

Inside Indianapolis

By Ed Sovola

THE PHONE rang and the man asked me to come over to see a pile of Portugal cork. Fresh, too.

Hmm, cork means bottle stoppers. Bottles usually can be found near stoppers. And a man like J. W. Ludewig, branch manager of the Mundet Cork Corp., 56 E. Merill St., certainly would have something in bottles.

Would you accept the invitation?

"Come on in," a voice instructed. I hesitated because the entrance was a far cry from what was expected. The building had the appearance of a bootlegger's ware house. There should have been a peeping slot in the door.

"Finally came over to see cork, eh? Not very busy today, are you?" J. W. quipped. (If you'll pardon the expression, he's somewhat of a coker.)

It would have been useless to argue the point. Just because a guy doesn't look busy or happens to be sitting in University Park doesn't mean he isn't busy. Thinkin' is work.

A FAST CHECK of the office revealed it to be as dry as a piece of cork. Incredible as it seemed, J. W. apparently meant to talk about cork. It would have to be a one-sided conversation. All I knew about cork you could put in a bottle.

Now I'm a pretty good listener. J. W. is a terrific talker and cork is his favorite subject. He began by expounding how important cork was in our daily lives. It is used in our homes, in airplanes, autos, refrigerators, deep freezers, shoes, flooring, cigarettes, athletic equipment.

"You forgot to mention bottle stoppers," I yawned. (If J. W. didn't talk so loud and fast I could have slept easily in the chair he provided.)

THE YAWN didn't bother him. J. W. said, turning a bright red which made his silver hair shine all the more. He does burn when he's trying to talk cork with someone and bottle stoppers pop up.

"You would think the only reason the cork industry exists is to make bottle stoppers."

It Happened Last Night

By Earl Wilson

ROCKFORD, O., May 22—I came back to the old home town and drove out to the farm where I was brought up.

"I'll just wait in the car," my Mother said. It was getting dark. I walked out to the old barn and smelled the hay in the hay mow. I looked into the horse stalls. I used to bring straw in on a pitchfork for bedding for our beloved "old Dick."

Then I sauntered slowly to the "hog house."

One Christmas I stood in the doorway here with a new B-B gun. Encouraged by my Dad, I fired at the rear of a hired hand who happened to be bending over slopping the pigs. I made a bull's eye . . . 35 years ago.

The grass was wet, but I tramped through it up to the old cellar where we used to eat homemade bread with great gobs of country butter.

Suddenly I realized that inside the house, the television was on.

It brought me out of my reverie. We drove back into town.

GOODNESS, the town must be growing.

Maybe it was busy because Ozzie and Harriet were playing at the movie.

Once I wrote that one car on Main St., Rockford, was a traffic jam. Now the street was crowded. I drove into a parking lot—a free one.

I love to listen to the speech, which is so different from New York's where many call me "Oil." Some of my relatives, hardy souls up in their 70s, never admit they've been sick.

They've been "complainin'" or "gruntin'."

But they usually put an "a" or an "uh" before the verb.

"I've been uh-gruntin' for weeks," they may say.

But they haven't been sick.

THE LIGHTS of "Kolter's koffee kup" invited us in.

Young Ted Kolter and his wife were busy at the counter. After a sandwich and coffee, I wanted to call up Rusty Risher, an old schoolmate. I went back to the crank phone on the wall.

For a moment, I hesitated.

I'd forgotten whether you lift the receiver before or after you crank.

It was Ted Kolter's moment. So he shouted:

"What's the matter? Don't you know how to use a phone? You a hick or something? Ain't you used to big city ways?"

I guess it's a gag he uses on everybody, but I had to smile.

And so that's all that happened. My Mother and I would have to drive back after midnight.

Americana

By Robert C. Ruark

NEW YORK, May 22—We are beginning to weep for poor Willie O'Dwyer, the ambassador, because we are minded of the prodigal son, and it seems that in Willie's case a son can get so prodigal he hates the sight of a candle in the window.

Here you have the plaintive situation of the honored ambassador to Mexico, with all kinds of people clamoring for him to come home to explain why so many cops were so crooked under his benign reign as mayor of New York. But Willie doesn't hear real good. He would rather be prodigal than questioned.

I feel sorry for Willie for a variety of reasons. One is that once he is so poor he admitted once that he had to borrow money from friends in order to play the role of ambassador and keep his beautiful bride in cocktail frocks. Then I feel sorry for him because he is so shy.

HE IS so shy he detests the idea of talking to a grand jury in his basic home town, New York, while still attempting to hold high the prestige of the United States on foreign soil. A shy ambassador is a pitiful thing, because an ambassador has to meet so many people.

On the positive side, one may be pleased at the improvement in Willie's health. When he was mayor of New York he was always coming down with the heart murmurs and flying off on Latin-American vacations.

Evidently, the 7500-foot altitude of Mexico City has put a stopper on his heart troubles, because he sure doesn't take any stateside vacation to relieve himself of pressure from that altitude—which, I understand, is not good for a chronic heart condition.

BEING just loaded with compassion this day, I also am sorry for the Democratic Party, because this is a thing that very few political organizations have to put up with. You keep having to pinch yourself to remember that this kid the righteous boys want to question is not a lamming tax dodger or even a bookmaker with a delicate air of aloofness from legal conversation. It is his excellency, the duly appointed ambassador of these United States to Mexico.

Most of us plain folks travel around kind of loose and easy, and when one of my masters says come home, why, I am apt to come home to see what the man wants. In the case of poor Willie O'Dwyer, either nobody in the management has asked him, or else he just won't heed that querulous call.

If I had me a tame ambassador and everybody was saying, "Come home dear boy, we



Here's Lowdown On Portugal Cork

growled J. W. (Didn't frighten me. He growls easily.)

"By the way, do you . . . ?" J. W. was off. Cork facts rolled-off his tongue like water off the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Facts were sort of jumbled up. Really doesn't matter.

Cork is the bark of the cork oak which grows most successfully around the western end of the Mediterranean Sea. It's a foreign product. You can tell that by the name—Quercus Suber and Quercus Occidentalis.

The bark is stripped from the trees every nine or 10 years. First harvest takes place after the tree is 20 years old. A tree will produce cork bark for about 100 years.

* * *

J. W. UNWOUND beautifully when he told how old cork is and how long it had been used. Ancient Greeks and Romans made stoppers and floats and shoes. He mentioned a Theophrastus, in business about 400 B.C. as a big cork user. That was news to me.

He finally worked himself out of the dim past and began spouting off what a wonderful insulator cork is. (The local Mundet branch office specializes in insulation—cold storage, pipes, roofs, vibration.)

The reason it is so good is that the bark of the cork oak is cellular in construction. All other barks of trees are fibrous. In one cubic inch of cork there are about 200 million cells and in each is a microscopic bit of dead air. (The figure is not from a government bureau.)

* * *

THIS CELLULAR construction makes the stuff repel liquid, it stays resilient, can be compressed, has low thermal conductivity and makes an excellent absorber of vibration.

Portugal, Spain and Algeria are the largest producers of cork. The main Mundet plant is in New Jersey. Two large processing plants are in New Jersey. Compared to foreign and eastern outlets, a Senator from Missouri, Harry S. Truman, finally was chosen. And when the ailing President died, the man from Missouri took over.

Historians some day will point out Henry Schricker's refusal at that time might have changed the whole course of political events in America. For a Senator from Missouri, Harry

S. Truman, finally was chosen. And when the ailing President died, the man from Missouri took over.

It is politically intense Indiana, where politicians like to boast "we teach our kids how to read out of pop books," even aloof Hoosiers were shocked by the shoddy politics and greedy politicians this year. In the midst of the growing contempt and distrust, not one breath of scandal has touched the Schricker administration.

Mr. SCHRICKER, without a trace of shame, calls himself a politician. He means that by aptitude, training and choice, his business in life is to deal with the problems of man and state. In one of his characteristic appeals for a higher moral tone in government, the Governor voiced his fears to an assembly of Indianapolis high school pupil leaders some time ago.

"We have debauched government," he said sadly. "We have cheapened government. We have made it laughing stock."

The Governor's talk was strangely prophetic. Some months later, newspapers over the nation headlined the news that two big political bosses in Indiana reaped a huge profit on a government deal. And an income tax scandal clouded the local scene.

In the face of these disclosures, Gov. Schricker says nothing publicly. Privately, he has worked successfully to oust from the Democratic Party the men who have brought discredit to the party, state and nation.

Hoosiers point, with some considerable pride, to Henry Frederick Schricker, who has hand-shaken his way to every nook and corner of Indiana to

explain his political philosophy.

Indiana Republicans, led by Sen. William E. Jenner, battled the Governor and the federal government, offering to reject federal funds if necessary. The GOP said the welfare secrecy

fight was a fundamental issue of states' rights. And the Republicans won the fight when Sen. Jenner was able to tack an amendment onto the President's tax bill which allowed states to open relief rolls without loss of federal funds.

Mr. Schricker has not been closely identified with the New Deal or the Fair Deal, primarily because he is rigidly independent of the dictates of the Democratic high command.

But he sympathizes and believes earnestly in such measures as social security, often explaining to the public: "What a wonderful thing for an old couple to look forward to."

Mr. SCHRICKER, the son of German immigrants, in speeches over the state, has imparted his faith in the United Nations, civil rights, human freedom and the separation of church and state.

Gov. Schricker came to grips with the Republicans recently, in a battle headlined in all state newspapers, on the question of welfare secrecy.

The Governor, who says he is a foe of secrecy in government, nevertheless was in favor of keeping the welfare rolls closed because Federal Security Administrator Oscar Ewing threatened to cut Indiana's federal welfare grant if the rolls were opened. He did not want to take a chance on losing federal funds by making an issue of welfare secrecy.

"Nall the welfare lists on

the Courthouse doors along with the taxpayers lists for all I care," the Governor declared.

"But let's not have any Hoosier go hungry because of our mistakes."

Mr. Schricker became editor of the Starke County Democrat and became president of the Indiana Democratic Editorial Association.

So far, this record is a familiar one in American politics. The poor boy who came from a struggling rural area, went to the city, built a successful business, established a local reputation.

But with Gov. Schricker, the story doesn't end there. He rose to State Senator, Lieutenant Governor and Governor.

In the State Senate, instead of associating with the "petty" lobbyists and backward element, Mr. Schricker quietly established himself as a "liberal" lawmaker. Indianapolis newspapers referred to him as "the young statesman from Knox." He fathered the state's merit system police force, and fought with equal zeal for labor, business and farm interests.

NEXT: Schricker's record.

The Indianapolis Times

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THE SCHRICKER STORY . . . No. 1—

He Might Have Been President

By IRVING LEIBOWITZ

"PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT wants you to run for Vice President. Would you consider being his running mate?"

The day these words were spoken in the Statehouse

One question naturally arises. If Gov. Schricker had been in Harry Truman's shoes, would the nation be in the shape it is in now?

Would we, for example, be involved in a limited war and a limited peace, facing inflation, scarred by scandals in government and discredited by official corruption?

If one can judge by Henry Schricker's record as Governor, there probably would be no issue today of corruption, crime and influence peddling in government. For the Schricker administration has been notable for its political cleanliness.

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The same need for money put him to work in a bank. As an insight to his character, his friends tell the story of a robbery in the bank shortly after young Henry took over. The safe was blown, but the robbers failed to get the money.

So, Banker Henry Schricker carried the funds with him in a suitcase. He slept with it and ate with it between his knees until a new safe arrived.

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