

The Birmingham Eccentric

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NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events connected with the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be received, however, to make such material appear in the paper. The style of the paper and the character of the headlines written thereon are the property of the Eccentric. The Eccentric will be glad to accept any person, firm or corporation which may desire to place advertising in the Eccentric. The Eccentric will be glad to accept any person, firm or corporation which may desire to place advertising in the Eccentric.

(Editor's Note: The editorials printed here, with the exception of the editorial on the League of Women Voters, are those of the League of Women Voters, a free organization devoted to the ideal of using the ballot intelligently by thorough study of current problems. There is also an editorial board member of the Birmingham Eccentric.)

The League of Women Voters is organized to promote the responsible participation of women in government.

These were a school board code defining the powers and duties of the school board and of the superintendent of schools, and the submission of the question of reclassification of Birmingham school district from a graded to a third class district, at the annual election. The changes of reclassification were registration of voters, mandatory publication of school board minutes, seven-member board with four-year terms—as well as wider powers granted this board, commensurate with the needs of a school district of over 10,000 population.

April 13, 1939, the school board provided for registration of voters.

April 18, the school board decided to place reclassification on the election ballot.

At the annual election, June 12, reclassification failed of adoption by the close vote of 667 to 631. Nevertheless, the League feels that well worth while and still has reclassification as a desirable aim for Birmingham's future.

In August, the school board voted to publish their minutes regularly in The Birmingham Eccentric.

Feb. 27, 1940, the school board adopted its new public school organization code.

The League is grateful to The Birmingham Eccentric for this opportunity of presenting our record in this field for the past year, definite proof that we participate actively in government. Ask your senators democracy needs to be practiced as well as preached.

SHIRLEY L. JOHNSTONE.

The Real Basis Of Subversion

The League of Women Voters has consistently stood for the careful study and evaluation of the needs of American citizens. It has been said that "fear is the worst enemy we have." Fear is the worst enemy we have. We have seen totalitarian governments build their strength on these two foundations.

In view of these things the League views with alarm a national budget for 1940 in which all the appropriations for domestic budgets are all beyond what the needs of our people seem to indicate. Work Relief budgets are cut by one-third when there are one million unemployed in this country.

The most valuable of this program that is not included in it. The Civil Conservation Corps, one-sixth and the Civilian Conservation Corps, cut by \$5,000,000. Housing, health and education programs are conspicuous by their absence. All of these in spite of the fact that there were three million families in the United States with an annual income of \$310 or less last year.

The League, therefore, urges Americans to continue to study the Social needs of their community and to work for continued efforts to meet those needs in terms of government relief programs. It is our conviction that the normal life of a great democratic community, and until a solution is found which ensures each of us the right to live and work by our own efforts.

CAROLINE L. BURLINGAME,
 384 Lake Park Drive.

League Studies Child Welfare

Properly cared-for children make good citizens, and good citizens make good government. That is why the League of Women Voters devotes itself to child welfare groups in all of our cities, and participating in whatever solutions it can find for the problems involved.

Every community, large or small, has children who need some kind of special care, and the League approves of the Social Security Act in its provisions for government aid when the family is unable to provide adequately for its children. Children from homes broken by sickness, or under other circumstances should be helped to foster homes under the supervision of competent relatives or other adults. Those physically or mentally handicapped should be helped to medical and convalescent care. Children neglected or mistreated should be given legal facilities and the Child Labor Amendment so that they may be protected from exploitation by unscrupulous or ignorant parents or employers. And as all these situations, plus inadequate housing, wages, recreational facilities and the like, contribute to juvenile delinquency, the League is working for the improvement of all standards which are below par in ordinary decent living. Not only is it a matter of humanitarianism, but the League realizes it is a matter of dollars and cents because any improvement which betters the condition of our youth cuts the budget necessary to pay for the cost of crime.

It is rather a comprehensive program, but a vital one if democracy is to be made to work.

FLORENCE B. WHITE,
 652 Brookside.

Lauds Food And Drug Bill

There are no national, class, or party hatreds in the fight to educate the public for health. One major victory in this struggle has been the enactment of the new food and drug act, passed two years ago, but not fully in force until July, 1940.

If you were one of those citizens who worked for the passage of this act you may well feel proud. In any case you should feel grateful. Even intelligent people sometimes do things which without doctors' orders, and because of injurious self-medication some have died; many have suffered permanent harm. This new act is necessary because so many new drugs have been discovered in recent years. The old food and drug laws had no control over dangerous drugs influencing growth, or over poisonous radio advertising.

There are two enforcing agencies of the new act: The Food and Drug Administration, and

IT'S ALL ON A HIGHER PLANE THIS YEAR



The Federal Trade Commission. Last year almost a hundred shipments of poisonous cosmetics were seized, as well as many dangerous drugs of the pain-killer variety. A surprising number of nationally advertised products were on the blacklist.

Another big job facing the new act is the establishment of standards for foods in order to protect and assist the buying public.

But important as was the passage of this law, its enforcement is even more important. Every citizen of us can help determine its future effectiveness. Ask your senators and representatives for funds adequate appropriations. Without funds the act has no teeth.

CHARLOTTE G. PENFIELD,
 233 Daines.

Youth and Citizenship

The most valuable resource in our land is our youth, and quite suddenly the citizenship of this youth has become of momentous importance. Have we upheld the standards of democratic citizenship or neglected to do so?

The family, the church, the school, and society in the whole will have to examine its own conscience to find the answer. We are our children's best hope. In a democracy, democracy needs the application as well as the knowledge of Christian morality in order to survive.

I shall divide this theme into three parts: Schooling, Health, and Jobs.

The mother and father are the baby's first teachers; their steadfast love and care are his right. Moral and religious training should be an integral part of that family living for the benefit of the child. To deny a child spiritual education, knowledge of God and His Ten Commandments is like denying a compass to a traveler approaching wilderness. For several months I have been aware of the increasing interest in the need of a spiritual and moral reclamation throughout our country. Science and mass production do not seem to have improved behavior. Teachers as well as parents are not blameless. The standards of good conduct, good manners, and fine achievement are allowed to lapse. If the home fails to function as it should, the citizenship of the child depends on the interest of the teacher, the pastor, or other counselors. Many who are vitally interested in education are deeply concerned at the increasing widespread curtailment of school funds, particularly, as the break-down in the American home is not diminishing. The schools are the training quarters for young citizens learning to "go on their own" and more funds are needed to prepare them as adequately as possible to minimize chances of failure.

In thinking of the health of our youth I am concerned with the fact that, not only Birmingham, a recent study showed that the population of our city was made up of less than 34.5% for father, mother and child. One-third of this group receives \$47. These amounts include housing, and other necessities. The thousands of families on public relief, the one-sided the family income, the health and citizenship of our youth are vital to our American democracy and it will be foolish and costly to selfishly neglect ourselves to the implications of these figures. Most of these families are organized in an orchestra from the building and quietly to affect some improvement. The health of our youth is of immeasurable value for the future of our country. We should have programs throughout the entire country. Have you a job for one of our 3,000,000 unemployed boys and girls in the United States? The C.C.C. and the N.Y.A. are two of the finest achievements in the history of our country. When I learned that Leo Tolstoy was organizing an orchestra from the boys and girls in the National Youth Administration to tour America on a good will trip, I was ready to burst with the inspiration he offered these young musicians and the opportunity to widen their horizons. What can we do to solve the problem of our unemployed youth? What can we do to solve the problem of our unemployed youth? What can we do to solve the problem of our unemployed youth? What can we do to solve the problem of our unemployed youth?

The Woman With a Vote

Too many women are still saying "I'm not interested in politics." They must be, if they are interested in themselves, their families and their environment. Of one thing they must be sure: politics, in the sense of those individuals and groups who formulate our public policy, are actively interested in them BECAUSE THEY HAVE A VOTE. How can any woman escape being interested in politics? Her her food, health, housing, children's education and husband's business are all vitally affected by political action?

The National League of Women Voters was organized in 1920 when woman suffrage went into effect in the United States. Its purpose was to encourage women to use their vote and to insist that their political action be consistently pursued this one basic policy.

Every voting woman, whatever her party or political convictions, should join it. She should use its facilities for studying government operation and pending legislation and cast her vote in support of or against public measures. By official use of the ballot, votes women can promote what is good or encourage what is bad in both local and national affairs.

ELSIE BALDWIN SMITH,
 381 North Adams.

How Shall We Remember?

Last month we remembered and celebrated the birthdays of two great American leaders, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. It is a fitting time to think of the struggle fought on the battlefield to make us a nation, the other strove to preserve that nation.

What would their think of our free nation today, of the political greed and graft, the unemployment problem and labor difficulties?

They came from different classes of society, yet both knew how to work, whether surveying, splitting logs, managing a plantation or debating in Congress.

What would their reaction be to a police force so corrupted by bribery that the highest official was indicted for a criminal gangster, a notorious murderer, a working man, or of a poor scrubman working three days to earn a single dollar; a factory worker compelled by his foreman boss to surrender \$10 from each pay check to insure his job; a man earning \$15 a week, more often less, with seven in the family, broadcasting over the radio that he wishes to adopt out two younger children, four and six, because this wage will not feed out clothes them adequately.

Listen! Do we hear the words "to establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, secure the blessings of liberty—neither slavery nor involuntary servitude,"—and again that they may have "certain inalienable rights, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Where along the trail of years have we stepped aside and lost this high goal? Are these words vanishing sentiments just echoes of voices gone and forgotten, or do they still live?

Can we say we remember and honor them and then forget to do as they would do?

FLORENCE FRAIDENBURG,
 Birmingham Manuscript Club.

Knocking on Wood!

with JOHN H. HARWOOD

INFORMALLY SPEAKING
 U. S. Presidents have been a useful toger lashing while in office, but after they're dead and are dug on postage stamps, they take a worse licking.

Current suggestions have to do with widening the Panama Canal. Similar though could well be applied to the case of the Atlantic Ocean.

Germany is suffering from a shortage of coal and oil. It appears that even Hitler cannot fuel all of the people.

Then there is the farmer who put cotton to bed for blowing away in a gale. He is now in an agricultural college to learn how to raise more cotton. Stewart-Warnock.

lack of efficient collection methods. A State Tax Study Commission was set up, with Dr. Lent D. Upton as chairman, and in 1939 detailed proposals for improvement were made to the 1939 legislature. But petty politics ruled, and in the absence of any responsible state leadership, the suggestions went into the wastebasket. Honesty in high office would competency in like owning a swell automobile and putting kerosene in the gas tank.

In brief, the Study Commission suggested a new department of state government to expertly coordinate tax collections, and to take tax collections out of politics.

The Details
 "This Commission recommends that a new Department of State Government should be established with certain general specifications: 1. general department to be known as the Department of Finance, to collect all State taxes, fees, rents, royalties and income of every description, and to deprive any department, board, or commission of its powers of regulation and enforcement as they should. The average citizen is not aware of the volume of tickets given for speeding because a ticket is to trial, in our opinion, to be included in the week's news to be found in The Eccentric. But this observer believes the City Administration has overlooked an important factor in the situation, namely, that the principal object is to slow up traffic, not give out tickets. Every arrested leaves a bad taste in some one's mouth; to be sure, the driver is guilty of the crime, but it would not be much better if motorists adhered to the 45-mile-an-hour speed limit on Hunter-leaved boulevard without the necessity of arrests?"

BIRMINGHAM TRAFFIC ARRESTS
 Hunter boulevard is a wonderful speedway for motorists going through the City, and full advantage is taken of this by the issuance of concrete. The result is a steady stream of arrests by local police officers, who are enforcing the law as they should. The average citizen is not aware of the volume of tickets given for speeding because a ticket is to trial, in our opinion, to be included in the week's news to be found in The Eccentric. But this observer believes the City Administration has overlooked an important factor in the situation, namely, that the principal object is to slow up traffic, not give out tickets. Every arrested leaves a bad taste in some one's mouth; to be sure, the driver is guilty of the crime, but it would not be much better if motorists adhered to the 45-mile-an-hour speed limit on Hunter-leaved boulevard without the necessity of arrests?"

Without a doubt, many tickets are given to drivers who do not realize they are breaking the law. Hunter boulevard runs along the river, and is a beautiful scenic spot, especially at night. Why not double the size of the reflector, and make them of the luminous reflector type, and add the words "strictly enforced?"

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF HAND
 Public business is handled badly by our government. It is not only out of the grasp of the average citizen, but it is also out of the grasp of the average citizen. That is why, we are of the opinion that the government should be better organized and handled than county, state and national government. It is not only out of the grasp of the average citizen, but it is also out of the grasp of the average citizen. That is why, we are of the opinion that the government should be better organized and handled than county, state and national government. It is not only out of the grasp of the average citizen, but it is also out of the grasp of the average citizen. That is why, we are of the opinion that the government should be better organized and handled than county, state and national government.

THE TAX MESS
 Eternal vigilance is the price of progress. Last week came the change that the Detroit office of the State Sales Tax collection agency was being poorly administered.

As a matter of fact, the whole of Michigan's tax levying and collecting is split up among a dozen or so state agencies. This is inefficient and badly handled. That is why, we are of the opinion that the government should be better organized and handled than county, state and national government. It is not only out of the grasp of the average citizen, but it is also out of the grasp of the average citizen. That is why, we are of the opinion that the government should be better organized and handled than county, state and national government.

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