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A Three-In-One Diagnosis of the Country's Ills

An Article That should Make Even the Blind See the Light.

It is rather refreshing to find three candid diagnoses of the country's ills which ignore the long and persistent broadcasting of the theory that prohibition is father, mother, aunt and uncle of every variety of crime that infests the United States. Not only is the new diagnosis interesting but illuminating, in that it ascribes the blame for the rampancy of crime to two of the very groups that have been most persistent in their opposition to prohibition and most clamorous for repeal of the 18th amendment.

American Chiefs of Police Speak Out

Even the casual reader and most superficial thinker can but conceive that the chiefs of police in the United States are thoroughly qualified to diagnose the causes of crime in American cities. Those gentlemen are members of the International Police Chiefs' Association. Chief H. D. Harper of Colorado Springs prepared for the Association its publicity report. Accordingly, this report speaks not only for American policemen but for police chiefs throughout the world.

Three Deterrents To Justice

That report lists three deterrents to justice and, mirabile dictu, does not mention prohibition as one of them. Here are what Chief Harper names as the hindrances to the suppression of crime, or as deterrents of justice: Political Interference, Irresponsible Newspapers, and Jury Laws Requiring Unanimous Verdicts.

In this connection, please consider the attitude of the political machines of America's great cities, and even smaller ones toward the enforcement of the prohibition laws and with respect to the question of repeal of the 18th amendment. Also, consider the media of the repeal propaganda, so persistent and long continued. It is evident that the two groups most responsible for the agitation for repeal and as deterrents of enforcement of the prohibition laws in the cities, are named in that report.

Consequently, on the high authority of the chiefs of police, the groups most responsible for the wave of anti-prohibition sentiment are indicted before the world as the principal hindrances to enforcement of criminal justice. Thus we find the arch-criminals resorting to the well known artifice of the sneak thief and raising the cry of "Thief—catch him" and pointing with persistent fingers at the prohibition law.

Will Durant Confirms the Diagnosis

But perhaps it would be more exact to say that Will Durant antedates the pronouncement of the International Police Chiefs' indictment of political rings and irresponsible newspapers. For his article in the September American was written before the recent convention of Police Chiefs, I believe. Mr. Durant, a writer of sufficient note to secure publication in the high-class American Magazine, was writing under the heading: "Shall We Train Our Sons For Public Office?" After discussing the degeneracy of democracy he suggests methods of preserving it. "We have failed to preserve order; our problem is to restore it without abandoning liberty," says Mr. Durant. Furthermore he says, "We know that as it (democracy) now operates it is doomed." His suggestion, though not pertinent here, is that a school for the training of public officials, similar to that for training soldiers, be established and that officials be chosen from only that group which has had rigorous training for the duties of their offices and that the choice be determined strictly upon merit and a system of promotion based upon honest and efficient service in the minor positions.

The Political Ring Indicted

Mr. Durant proceeds thus: "In almost every city of America a few men, banded together for the manipulation of masses and the distribution of patronage succeed in organizing a compact and obedient minority, through whose unscrupulous loyalty they dominate primaries and conventions, dictate nominations, capture elections, and enjoy the spoils. Under these conditions the road to office lies, not through honest and competent service to a municipality or a state, but through years of coarsening

subserviency to the 'machine'. Men of ability, education, and integrity are not wanted; they might not 'play the game.'" Proceeding a few lines, he says: "In some cities it is difficult to distinguish the politicians from the gangsters, since they have not yet agreed on the precise distribution of their functions and their authority. In some courts the decisive question is not what a man has done, but what friends he can find in the Organization. Crime flourishes as never before; the murder rate has doubled since 1900; and men seek imprisonment because the forces of the law can no longer protect them from assassination. Some of our mayors are in exile, some are in jail. Our municipal taxes have risen to the point where they threaten to bleed industry to death, and have long since discouraged that widespread ownership of homes which is the secret of social stability and peace."

Not a Word About the Prohibition Menace

Above you find a clear-cut indictment of political rings for the prevalence of poverty and crime in the cities, but not one word in respect to prohibition as the basic cause of the prevalence of either. Nor could you expect such a suggestion from a man who thus discloses the criminal association of the dominant political rings with the gangsters and who can but know that those same ringsters are among the most rampant agitators for repeal of the prohibition laws, and have been largely responsible for the failure of all attempts at enforcement of those laws.

The New York Campaign Also An Enlightener

The New York mayoralty campaign is also an enlightener in this respect. Tammany Hall is one of the earliest and most persistent sources of agitation against prohibition. The corruption of that organization is not only traditional but is now being readvertised to the world through the disclosures of the two campaigns against the Tammany candidate for mayor. The decent elements of New York City had put out a candidate, Major LaGuardia, against the Tammany machine candidate. But even the National Democratic machine, which is sponsoring the repeal campaign, must assist in retaining party influence in the city and has endangered the success of the fight against Tammany corruption by launching an independent Democratic candidate for mayor. And thus political interest is seen to supersede civic interest. However, the question of prohibition is not here involved; yet the action emphasizes the point that city government is a pawn for the political ringsters, while the two-fold campaign against Tammany based upon the ground of the corruption of city government under that organization's auspices thoroughly demonstrates the pusillanimity of the American electorate in falling over themselves in their haste to support a campaign for repeal of the 18th amendment which largely had its origin in the "Wigwam", and similar political hell-holes. Consider the source of repeal clamor at the Chicago convention.

AN ASTOUNDING EDITORIAL

The Saturday Evening Post is edited by a man who is not prone to go off half-cocked. The Post's editorial utterances are recognized everywhere for their conservatism. Yet that oldest of American papers gives utterance to the following editorial so utterly in accord with the two opinions quoted above as to be startling. Says the Saturday Evening Post under the title of "What About Crime?"

"WHAT ABOUT CRIME?"

Let us face realities. Repeal of prohibition will not repeal crime. Crime conditions in America must be attacked from the inside instead of the outside. There can be no real improvement in them until we go to the root of the evil and break up the unholy alliance between the crooked politician and the criminal, sweep his creatures out of office and take the police out of politics. Prohibition has been a smoke screen for crooked politicians behind which they have tried to conceal their protection of vice and crime, while they fostered them, and so far as possible corrupted and debauched our law-enforcement agencies. But the smoke has been steadily

clearing away and we know these fellows are exactly what they are. What are we going to do about them?"

Shall North Carolina Become a Tool Of Tools?

The higher-ups in the campaign for the restoration of legalized liquor in the United States have clearly not hesitated to use any instruments at their hands. Failure of enforcement of the prohibition law in the cities was conceived as the first essential to the successful agitation for repeal. Not only have the political masters of the cities failed to insist upon enforcement but have shared in the profits of the illicit business which was calculated to serve the greater end of disgusting, under skillful propaganda, the people of the country against prohibition as a policy. Thus the political machines have sought, and sought successfully it would appear, to kill two birds with the same stone of encouragement of the practical annulment of prohibition in their balliwicks. And many of the decent people of the country have allowed themselves to be duped by this hellish howl of "Thief, thief!", with finger pointed at prohibition.

Above are three diagnoses of the ills of our country by parties that have no ulterior purpose in attributing the cause to prohibition. The question arises as to whether the people of North Carolina, like those of thirty-odd states, will allow themselves to be duped by this old device of the sneak thief and give their aid in the chase and the destruction of what should be the greatest aid in overcoming the dire conditions of poverty which Mr. Durant depicts as a result of the domination of rascally and inefficient political rings, or machines. Three weeks more will answer the question. A just answer depends partly upon the reader's own response to the two appeals which reach him—the appeal of men with no ulterior purpose and that which is fathered and nourished by the same hellish crew that have connived at the dominancy of crime in our larger cities. It is a wise man who can, in the midst of an electorate mob-crazed by a decade of agitation, deliberately consider the source of the appeals and choose to heed that which comes without taint of corruption.

"The Nation Now Knows"

The Christian Science Monitor, possibly America's most ably edited daily, commenting upon the report of the Police Chiefs' Association, says: "The recent Chicago convention removed the gag from the mouths of the police.—Now the nation knows that it is often politicians controlling police departments, who frustrate the law."

LISTLESSNESS IN REPEAL RANKS

The fact that repealists in four counties failed to qualify candidates for the convention is suggestive of a listlessness or a fear of consequences that bodes no good to the repeal cause in North Carolina. There is evidently no lack of repealists, but it is notable that few of those whose political fortunes might be hazarded have allowed their names to appear on the list of repeal candidates. Nor have such, who generally have a large share in carrying elections, been very active in securing petitions for others, else such a lapse would not have occurred. That suggests that the same gentlemen will not, with the present evidence of strength on the part of the Drys, risk future political advancement by taking a very active part in the campaign from now on, and especially on the day of the election.

Few politicians are desirous of risking the consequences of activity in behalf of repeal in the face of the present opposition to it. It would have been different if the bandwagon which was expected to pass with so great a hurrah had materialized. Yet it is doubtful if fence-straddling will profit them.

The failure to nominate candidates in those four counties means four Dry delegates assured. The Wets cannot "shirt-tail" us, as the boys used to say in marble games.

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