

The Alliance Herald

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THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(By George M. Carey)

"What do I get out of the Chamber of Commerce?" This question is more frequently heard than any other and it is highly important that it be answered and thoroughly understood.

There are many people paying school taxes who have no children who might ask the question, "What do I get out of the schools?" But who wants to live in a town where there are no schools? There are a great many business men who never go to church, neither do they belong to any. They might say, "What do I get out of the church?" But who wants to live in a town where there are no churches?

A great deal of the work of the chamber of commerce is of a routine character, of course. It divides itself into two classes—initiation and prevention. There are many things which some would want to do that must be prevented. Much of the work of an association of citizens is to do that intangible something called enterprise, also developing the personality of the city.

These questions can best be answered by saying, "Who wants to live in a city that does not have such an institution?" The child goes to school for months and years and at no particular time can you measure in cubic inches the mental growth and development of that child, yet, somehow or other, gradually the youth develops into manhood, and imperceptibly to the naked eye intelligence does grow. So the church has worked quietly on many individuals and has been instrumental in the same imperceptible manner in developing character and virility. No one can measure this normal growth. In like manner the chamber of commerce works quietly, sometimes noisily, the year through, in stimulating city growth and the organization was instrumental in doing the most good. Yet somehow in some way, perceptibly and imperceptibly, Alliance is growing, a bigger, better and more prosperous city.

Many agencies, of course, have contributed to this condition and surely this organization of citizens with its allied civic bodies in the city have been responsible for much of its growth.

The questions before a worth-while citizen of any city are not, "What do my family and I get out of city schools?" "What do we get out of its churches?" "What does my business get out of its club?" but rather, "What am I putting into my chamber of commerce to have a part in its progress?" "When can I be of greatest service in the place I am making my home?" "Does the world owe me a living or do I owe the world a service?" "Am I a vacuum cleaner or a producer?" "Is my favorite harness a breast-strap or a back strap?"

Are you a recipient or a contributor?

The chamber of commerce needs every citizen of Alliance as a contributing member.

THE GOLDEN RULE IN INDUSTRY

We confess to being disappointed in Secretary of Labor Denby. His first speech, fully reported by the Associated Press, does not indicate that he possesses a master mind. Mr. Denby is quoted as saying that the remedy for industrial disputes consists in applying the golden rule to relations between labor and capital, and while his remarks and sweet and consoling, they come about as near settling the labor question as Henry Ford's peace ship did toward putting an end to the great war.

It was Polonius, was it not, who spoke almost entirely in platitudes. Speeches of this sort have a sonorous sound and fall benignly on the ear, but the great trouble is that they reach the wrong ears. The people who will be impressed with Mr. Denby's axioms are not the laborers or the capitalists, and unfortunately, these two are the ones who figure largely in labor disputes. It is a pleasing thing to learn that it is better for labor and capital to get together and amicably adjust their disputes than to have the secretary of labor volunteer his assistance to adjust their differences. It is just too utterly sweet to learn that neither side should attempt to put anything over on the other and that each should recognize the rights of the other and both the rights of the public.

Naturally the capitalists will be greatly influenced by Mr. Denby's suggestion that men and women should be given a decent living wage, "for the way to make a loyal American is to make American men something to him in the way of a happy home, family circle, food, clothing and self-respect. To grind the life out of him is to make him a poor patriot." The laborers probably have never heard that the time has come when they are to "take a share in the organization and direction of the policies of the nation. Its viewpoint must become constructive. It must share in the responsibilities. It must realize that any plan of action or policy that proposes to confer privileges and benefits on one group that are not to be extended to all others will inevitably fail."

It is surprising that a man of Mr. Denby's qualifications should approach the big task that confronts him, with this stuff on his lips. For the labor situation is fast approaching the stage when kind words and sweet and wholesome thought have about as much effect as reading Omar Khayyam to a bulldog whose feelings have been injured. All these things are undoubtedly true, but with workmen facing a reduction in wages and capitalists already suffering from a diminution of profits, it is going to take something more than loving sentiments to alter the situation.

THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

A number of Alliance men are reported to be interested in the citizens' military camps to be conducted this summer by the war department, and several of them are reported to be considering applying for places in them. In most instances the parents of the youths are just as enthusiastic as the boys themselves.

Frankly, it is an opportunity that should appeal to

every red-blooded boy in the city who can possibly spare the time, or who does not have a pressing need for the money he can earn in that month. The course lasts for a month. In this area, the boys will be sent to either Camp Pike, Ark., or Fort Snelling, Minn., and it is worth a whole lot to spend a month at either of these places.

This is military training, of course, and following so soon upon the days when the boys were simply aching to get out of the army, it is possible that there may be some little hesitancy on the part of the younger lads to try their hand at the game. The citizens' camps, however, are a sample of military training in its most pleasant form. There will be a month of open air life, with good, wholesome food, plenty of exercise and plenty to do. It's an experience that those who have not yet had a try at army service will appreciate the rest of their lives, and there are many hardened and hard-boiled veterans who will, after pondering the matter, be attracted by the prospect.

Parents will do well to give their sons the necessary encouragement in getting them to accept this opportunity. It is needless, so soon after the war, to dwell on the benefits of intensive military training. And this isn't like the regular service—the boys are not obligated to do anything, and after a month of wholesome living and fine training will return to their homes better fitted to make something of the remainder of their summer vacation, no matter how they spend it. It seems, on the face of it, an effort on the part of the department, to create an interest in military service, and in addition to doing this, it will do a distinctive service to every boy who takes advantage of the offer. Chances like this do not come often, and the average boy will not want to pass this one by.

MORE FUNDS FOR THE LIBRARY

Among the problems that deserve a prompt solution at the hands of the new city council is that of increased revenue for the city library. At the council meeting last week, representatives from the library board made a report which should be of interest to every intelligent man and woman in the city. The present levy is insufficient for the needs of the institution. It brings in only sufficient money to pay the running expenses, and by the time the expense of rebinding the books now on hand is cared for, there is hardly enough left over to be worthy the name of a new book fund.

Alliance has one of the best library buildings in the state in a city of this size. It has a fair assortment of books, or did have a few years ago, but it is impossible to have a reference library of any real value without an adequate fund for the purchase of new books.

The records show that there are over two thousand calls a month for books. There have been few additions made along the lines of late fiction or reference books for months. The supply of books is not sufficient for the demands made upon the institution. If the library is to serve its purpose in this city, there must be no more of the scrimping for funds that has taken place the last two years.

The new council is composed of men who are able to appreciate the benefits of the library to the city. The library board contains men who are able to present the need for more funds, if it is necessary. When the budget for the next year is made up, there should be an ample appropriation made to care for the library as its importance in the community will justify. A city that spends thousands of dollars for public improvements and overlooks the need for mental improvement isn't getting ahead as fast as it might.

THE SALES TAX IN OPERATION

(State Journal.)

John D. Rockefeller has an income of, say \$25,000,000 a year. John Smith's income is, let us say, \$1,200 a year. Let him try as he may, Mr. Rockefeller cannot live up more than \$1,000,000 of his income. To use even that would be a criminal economic waste. John Smith, on the other hand may try as he may, but if he has a family of normal size and appetite he will not be able to live on much less than his full \$1,200 a year.

Comes now Senator Reed Smoot, with a bill for a new form of "income" tax to be employed largely in lieu of the existing income tax. It is called the sales tax. It levies a tax of one per cent on all goods sold. The amount of the tax, as he says, is added to the price the consumer pays to the cost of living. In that way, he says, each citizen bears a share "proportionate to his ability to pay, as measured by his paying or producing powers."

Is that so? Let us see. Mr. Rockefeller, with a buying power of \$25,000,000, spends \$1,000,000 and puts the rest in the bank. The sales tax reaches, accordingly, only the \$1,000,000 representing one fiftieth of his "ability to pay."

John Smith, who has to spend all his income for a living, pays a tax on \$1,200, his full buying power. He is taxed, accordingly, on his full ability. That is nice for Mr. Rockefeller but rough on Smith.

This is an extreme illustration, but it reveals accurately the general bearing of the proposed sales tax. It falls most heavily on those of income so small that it must all be consumed. It falls next most heavily upon those with incomes so small that only a small proportion can be saved. It taxes most lightly of all, by the standard of taxpaying ability, those who like Mr. Rockefeller, have need to spend on living expenses only a minor fraction of their great incomes.

Senator Smoot's sales tax shifts the burden of taxation from John Rockefeller to John Smith. Maybe it can be justified in spite of that. But before proceeding to that justification we should be rid of any such delusion as Senator Smoot's when he says that under his tax each citizen will "bear a share proportionate to his ability to pay as measured by his buying or producing powers." The sales tax taxes men according to their necessities, not according to their abilities, however measured. That is an undebatable fact. The remaining question for debate is, is that shifting of the tax burden from the wealthier to the less wealthy to be justified?

HIS HOBBIES

(American Legion Weekly.)

Grover C. Bergdoll, who is devoting the Rhineland springtime to strutting mockery of the United States government and slandering American army officials in the hope that his false accusations of bribery may cause distrust in the hearts of Americans, has two hobbies. He fishes for trout, and he keeps a scrap-book of newspaper clippings and letters forwarded to him from the states. There is a suspicion that he is displaying to his German courtiers with pompous exultation the letters he receives from slacking friends and disloyalists at home. "See what they think of me," he probably is saying.

Throughout the United States there are thousands of ex-service men who would like to tell Bergdoll what they think of him. If they speak, his scrap-book will no longer be a record of perfidy condoned. For general information, his address is Eberbach, Baden, Deutschland. A five-cent stamp is required. There is no censorship.

A flywheel in Rochester burst loose, flew thirty rods over three houses, and smashed into a Miss Ewell's dining-room, but Miss Ewell was in the kitchen and escaped injury. What a lesson to the women folks!—New York Call.

And now the nebula Drier, in the constellation Cetus, is speeding away from the earth at the rate of 1,250 miles a second. What has it against us?—Omaha World-Herald.

State Action Wins For Passage of American Language Bill

The Reed-Norval or American language act was passed by the house of representatives on Monday, April 4, by the vote of 65 to 31, thus bringing to a dramatic close the bitterest fight of the session. Opposed by the strong German language element, who employed every means in their power to bring about its defeat, including an organized system of propaganda written in German, the bill was sponsored by the American Legion, who practically deserted their own legislative program to come to the measure's defense when it was threatened with failure. The act had been previously passed by the senate, and was later passed by the house with the emergency clause, making it effective immediately on being signed by the governor.

The new law strengthens existing statutes in making English the official language of the state, in prohibiting the teaching of any foreign language in common school branches, and in prohibiting discrimination against the use of English in any meeting. It does not prevent the use of foreign tongues in religious services. Its success is considered a notable triumph for Americanism by the American Legion and other patriotic societies.

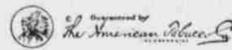
The success of Hoover's plans would indicate that deflation hasn't lowered the American standard of giving.—Bridgport Star.



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If the nation could disarm suspicion the rest would be easy.—Columbia (S. C.) Record.

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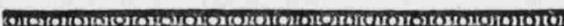
On this superior body is built a wearing surface formed with special enamel paint—and fully a third more is used. This better wearing surface lasts far longer under hard knocks and frequent mopping with soapy water.

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