

Newspaper tirade against IU drew editorial protests

Periodically during its evolution Indiana University comes under fire for whatever reasons state newspaper editors choose to point out to their readers. Many of the early editorial tirades were opportunistic in the sense that the editors wanted the university moved to their communities.

It would be interesting to know why the editor of the *Seymour Republican* had his dander up over the state university. *The* (Bloomington) *World* reported on April 30, 1897, that the editorial page of the *Republican* had been harping on IU, particularly during the last session of the Legislature.

Readers of the *World* were treated to some colorful language by its editor. "Almost every day the editor (of the *Republican*) vomited into the columns of the *Republican*, and the citizens of Jackson County were given an



LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

opportunity to see and smell the nauseating stuff."

Continued *The World*, "Not content with attacking the University last winter, it has kept up its warfare almost constantly, and its attacks would be laughable were they not so ridiculous. In yesterdays' edition the editor of the *Republican* was comparatively mild."

What was the Seymour editor's latest complaint? It seems that IU was sending out "bulletins to newspapers over the state."

Today we would call them news releases, and they were sent out in the hope of getting the name of the university into state newspapers.

Snorted the Seymour *Republican* editor, "It is quite likely however that most of the newspapers will see fit to prepare their own copy relative to the university of Indiana." *The World* editor snapped back, "Bless your poor, antediluvian and antiquated soul, dear *Republican*, the Registrar of the State University has spent years in the newspaper business where you have spent months, and the University items sent out over his name have been cheerfully used by such papers as the *News*, *Sentinel* and *Journal* of Indianapolis, to say nothing of the other leading papers in the various parts of the state."

There is a suggestion in *The World's* article about what the Seymour newspaper editor

was up to. During the legislative session there had been discussion of creating another higher education school, and the *Republican* had been opposed to the idea until "it immediately began to advocate Seymour as the proper place to locate the new school."

The editor of *The World* compared the Seymour editors salvos against IU as "popgun wads against the State University man-of-war." *The World* furthermore pointed out that public criticism of IU by the Seymour editor helped the university. "Every attack from such a source is an advertisement."

Oh well, what could readers expect from the *Seymour Republican*? According to *The World*, "There are a few men in Indiana who would rather wallow in the mire of old foggyism than to stand in the sunshine of educational enlightenment."

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