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 town.

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 what it must obey the constitution. We know this is what he said, because Judge Niblack departed from the legalistic jargon usually used by judges to write opinions. He wrote 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 was the overwhelming attitude 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 governmental 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 representa-

tives 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 provision. 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

'Jumping Vessels' Increases on Greek, Polish and Italian Craft in N. Y. Harbor

By Scripps-Howard Newspapers

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 run 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 commissars.

Sixty-two crew members, including the first mate, deserted from the Sobieski a few months ago, later surrendered to a Polish ship.

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.

Vice president of Gdynia 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, 51st 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.

Sea Homer Capahart, one who has 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 backstop. 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 already readying big food 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, 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 Commies 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 hindrance to 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 where it's going.

Urged for U. S. Post PRESIDENT TRUMAN urged Tom Morgan, president of Sperry Gyroscope Co., to be chairman of National Security Board. So far, Mr. Morgan has turned him down.

Hitch is that Mr. Morgan remembers what happened to E. E. Gillmor, vice president of Sperry, who served as NSRB vice chairman under Arthur M. Hill. When Mon Wallgren was picked as Mr. Hill's successor, he told Mr. Gillmor he'd have to leave; that he wanted the job for someone else.

Privately, President Truman has sent word that Mr. Gillmor 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 re-election.

Some Ohio Democrats who called at White House this week came away with impression the President is willing to go to their state for a speech or two next manufacturing process.

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 Cabled 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 Andre 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 and 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.

"The government which replaces this Socialist government will, I hope, be led by Mr. Churchill," Earl Rosebery said.

Italy

THE left-wing Italian Socialist Party was split again today. The executive council expelled Senator Giuseppe Romita, chief of party leader Pietro Nenni's pro-Communist policy.

Sen. Romita was supported by 39 per cent of the membership at the recent party congress. His expulsion, coming on top of earlier splinter movements, may end Socialism as a substantial power in Italy.

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 as the Western zone is practically.

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.

This may have to be decided some day if young Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr. should take aim at the White House.

The Constitution says you have to be a "natural born citizen" to be President. The citizenship act of 1940 defines a "citizen at birth" on a par with anyone born in this country—as a "person born in the United States and its outlying possessions of parents both of whom are citizens of the United States."

FDR Jr. was born Aug. 17, 1914, at Campbell Island, a few hundred yards over the Canadian border, where his parents had a summer home.

Library of Congress law decisions interpreting "natural born citizen."

Citizenship Problem DOES THE phrase "natural born citizen" mean the same as "citizen at birth?"

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

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