

city only when it has become subject to an adequate machinery of control.

Given three years of peace, a fair volume of employment, and hence, substantial collections of dues and assessments through the check-off, the union will have large resources for continuing its struggle to organize the non-union fields. It is inevitable that West Virginia and the other non-union areas should become the scene of the great battles for control which will be waged in the next few years. How soon this happens, depends on the policy of Mr. Lewis and his cabinet and on the political complexion of the non-union territories. But it is certain that the organization of miners cannot long resist the pressure of union operators that they be freed from the costly competition of unorganized coal fields.

Oil and the A. P.

WHAT part the press should have played in reporting the story of oil is a much debated question. Mr. Vanderlip contends that there was a period of twenty-two months between the time the leases were signed and the ultimate crash, when the press lay back on its oars. The first leases date from April, 1922. In that month Senator La Follette publicly attacked them. The story was there. Why didn't the press go after it?

Here and there the press replies. Thus the New York World: "If he [Mr. Vanderlip] had taken the least trouble to look into the facts or even to read the facts, he would know that the Senate committee was searching the records and other sources of information, and that such sources of information as it was ready to disclose were published in the newspapers. It was not engaged merely in spreading scandalous rumors for scandal's sake."

But is that all? Weren't there occasions, meantime, when the press was spreading good cheer for scandal's sake? Leaving aside for the moment the question whether most papers did not fail for more than a year to report the most sensational news in Washington, when there were enough suspicious circumstances to justify at least a careful investigation, there remains one striking bit of evidence of the part played by the press—not given the attention it deserves. Not given that attention: because it takes a great organization like the Associated Press to scatter the news broadcast—and this affair concerns a slip on the part of the Associated Press itself.

Remember it was on December 12, 1922, that Mr. Doheny received the contract finally confirming his privilege to exploit the great Elk Hills reserve in California. At that time it was not known, to be sure, that Mr. Doheny had let Secretary Fall have \$100,000 on an extraordinary non-interest-bearing loan. But it *was* known that the navy had lost its rights in its own oil field, by that contract

of December 12. The terms of that lease were written, then, precisely in the form in which Congress was later to declare them "against the public interest." And did the Associated Press then sound a note of warning—or so much as hint that this might not be the best of all oil contracts? Its night wire from Washington, on December 14th, began as follows:

WASHINGTON, December 14.—A huge fuel supply for the Pacific Fleet will be built up, an extensive tract of country developed and facilities for handling oil increased, and the Government will get immediate benefit of royalties from naval reserve No. 1 in California, as a result of the extension today of a contract between the Government and the Pan-American Petroleum & Transport Co., it was said after announcement of the change was made by Secretary Denby.

"Huge fuel supply for the Pacific Fleet"—"Government will get immediate benefit of royalties"—how does that read now?

The rest of the A. P. wire, as read into the Walsh committee investigations (page 1631) goes on in the same spirit for some eight hundred words. Mr. Doheny is quoted as to the benefits the government will derive. Secretary Denby comes in for a paragraph or two. Mr. Doheny returns to repeat himself on the benefits to the government. The whole message strikes an optimistic chord. What could have been the effect of breaking the news to the country in those terms, other than to contribute toward the calming of all doubts? And such doubts had arisen. For it was eight months earlier that Senator La Follette had attacked the first Doheny lease.

Presumably a report of this character went to all the papers which the A. P. serves. It is Senator Smoot who points out "of course that [the report] would go to about 1,300 or 1,400 papers."

The navy lost its oil. And the A. P. broadcasted a story of good cheer. The heading used by the Los Angeles Times summed its message fairly:

"OIL ASSURED FOR FLEET."

Good reading now!

The Problem of the Smith Candidacy

THE friends of Governor Smith are making out an exceedingly strong case for his right to the Democratic nomination for President. He is an honest man, and an able one. He has proved himself one of the best executives the State of New York has produced. His methods of political strategy are direct and open and commend themselves strongly to the average citizen. He has never failed, when the occasion arose, to take his stand on the side of a democratic and progressive liberalism, neither has he weighed political costs against his principles. For his virtues he has been

rewarded by an immense popularity which is one of the most striking signs of the essential soundness of the American democracy. If he secured the nomination for the Presidency, he would carry New York, New Jersey and Illinois, and very likely Massachusetts. These states together with the Solid South would come within sixty votes of electing him, and the probability is strong that he could pick up those sixty votes, even if no third party is launched. If the Progressives of the Northwest launched a party of their own, it would draw enough votes away from the Republicans to make Smith's election certain.

Against such a case as this, what have the opponents of Governor Smith to urge? That he is a Roman Catholic. But for this fact the movement for his nomination would be irresistible. Now, how much weight is it reasonable to give to a candidate's religion, in a country where religious freedom is guaranteed in the Constitution? In theory, it should not be given any weight at all. If we had arrived at a state of universal political enlightenment and social adjustment, it would not be given any weight. Unhappily we have not yet arrived at such a state, and it behooves all Americans who place the national welfare above party advantage and personal ambition to consider seriously the remote as well as the immediate effects of the election of a Roman Catholic to the Presidency.

It is well known that in large sections of the country, and among considerable classes everywhere the anti-Catholic feeling generated in the Reformation period remains active and militant. Anti-Catholicism furnishes the chief capital of the Ku Klux Klan today. It accounts in large part for the old American anxiety over immigration from southern and eastern Europe. Immigration from Poland and Italy increases the proportion of Catholics in the population both actually and potentially—potentially because of the superior fecundity of those peoples.

Millions of Americans are seriously alarmed over what they term the Catholic menace. Other millions, equally averse to Catholicism, still maintain the optimistic view that nothing can alter the fundamentally Protestant character of the nation. The election of a Catholic to the Presidency would shake this latter class out of their complacency and make out of them a rich source of recruits to nativism and the Ku Klux.

In such an event the religious motive, which has hitherto played a subordinate part in our politics, would be certain to work its way into the foreground. Little by little the nativistic South would detach itself from its allegiance with the urban democracies of the East and align itself with the Nordic Northwest. Our political alignments would run in terms of Protestant against Catholic, native and Nordic against newer immigrant stocks, country against city. In so far as the economic ques-

tion entered in at all, it would result in a union between the Protestant, native, country party and the capitalistic class of the cities. For both the Ku Klux and the capitalist shape their ideals on the past, a past of self help and unrestrained private enterprise. Neither views sympathetically the demand of the urban masses for conditions of living controlled by the community.

In mere numbers the two parties might be fairly evenly matched. The cities, however, are increasing in population more rapidly than the country, and in no distant future might easily dominate the House of Representatives. The country, thanks to our constitutional scheme, would continue to dominate the Senate. It is hard to escape the conclusion that in these circumstances our governmental machine would become almost incapable of operation.

The consequences of the election of Governor Smith to the Presidency would be extremely grave. They would be grave only because of the persistence of religious intolerance among us. Might it not be better, Governor Smith's friends are asking, to meet the issue squarely at once and by making Governor Smith President, prove that we are capable of living up to our pretensions of religious equality? Governor Smith could be counted on to prove that a Catholic can make an exceptionally capable chief executive of the nation.

We do not believe that tolerance can be established by fighting, at the polls or in the field of battle. It will come to us, if at all, through a gradual process of education. It is most likely to come when the communicants of all creeds and persons of no creed work together in a common cause. We are fast approaching the point where a real alignment can be established in politics. The democratic elements of city and country alike are beginning to recognize the need of union against predation and arbitrary capitalistic control of the resources of the nation. It is no time to drag in the religious issue. We think that Governor Smith sees this himself and will decide before the time of the convention that his candidacy is not conducive to the best interests of the American people, Protestant or Catholic, and should therefore be withdrawn.

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