

# Magazine Critic of Reno Draws Warm Reply; Hypocrisy Declared Lacking

To The Nevada State Journal—

It was with varied emotions of curiosity and regret that I read an article by Carlton Russell in *Real Detective* of December, 1931, curiosity to know if those things were true, and regret that I should have missed those attractions and allow a mere shorthorn visitor to skim the cream of joy. To remedy my oversight I immediately proceeded to step out according to Mr. Carlton Russell's direction and possessing the same desires and weakness as he, naturally my first inclination was to visit what he calls the "bullpen" on the banks of Truckee river. At least, Mr. Carlton Russell, you must give us credit for trying to segregate our scarlet sisters from our wives, our daughters and sweethearts. Can you say as much for your own home town?

Proceeding further, I am willing to accept your measurement of one hundred yards from Second street as being correct. Ha, Mr. Carlton Russell, you old roue, you made sure of being able to find the place again!

If you will open the old Testament and let your rheumy eyes search the pages you will find that prostitution by no means originated in RENO, and for ages to come always will be an institution, as long as men are like you and I and Women God bless them, are nothing else.

You mention in your article that gambling, prostitution, dope and liquor flourish in other cities, no doubt. I am willing to accept your word and trust you, Mr. Carlton Russell, to smell out those places no matter how well hidden, but there are a few things that were not wayed before your eyes in Reno, Nevada, the "hell-hole of the West" as you call it, and that is deceit and hypocrisy. We cleaned the state of those two besetting sins. For a man who is used to slink like a criminal in and out through back doors with furtive glances over his shoulder, doing his loving on the sly, gambling behind locked doors and drawn blinds, to him, I say, Reno must be a distinct shock. But stop and contemplate, linger among us a while, Mr. Carlton Russell, get used to straightforward honest thinking and your coating of deceit and hypocrisy will sooner or later slough off and perhaps make of you a real man that could take his place among men even in Reno!

In your article you mention reformers being taken for a ride. You astonish me, Mr. Carlton Russell, you probably refer to what is known as the bums-rush, when a door of a speakeasy is violently opened and a chiseler of one kind or another is thrown out on his ear. Sure, Mr. Carlton Russell, the fact that you escaped a similar treatment is probably due to your size, judging by the article you wrote you are a very small man, and we do not throw small men around in Reno. If your physical development is at par with your mind, Mr. Carlton Russell, you are too insignificant to be kicked through the keyhole.

Yes, we have here all the different kinds of near humans which you mentioned in your brilliant article, but surely you noticed that even the bums were fat and saucy. Some of them no doubt contribute to the filth in Douglas Alley, but somehow, Mr. Carlton Russell, that filthy thoroughfare seems cleaner since your carcass is no longer in view. I am glad you mentioned his honor, Mayor E. E. Roberts' speech at the Methodist church. There was a beautiful sentiment underlying Mayor Roberts' masterly discourse on prohibition, which you, in your

infinite smallness of mind, are unable to comprehend. The overflowing collection plates were ample evidence of Mayor Roberts' firm standing among the liberty loving and right thinking citizens of Reno.

Violators of prohibition include consumers as well as purveyors which means that three-quarters of the nation are law breakers. As majority rule is the fundamental principle of this country, the opposition of more than a majority invalidated a law and its enforcement is tyranny which it is a patriotic duty to resist. Do you get the idea, Mr. Carlton Russell, beside bootlegging is a very profitable business and rather more legitimate than speculating in stock or raising the price of a baby's milk which practices are well tolerated among the most rabid of bluenoses? So much for prohibition.

You speak of our Chamber of Commerce, with a glibness worthy of a nobler cause. Perhaps you had rather confine your remarks to a different kind with handles on of which variety you may be more familiar. Glad you mentioned His Excellency, Governor Fred B. Balzar; there is a man, take off your hat to him, son. If true, as you said, that he lost thirty grand and carried it off with a pleasant grin, he is every inch a man. To the gambler, the plunger, the dead game sport goes the credit for Reno's prosperity. Contemplate, Mr. Carlton Russell, thirty grand put into circulation by one single individual eventually to find its way into the pockets of the carpenters, the plumbers, the window washers and upholsterers. Thirty grand to buy necessities of life to hundreds of families. Why, Mr. Carlton Russell, Governor Balzar is a public benefactor. There may be misers, even in Reno, who grasp and grope with filthy claws for nickels and dimes, grudging the pennies that must be paid out, contented to starve and let the world starve with them only so that they may keep their ill-gotten gains. I say, there may be such. I do not know, but I do know that such men are not at the head of the government of Nevada or the city of Reno, and as a citizen of the Silver State we can only pray that they never will be.

As for the gambling games, they may be crooked, as you say. I know no more about it than you do, Mr. Carlton Russell, and speaking of suckers, well, Barnum settled that question while you were cutting your teeth. You should be a writer of drama, Mr. Carlton Russell, the blood-curdling description you gave to the shooting of a dangerous character is a marvel of art.

The citizens of Reno regret those happenings just as much as the roustabouts and swamper who must clean up the mess. You mention slot machines, where every school child can donate his nickels. Yes, Mr. Carlton Russell, they can, but do they?

In your scurrilous yarn you state

that even a newsboy keeps the money he earns. You are not above hitting below the belt, Mr. Carlton Russell, as in the case of the splendid men who constitute our police force. I am sure that when the situation becomes too critical, Chief Kirkley will send for you.

However, Mr. Carlton Russell, we forgive you, as we hope to be forgiven, be generous. Have you noticed that God does not put all his sunbeams into turnips and squash, but scatters his sunshine prodigiously over the universe? Have you stopped to consider that the men and women and a kind word and a smile means to them just as much as it does to the straight and the good? Perhaps in your righteous wrath, Mr. Carlton Russell, you will arise to your full and majestic height and command the Truckee river to raise and engulf our wicked city, letting the just perish with the unjust, if so we can only say, Kismet, so be it.

FRANK SANBERG