

THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR

Where The Spirit Of The Lord Is, There Is Liberty

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EUGENE C. PULLIAM, *Publisher*

"Let the people know the facts and the country will be saved."—Abraham Lincoln

Freedom Vs. Necessity

We are happy to publish (in adjoining columns) the letters from H. K. Clodfelter, President of Local 933 of the CIO United Automobile Workers and a group of other UAW members. The letters, objecting to our Aug. 2 editorial, "Yellow Dog In Reverse," make a reasoned contribution to the Union Shop vs. the Right-To-Work debate. As to the statement that the editorial reflected anti-union thinking we would like to call attention to Paragraph 2, in which it was asserted that, "Today, both law and public opinion buttress the right of employes to join unions and bargain collectively."

The writers assert that labor unions have helped make possible better working conditions and higher wages. We agree. But this is not the point at issue. The point can be found in the very quotation cited in the first letter: "Necessitous men are not free men." For if Allison employe V. R. Smith did not need his job it is highly unlikely that he would be working for Allison or anybody else. The union shop agreement between the UAW and G.M. threatens to force this "necessitous man" from his livelihood unless he "hangs his manhood on a nail" and joins the union, contrary to his strongly held convictions.

Mr. Smith's desire not to surrender his freedom of conviction may be illogical. Certainly G.M. will be glad to hear present working conditions described by UAW members as "the plushiest, the most luxurious kind of treatment." If Mr. Smith no longer can decide freely the question of joining or not joining a union the principle of the yellow dog contract has returned. The fact that this is a "plushy" contract rather than a niggardly one would not alter the description, "Yellow Dog Contract In Reverse."

It is argued that since benefits accrue as a result of union activities Mr. Smith should be forced to pay them by joining the union.

Benefits also accrue from church activities. Is anyone forced, therefore, to join a church? The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, are in effect as pressure groups bringing great benefits to all veterans. Should any veteran, thereby, be forced to join these veterans' organizations, or any veterans' organization? Carrying the argument still further: With the merger of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations it can be argued that independent unions "are not pulling their weight" by throwing their resources behind the unified organizations. Are the smaller independent unions now "free riders," getting the benefits of Big Unionism's lobbying pressure without paying for them?

No, the issue is not trade unionism, much though union leaders would like it to appear that the Right-To-Work threatens unions. If union leaders, who now wield the enormous power they showed in the recent Ford and G.M. strikes, would remember a little about their own past they would see that they have forgotten how it feels to be the underdog. In speaking in the name of the underdog they are using emotional capital long spent.

It is Mr. Smith who feels the "tyranny" of the majority. It is Mr. Smith, whose convictions place him in the minority in a given place, who needs speaking

Talking Elevator Sets Bad Example

By Mary E. Bostwick

When you think of all the superfluous conversation there is going on all the time on the part of human beings—and parakeets, too, for that matter—everybody sounding off and jabbering and gabbling, usually about nothing, it's somewhat disturbing to read about that talking elevator that just made its debut in the National Distiller's Building in New York.

This elevator reminds passengers to press the first button, not to block the doors and tells which direction the car is going. And if by some sad mischance the elevator gets stuck, it's right there with words of comfort and consolation.

That's all right so far as it goes, but will it stop there—and will this electronic jabber be confined to elevators, or will other machines want to get into the act? So far as that goes, how do we know that the elevator will confine itself to businesslike remarks connected with the business of riding in an elevator? Apparently the more anybody—or any elevator—talks, the more he or it becomes enamored with the sound of his own voice. That elevator may very well start in pretty soon telling jokes, making wise cracks, etc., and laughing heartily at them, though the elevator passengers will only scowl and mumble, "Shut up!"

There's so much jabbering going on everywhere, every place, what with squalling TV, yammering juke boxes, etc., that I've often thought that some smart cookie would come to realize how badly bent the ears of the populace are becoming, and might hire a soundproof hall where citizens, exhausted from being beaten over the ears with all the yapping, yelling, yelping, hollering, squawking, etc., might retire to enjoy some blessed silence, at so much per hour. The notion of curling up in a comfortable upholstered seat, and listening to absolutely nothing would have a most salubrious and soothing effect, and would be worth anything that the Impresario of Silence chose to charge for the privilege. Anybody in the Silence Hall who started popping off, even in a whisper, would get tossed out, and not get his money back, either.

But that's far in the future, like the "artificial satellite" they've been talking about, and meantime we have the threat that other pieces of machinery will hear about the talking elevators, and start doing monologues themselves.

What fun, when you opened the refrigerator door, to hear the refrigerator say "Go easy on the ice cubes. I've been overworked this hot weather, and unless I get a little cooperation around here, I'll quit working altogether, and then where would you be? And I wish you'd stop stuffing me up with watermelons; they're too big, and give me an aching back. And why don't you use up all the left-overs in here? If there's one thing I hate, it's being all messed up with little dishes of this, and little dishes of that. Why don't you—" Right here, you'd wish you never had a mechanical refrigerator, and you'd begin looking around trying to locate an old-fashioned ice box that couldn't talk back.

A gabby automobile would also be a pain in the neck. It would be like having the car filled with back seat drivers.

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To the Editor of The

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