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HERBERT F. L. ALLEN, Editor

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HAIL JUDGE CHARLES W. WOODWARD

In the circuit court of Montgomery County, a few days ago, four persons were being examined for citizenship. One was a native of France, another came from Canada, a third was from Scotland, and a fourth was American born but had lost her citizenship by marrying an alien.

As usual the applicants were questioned as to their knowledge of the Constitution of the United States. All four passed the test satisfactorily, and then Judge Charles W. Woodward in a short talk, explained the importance of the Constitution, declaring:

"The Constitution of the United States is the greatest thing in this country today."

For that utterance alone, Montgomery County people should be congratulated on having a Judge of such devotion to his country and the law.

Chiseled in marble over the entrance to the new Supreme Court building in the Nation's Capital should be the words:

"The Constitution of the United States is the greatest thing in this country today."

Richard Franchot, of Washington, in a letter to the Baltimore Sun takes Frank Kent to task for defending the Constitution and the U. S. Supreme Court.

Mr. Franchot says: "When the President requests the court to check itself by its own heart and conscience as an aid in solving national problems for the general welfare all Mr. Kent can see is an attack upon the court."

The kernel of the nut lies in the words "heart and conscience", and where the heart is concerned there is emotionalism, and where there is emotionalism stability is lacking. Human emotions run from joy to sadness, love and hatred. In a jovial mood a Supreme Court actuated by "heart and conscience" might consign the Constitution to hades and declare all laws null and void. In a fit of remorse the same court might decree the death of high officials, even as men are condemned in Soviet Russia.

Against such fancies, upholding the liberty and rights of the humblest citizen is the Constitution of the United States, and the Supreme Court's duty to interpret the laws with strict impartiality, unaffected by any other consideration than the strict terms of the basic code written in "The Constitution of the United States, the greatest thing in this country today."

1937 TRAFFIC TOLL

There is genuine reason for concern over the mounting traffic toll in Maryland. The total deaths during January, 1936, was 26. For the first month of the new year ending Sunday last the death toll reached the enormous total of 62, two per day.

This high rate of fatalities may be attributed to a number of conditions. Foremost is the charge that Maryland roads are death hazards. In another part of the paper are shown some of the dangerous roads, over which people must travel. The Hotel Men's Association has minced no words in charging that Maryland roads are in such condition that tourists detour around the state. Farmers complain that arterial highways have been improved but lateral roads neglected.

The General Assembly, now in session, is striving to discover some way to raise money to meet the expenses of government, without diversion of road improvement funds. Naturally the more money spent on roads, the better the roads will be, but there is reasonable doubt as to bad roads being the real cause of the state's high traffic toll.

Excessive speed, reckless driving, refusal to yield an inch to other drivers, driving while intoxicated, and drivers with mental disorders or inherited mental defectiveness, are some of the causes of a high death toll.

Worse than all is the speed demon, who grins and laughs in the face of pedestrians who escape death only by a hair's breadth.

Want Roosevelt to Stop Fight

Europe Believes He Can Prevent World War; No Meddling With Constitution

By EARL GODWIN.

WASHINGTON. — Europe wants President Roosevelt to step in and stop that row over there!

European dictators, arming themselves to the teeth on money they could better use to pay off their debt to us in the last war have blustered themselves to the point where they have just got to fight—and how they hate it!

Our State Department knows this from inside sources; and I understand our diplomats have been telling the President that Europe looks to him to prevent a World war which will drag this country into it. The stories we hear show that Europe is apparently scared of itself. Militaristic dictators of these increasingly warlike countries appear to be something like drunken rowdies who have forced themselves into a fight—and then look around for some friend to hold them back.

Most of the European troubles can be traced back to the division of spoils at the Versailles treaty after the World war; Germany was stripped of its colonies, and there were other rearrangements of the map. Germany would like its colonies back and American information is that if a World war can be stopped by returning Germany its colonies — this could be accomplished if someone like Roosevelt would suggest it. What is needed is someone who can make these peaceful suggestions without interfering with the prestige of some of the European leaders.

Some time ago it was hinted broadly that the President planned to step in and suggest a friendly talk with Stalin of Russia, Hitler of Germany, Mussolini of Italy all present. At that time, early in the summer, the suggestion was met with varying reactions.

Mr. Roosevelt never completely denied the implications in the published news stories at the time I mentioned; for it involved tremendous and dangerous matters—but the situation has reached a point where Europe may make the suggestion. In which case everyone here believes the President would acquiesce and do what he could to bring peace to the Old World just as he has been working to insure peace in the western world.

* * *

CONSTITUTION IS O. K.

All thoughts of amending the Constitution to conform to New Deal ideas have been abandoned in administration ranks since the President himself has said there is nothing the matter with the Constitution—it's the courts that need attention! The President passes on what he has learned this past year—that there is general feeling that "there is little fault to be found with the Constitution."

Several Presidents have criticized the courts; among them was William Howard Taft, himself; who was later Chief Justice of the United States; but memory fails to recall one who, prior to Roosevelt, told congress that the election was a mandate for a legislative program—the reactionary members of the Supreme court, notwithstanding. Those crude words will not be found in the text of the President's first communication to the 75th congress—but they are to be found by those who know how to read between the lines.

The President actually never had any right to make such a statement before he went before congress, because the issue had not been decided by the voters; before election he had his own ideas on the subject, and his ideas became a part of the campaign issue—after election he appeared to have the people's backing to ask all three branches of government—executive, legislative and judicial to keep step in a liberal program.

* * *

The President took his text from the Constitution itself, the preamble which is the fountain source of all "general welfare" legislation and Article I which gives to the congress "all" legislative power. When he inferentially questioned the propriety of the Supreme court knocking out the laws made by a congress of peoples' representatives he was not introducing a new idea, for this has been a debated subject for many years. It is a red not question whenever a law is rendered unconstitutional by a five to four vote, because that seems too close a margin, giving one man on the court too much fateful power. The President has had a long time in which to gauge the sentiment of the country since he told his newspaper friends that the court's narrow attitude toward NRA put us back to the horse and buggy days. The court, too, has had several experiences with other New Deal legislation and in the famous AAA case, the minority members of the court criticized the majority in a bitter opinion written by Justice Stone. In that, the minority, Justices Brandeis, Stone and Cardozo, reminded the rest of the court that there were other branches of the government capable of carrying on. At the time the President made his "horse and buggy" remark, I received the impression that he believed that sooner or later the people of the United States would demand a changed Constitution to guarantee the utilization of the full federal powers in social, economic and agricultural problems. That time may arrive; but apparently the President believes the first step should be a liberal view of the Constitution as it stands.

In other days Theodore Roosevelt was looked upon as a radical when he advocated popular recall of judicial decisions; and that first Roosevelt reminded the people that as radical as he might be he was not even abreast of Abraham Lincoln. The great war President, Theodore Roosevelt recalled, said in his inaugural message the first time that "the people will have ceased to be their rulers" if vital questions affecting all the people rested irrevocably on the Supreme court. In contrast, Franklin Roosevelt's suggestion that the courts have "an enlightened view" is straight and bold, but comparatively conservative.

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STATES' RIGHTS.

There has grown up the idea that the founding fathers were completely states' rights men in the sense that they wanted to reduce the federal power to a mere trickle in contrast to the sweeping powers of the infant states. This has developed to the size of an overgrown political and legal fiction in the last two decades by the constant hammering of corporation lawyers who have fought against federal regulation of their clients' affairs. Many court opinions have strengthened this view, but despite all this, court opinions are not the Constitution. No interpretation can make it less powerful than it was held to be by the men who made it; and the debates of the constitutional convention have impressed those who think as Mr. Roosevelt thinks, that the founding fathers were strong for the states—but much stronger for the federal government. In those debates students of the Constitution are again finding that the powers of congress presented no problem to the founders. They believed that the Constitution guaranteed economic justice and the rights of citizenship; they had no idea of a court that would deny these things after congress had found a way to spread them about.

* * *

ASKS FIREARMS LAW.

Homer Cummings, attorney general, believes that it will aid law enforcement if the government knows who owns every pistol and rifle in the country, and again asks congress for a law requiring the registration of every such weapon. Cummings puts up a good case for his idea; he has to deal with the kidnapers and other gangsters—but the previous congress was stopped from enacting a federal firearms law by protests from gun makers as well as hunters.

There is a law for the registration of machine guns; and the manufacturers thereof have an understanding that these weapons are for sale only to the government or to national guard organizations. Gangsters steal them from armories. But pistols and rifles can be freely sold practically without stint—except in such cases as that of New York state which has its Sullivan law prohibiting the ownership of a pistol by a citizen. Opponents of the law say it takes away from the decent citizens the right to arm themselves against the crooks who always manage to have a full arsenal.

* * *

JEALOUSY CROPS OUT.

Two sets of government sleuths are fighting for the honor of having put Al Karpis, notorious kidnaper and bandit, behind the bars of a federal penitentiary. The jealousy comes to light in the two separate annual reports of the Post Office and the Attorney General's office, and it is an indication of the reason why the President wants to reorganize the government and have fewer overlapping agencies and bureaus.

Karpis kidnaped E. G. Bremer and W. A. Hamm and immediately the famous G-Men of the Department of Justice were on the trail. Karpis disappeared and did not show a trace until one day the Postal Inspectors, sleuthing on the trail of a train robber, turned up evidence that Karpis had done the job and that he was accompanied by a gangster named Campbell also a kidnaper. Here, then, were the two crooks being chased for two different crimes by two different sets of government detectives.

Postal inspectors have been chasing bandits for years without the publicity which now attends the famous G-Men; and they have a standoffish feeling about these kidnaper chasers. There was hard feeling in this instance — and some sharp words; but instead of co-operating, the two sets of sleuths pursued their quarry along different lines; and at one time both sets of detectives nearly smashed up the whole game; they almost let Karpis et al get away.

Finally the G-Men got both crooks—and they are both serving life sentences. Now the Post Office Department officially claims that its men picked up the scent which led to the eventual incarceration—while the Department of Justice in its annual report claims credit for the imprisonment of the two men.

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Social Security—Question Box

Q.: Where can I get some information about the Social Security law?—J. M. K.

A.: The Press will, through this column, provide its readers with authoritative answers to questions on Social Security. The Regional Office of the Social Security Board is in the National Theatre Building, Washington, D. C., and G. R. Parker is Regional Director.

Q.: I am now employed by an automobile company as a stenographer but I will be married in a few months and will give up my job to care for my home. Do I come under the Social Security law?—M. L. B.

A.: You do. The wages you earn between now and your wedding will be credited to your account under the old age benefits program and will serve as a basis for payments to you in the future.

Q.: I have lost my Social Security card. Will that make any difference? How can I get another one?—K. E. D.

A.: Write to the Records Office, Social Security Board, Baltimore, Md. Say you lost your card. Give the number of your card, if you can.

Q.: An applicant for a job does not have a Social Security account card or number. Can I hire him?—M. O.

A.: Yes. If he has not made application for an old age benefits account he should file an application at once, but the fact he does not have a card need not stop you from giving him a job.

Q.: I run a filling station and employ one man. Do I come under the Social Security law?—M. P.

A.: The Social Security Act applies to you if your employe was not 65 or older on January 1, 1937. Under Title VIII of the law you must pay to the Collector of Internal Revenue for this district one per cent of the wages you pay your employe and must collect one per cent of his wages from your employe and pay both amounts into the Federal Treasury.

Q.: My wife and daughters get the money from the chickens and butter and some other things on our farm. Do I have to pay any Social Security tax on them?—T. E. Y.

A.: No. The Act does not apply to agricultural pursuits.

Initials on Lincoln Pennies

The initials V. D. B. on some Lincoln head pennies minted in 1909 are those of Victor D. Brenner, the medalist and sculptor who designed the coin. But this part of the design was soon withdrawn by the Treasury department and consequently the artist's initials appear on only part of the Lincoln pennies bearing the date 1909. Many thousands of the initialed cents were circulated, however.