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THURSDAY, MAY 2, 1935

**Salaries Of Our City Employees**  
The information, published in last week's Eccentric, that the city is and has been paying out from \$400 to \$750 more in salaries every two weeks than it did over corresponding semi-monthly periods of a year or more ago, comes as disconcerting news when coupled with the remembrance that there have been no salary increases for regular employees since the several cuts of two and three years ago were put into effect.

It means that all of the excess has been going to additional employees—employees who were not on the payroll at all a year ago. It is true that the city at present is engaged in projects of a more or less emergency nature which it does not have at hand 12 months ago—the tax collection drive, for instance, and special work on special assessment district accounts—and that the increased personnel may therefore be entirely justified.

Fortunately, much of this emergency work is nearing completion, and the city will be able shortly to drop most of its payroll "extras." We use the word "fortunately," not that we are anxious to see any person lose his or her job, even if his salary is being paid by the taxpayers, but we believe that the regular employees of the Municipal Building are deserving of a pay increase, and we don't like to see any opportunity they may have for receiving one vanish in salaries to part-time or emergency workers.

Business men know that there is no more effective method of increasing the efficiency and improving the morale of their employees than by raising their salaries, and it is logical to assume that a part of the emergency work at the Municipal Building during the last few months could have been handled by the regular staff, had its payroll been fattened slightly. This might even have been more economical than hiring new persons to do the work.

However, that may be, the best course for the future would seem to be for the city to get its emergency work out of the way as fast as possible, reduce the number of its employees to an efficient minimum, and pay higher salaries to those that are left. City Manager Pate has already announced his intention of recommending provisions for a pay increase in the next budget, together with an adjustment of the salary scale. We hope, when that time comes, the Commission will find itself in a position to act favorably on the recommendation. The taxpayers of Birmingham want to pay their city employees well, but they insist that maximum efficiency be a corollary to high wages.

**Woodward Traffic Congestion**  
The City Commission is perfectly justified in condemning Highway Commission Engineer D. Van Wagner for his delay in ordering commencement of the wider Woodward avenue project through Birmingham. The only regret is that the resolution adopted last week was not couched in terms even more critical of Van Wagner's procrastination.

There is no need to hurry the execution of the resolution, for the fact that no progress has been made on the project in the past seven years. The Commission should persistently continue to voice its disapproval of the State's inertia, and the remainder of the community should take up the clamor until some definite action is begun.

There is a real and immediate need for this highway, as no observer of Sunday traffic through Birmingham will deny. By delaying preparations for opening the new thoroughfare, the state is openly abetting the danger to life and property which exists on the present highway. The Commission would be perfectly within its moral right to carry out its threat of routing north-bound traffic up the uncompleted right-of-way in the event the State refuses to pave it immediately.

**Senator Moore Loses A Legislative Opponent**  
Vernon J. Brown, able Republican legislator from Mason, not so long ago was a warm admirer of Senator A. L. Moore, Mr. Brown, who publishes a fine weekly newspaper in Mason, is the recognized tax expert in the House of Representatives at Lansing. When Senator Moore went to Lansing in 1931, Representative Brown was captivated by Moore's apparent ability and his seeming desire to solve Michigan's tax delinquency. Rep. Brown approved Senator Moore's ten-year moratorium, passed in 1932, and had hoped that the Pontiac citizen would, through this session, produce further and more satisfactory methods of increasing the collection of taxes in Michigan.

But when Senator Moore introduced his tax cancellation plan in the Legislature, Rep. Brown revolted. Eventually, with the assistance of tax authorities in the University of Michigan, Rep. Brown introduced a tax cancellation plan of his own in the House. All of which leads us to present an editorial from Rep. Brown's newspaper, touching on Senator Moore's scheme to cancel taxes. The reference of Mr. Brown's to "one of Michigan's important cities" alludes to the city of Pontiac, Senator Moore's own home town. Here is Rep. Brown's comment:

A BIG BARGAIN  
Discussion of what shall be done with the delinquent taxes of Michigan and how best shall

be conserved the property rights of the citizens of Michigan, has led to some interesting discoveries. A survey made in a certain ward of the city of Ann Arbor has just been completed and findings published. In this ward a typical variety of properties is found. There are some vacant lots on subdivided plots, some modest homes and some more pretentious, some good business properties and some industrial properties of high value. Vacant lots anywhere are for the most part unimproved speculative in character. This class in Ann Arbor is nearly 80 per cent tax delinquent. Likewise all business property assessed at valuations above \$25,000 is found delinquent. Properties ranging between \$2,500 and \$25,000 in valuation are found to be approximately one-half delinquent. Owners of homes ranging in value between \$1,000 and \$2,500 are found to have paid their taxes in greater proportion than on any other type of property.

Another disclosure of considerable interest has to do with certain commercial properties in the business district of one of Michigan's important cities. Among these properties is found a modern hotel, originally assessed at \$180,000 but which since its completion has never paid a cent of state or local taxes. It is delinquent since 1926 and now owes \$75,391.77 accumulated debt to state and local government and the schools. Under the Moore plan of tax cancellation which is supported by a strong real estate lobby, this hotel would pay its 1934 taxes amounting to \$3624.10 and receive credit for \$12,976.20 of canceled taxes.

Another piece of business property in the same city, an office building erected and operated by a bank and receiving in rents in 1930 the sum of \$100,000, owes in back taxes the sum of \$10,461.81. By paying an estimated \$40,000 in 1934, 1935 and 1936 taxes this banking institution would cancel \$41,000.

Meanwhile the homeowner has carried on in support of the schools, his city, and his country.

Cancellation is a smart idea for the smart business man who has played the game like he would the tables at Monte Carlo. Cancellation makes a tap out of the honest average citizen who thought he was playing the part of the good citizen by paying his debt to his government and thus proving police and fire protection, even paying for sweeping the streets in front of the hotel so the management might pocket the money paid in by guests and tenants.

Cancellation may be a big bargain for the speculator but it is a bad bargain for Mr. John Public.

**Small Loan Interest Rates**

Our good old friend, Elton R. Eaton, of The Plymouth Mail, last week dipped his typewriter in a vat of blue vitriol, and forthwith chronicled to his reading public his disappointment in our "defense of the small loan companies." Mr. Eaton, under the caption of "Thou Too, Bruce," pointed out that all Michigan banks revealed sympathy for the loan companies by suggesting that they be allowed to drop the three per cent charge, are unfriendly to those whose financial plight makes them customers of "loan sharks."

The editor of The Eccentric is sorry that he has offended the sensibilities of his fellow scribbler. If Mr. Eaton and his associates are correct, one of the "loan sharks" are Shylocks, then we are doubly sorry for we have always striven to defend the average man and woman from exploitation.

For a number of years past, Michigan Legislatures have introduced bills to cut the interest rate charged on small loans below three per cent. Republican and Democratic assemblies have fought over this legislation, and when the Legislatures adjourned, the three per cent rate remained on the statute books. Surely, friend Eaton, there must be some logic back of all this compromise.

Frankly, The Eccentric does not claim to possess sufficient financial data and wisdom to settle in its columns the righteousness of the three per cent interest charge. It may be, as you write, Mr. Eaton, too high. If so, however, you are one of the very few who know just why. When first we considered this matter, we, too, sort of instinctively felt that three per cent month was usury. But we have observed some of the possibilities. Larry, the fisherman's sportsman, and his brother Larry were raised in that recreation. Larry went into the paper business and his brother Larry remained at home and helped to develop the county and preserve its beauty. With the aid of the C. C. C. boys the state park work has been advanced. Larry's picture will be a sight worth driving hundreds of miles to see. Right now a large bathhouse is being completed on the shores of Lake Michigan, stream improvements have been made, work on the dunes has gone forward, trails have been cut and will be marked, fire hazards have been removed.

By summer, a person will be able to go there and camp or hike, fish or take a rest. The time will be a sight worth driving hundreds of miles to see. Right now a large bathhouse is being completed on the shores of Lake Michigan, stream improvements have been made, work on the dunes has gone forward, trails have been cut and will be marked, fire hazards have been removed.

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**MOVING DAY, 1935**

**DUST AND DROUGHT SICKEN FARMERS LEAVE WORKLESS FARMS FOR GOVERNMENT LAND IN ALASKA**

**RESIDENTS LEAVE AS GOVERNMENT TEARS DOWN SLUMS TO BUILD MODERN SANITARY APARTMENTS**

**VALLEYS ARE FLOODED BY FEDERAL DAMS—TENNESSEE MOUNTAINEERS SEEK NEW FARMS**

**FROM THE ECCENTRIC COLUMNS**

—of Long Ago

*Bits Of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.*

**FIFTY YEARS AGO**  
Clean up that back yard. Awful cold again Tuesday. Coming out Saturday night—the band boys. Now would be a good time to get the depot scheme, wouldn't it? Fifteen and twenty-five cents will admit you to Gregory Brown's great metropolitan shows. William Strong of near Big Beaver has rented a fine place on a farm for a term of years. Success, William. The Purdys are arriving from all directions. Last week, born to Mrs. Jack Purdy, the nicest boy the town, and to Mrs. Charles Purdy, the premium girl. They had a bean guess up at Bad Axe the other day. Joe Donaldson obtained all the prizes but one. You needn't think Joe's guesses were any better than anyone else's. He had 98 trials. Robert Compton of Royal Oak is man for the job. He is probably receiving, when he gets used to that baby boy, who arrived recently. Such a happy form of insanity hardly ever results seriously.

When you see approaching you something like a comet or a locomotive headlight, be ye not afraid! It is Samuel C. Mills with his new official badge, on which is engraved in burning characters "City Marshall," and Sam has the muscle to back all his undertakes.

**TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO**  
From all signs now and soon to be out here, in the town of Birmingham, will be an electric sign-lighted town. While no one in particular is claiming a building boom for Birmingham, aside from the three other new homes mentioned elsewhere in this issue, the Purdy Bros., Jack and George, are building on Ann street, another fine home for James L. Purdy. Mr. Wiley, too, on Southfield avenue is erecting a new fine home. We are not so slow.

A Maxwell 30 for T. G. McKinney, a Brush runabout for W. J. McKinney, and a great big Buick for the family of J. Bert Peabody, will cause us Birmingham pedestrians to look out or be auto killed this summer. Hurrah for the Birmingham boys. Rev. Lewis Goodwin, one of the orators, between Albion College and Greenville and DePaul University, won Friday evening, April 22, at Albion by unanimous vote of the judges. This is the second victory, Good.

F. H. Smith, electrician, whose ad, appears in another column, is without doubt, the busiest man of all in this city. Just now he is fitting out the Greater National Hotel with an electric light and power outfit. This job calls for 70 lights and when finished, the Greater National will shine like it never did before. He is also putting in a motor for dragster J. W. Cobb to make ice cream. Mr. Cobb lays aside a gasoline engine and installs electricity.

**FIVE YEARS AGO**  
Characterized by Wilbur M. Brucker, attorney general of Michigan, as "the physical evidence of the attainment of an ideal," the Birmingham Community House was dedicated Monday night with appropriate ceremonies. May Day will be observed in Birmingham today in the healthiest of various ways. Sponsored by the Oakland County department of health, and the Parent-Teacher association, the Building activities in Birmingham during the month of April reached a new high peak, with perhaps the largest number of children, totaling \$237,375, according to the report of Donald C. Egbert, building inspector. The rapid rise of spring building programs marks an increase of \$107,000 over last year's record of \$130,375. The total building for the first four months of the year exceeded the same period of 1929, the report shows.

Thursday evening, April 24, will go down in history as one of the outstanding events in the annals of the Birmingham Lodge, No. 44, Free and Accepted Masons, more than 200 members and visitors attended the ceremony of celebration of the organization's fifth birthday. The rapid rise of spring building programs marks an increase of \$107,000 over last year's record of \$130,375. The total building for the first four months of the year exceeded the same period of 1929, the report shows.

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**What's What at a Glance**  
WASHINGTON WORLD

Central Press—Washington Bureau 1900 S. STREET  
By CHARLES F. STEWART  
Central Press Staff Writer  
WASHINGTON, D. C.—Republican strategists are fairly optimistic as to G. O. P. prospects in 1936.  
They may be unjustifiably so, but they are moderately hopeful. Even supposing that times improve considerably, these Republicans are of the opinion that a large class of Americans will be sufferers (or will think that they are, anyway) from the very nature of the improvement.  
Improvement, they reason, inevitably will be accompanied by a continued advance in living costs, without a corresponding advance in average incomes—which, the G. O. P.'s prophets believe, will create widespread discontent in the ranks of consumers.  
If it fails to fizzle, however, the consumer's feelings remain to be played on—and consumerism is a formidable contingent, consisting of everyone.  
Increased taxation probably will be a secondary issue.  
It is not as good an issue as the rising-price issue, for, although everyone is a taxpayer as well as a consumer, much taxation is indirect, and many folk pay without realizing that they are paying. Besides, it is foreseen that the party in power will stave off any very noticeable advance in taxes until after election day, if it will be predictable, but not an actual fact to be pointed to, like higher living costs, and presumably unincreased incomes.

**TO PROFIT BY DISCONTENT**  
It is to this discontent (assuming its large-scale development) that Republicanism's "best minds" propose appealing.  
Of course, if recovery fizzes, there will be discontent on THAT hope for 1936—no forgetting such taxpayers as it may be able to frighten, as to the future.  
If it is a strategy which favors in power will stave off any very noticeable advance in taxes until after election day, if it will be predictable, but not an actual fact to be pointed to, like higher living costs, and presumably unincreased incomes.

**DISCONTENTED CONSUMERS**  
Disgruntled consumers, it is the voters upon whom far-seeing Republicanism bases its chief hope for 1936—no forgetting such taxpayers as it may be able to frighten, as to the future.  
If it is a strategy which favors in power will stave off any very noticeable advance in taxes until after election day, if it will be predictable, but not an actual fact to be pointed to, like higher living costs, and presumably unincreased incomes.

**ANTIQUED LAWS**  
We wrote the other day of the law that makes it a crime to be a criminal lawyer. They not only are useless, but antiquated and barbarous, says Dr. William Alanson White, superintendent of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington.  
"Says Dr. White: 'Psychiatry has branched out into the field of criminology where it is struggling with the problem of so-called crime. Here we find of trial of ghost, outworn, archaic ways of thinking that have been crystallized in the statutory law and the government paper in a long-term refunding program.'"  
He stresses as necessary for national recovery such measures as currency stabilization, lowering of tariffs, elimination of other trade restrictions, adjustment of government debts (probably the taking of a big part of the government paper in a long-term refunding program).  
"If goods can move across international borders with reasonable freedom, then the pressure on gold stocks and the gold standard enormously lightened, and the gold supply of the entire world be greatly increased."

**DEATH FOR PACIFISTS**  
Germany now decrees the death penalty for pacifists.  
In every major country in the world—including the United States—pacifists now may be imprisoned for longer terms than common criminals.  
Thus have we traveled since the days of the Prince of Peace.

**Miser**  
I'll never spend my hoard of yellow gold.  
Sooner I'd part with all else that I have than my gold.  
Nor once become a miser.  
My loss—  
No gold is precious,  
No hoarding is laudable.  
I couldn't lend away  
Nor spend nor give  
Those treasures in my young lad's face  
(Dancing, sparkling laughing  
And merrily answering her  
And not the curls,  
The silken moor that frames my  
Enchanting smile,  
And surely not the glow  
That lights my husband's eyes  
Each time he takes me in his arms.  
Gold is too beautiful to spend.  
And oh, it has such captivating charms.  
—BEATRICE McDONALD.

**Jest For Fun**  
Driller by Birth  
"Have you been a dentist very long?"  
"No, I was a riveter till I got too nervous to work up high."

**Rear Power**  
"Have you ever driven a car?"  
The city answer for her license was:  
"One hundred and twenty thousand miles answer for her husband, and never had a hand on the wheel."—S. C. Wampus.

**Smoothing It Over**  
Wife (at dance): "This is the 12th time you've been to the refreshment buffet."  
Husband: "Oh, that's all right. I tell everybody I'm getting something for you."—Detroit Free Press.

**WABECK STATE BANK**  
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