

Editorial Page of The Birmingham Eccentric

A free, responsible and aggressive Press is democracy's first line of defense

Knocking on Wood

with JOHN H. HARWOOD

VERNE MARSHALL, Cedar Rapids editor who is chairman of the No Foreign War committee, revealed in a talk we heard Friday evening at East Lansing that some of his best friends are resigning from the organization. It is not difficult to understand why.

Mr. Marshall was one of two speakers who addressed the annual convention of the Michigan Press Association; the other was Gerhart Seger, former Reichstag member who recently spoke in Birmingham. Each was to present an opposing view on the question of America's relationship to England's war with Germany and Italy.

It was obvious that the Iowa editor was under considerable emotional strain, for instead of giving a cogent argument for his viewpoint, he devoted about half his time to attacking those who have tried to impugn his cause by depicting his patriotism. That has happened Brother Marshall up and at great length he orated that his friends of record dated back to 1776, fought in the Revolution and in every war since. Himself, he fought in the World War, first for France before the United States entered and then for France's forces when the Doughboys Over There.

Gerhart Seger, on the other hand, fought for the Kaiser, was shot down by an American aviator which was not exactly nothing at the present time, just as there is nothing to be gained in any discussion by attacking a man's ancestry. So we don't blame Marshall for being stoked when fellow like Keyhole Correspondent Walter Winchell laced unfair cracks at him. On the other hand, Marshall himself has shown it out plenty of times, and by now should be able to take it. One thing is certain, if he were let down and get rid of the idea that everyone in the country is after him, he will get exactly where with his No Foreign War Committee and will soon find himself a non-entity.

If his argument was not impressive, Marshall's sincerity certainly was. He confessed that he had lost 200 pounds in the past month and had spent more than \$50,000 of his own money since taking over the job, and he added that the war on his way back to Iowa to liquidate everything he owned in order to carry on. Who knows what he may become the Eugene Debs of this world war?

Why Train Them?

Rep. George A. Dondero deserves congratulations on his prompt action to alter the draft law for the benefit of Warren E. Brauchwitz, one of Rep. Dondero's Detroit constituents who finds himself sent to a year's army training despite the fact that he has already been trained four years in the Navy. That just doesn't make sense, and we hope the Dondero bill gets prompt attention in Congress. It is certainly ridiculous to force a trained sailor or marine to learn the elementary stuff which is being administered to the raw civilians in the draft camps.

THE LENDLEASE BILL

Certain Washington correspondents have pointed out that the Administration, in seeking passage of the lendlease bill, is following the same policy it has followed in other requests of Congress to seek more than is really desired so that when opponents get through with a bill, there is still a good deal left. If that is the case, the policy certainly deserves condemnation in this particular lendlease battle, for the populace is being stirred to a fever pitch by what appears to be a deliberate effort to frighten the American people. It is highly doubtful that

Educators, Not Teachers, Are Floundering

T. W. Eustis, of Linden road, is an ardent supporter of the very best in public school teaching. Last week, in a brief talk before a local committee headed together to consider increasing school revenues, Mr. Eustis was quite pronounced in his conviction that Birmingham needs to give its students the kind of training that will fit them better for college or university life. He pointed out the case of his own son, an typical, that local secondary schools are failing to train their graduates so that they fit into higher educational systems more easily.

By this, of course, Mr. Eustis merely means that something is lacking in the Baldwin high school curriculum; he attributes it to lack of well-rounded teaching staff.

We are not going to argue with Mr. Eustis about his convictions; probably the teachers themselves, being human, will admit that they, individually or collectively, have not reached the zenith of superior teaching. But we wonder if Mr. Eustis had not pointed out a realistic fact, though, we wonder if much of the fault he finds is not so much with the teachers, as in the educational policies of those who guide the teachers. Specifically, we refer not to a person, or persons, as such; we refer to the inherent neo-fangled educational notions to which too many educators have subscribed—some of which have shoved out of the school system those old-fashioned policies of thoroughness, discipline, and similar character values.

As we see it, the "modern" educator has decided that every boy and girl is a potential genius in something or other; therefore each student must be spinned to a variety of subjects and special assignment—for, believe it or not, the embryo of an Edison, a Southern, a Steinmetz, a Washington, a Jane Addams, Florence Nightingale, or... well, a great leader, anyway?

The result, in most cases, is that the average student gets a smattering of many things, and a thoroughness in none. Of equal importance, too, is the lack of classroom discipline. (The notion that students are able and wise enough to govern themselves to any real degree is foolish; not even adults, with the aid of presence of law enforcement agencies, will be of good Christians as they will with them.)

Of course, every parent hopes his offspring will become great; we said "hopes." But most parents are practical enough to know that realistic training, insofar as it relates to mere facts and statistics, is a negligible factor in the real growth and development of a boy or a girl; parents want their children to become "students," young people "who study, who are attentive and systematic observers."

So, reverting back to Mr. Eustis' contention that Birmingham needs a more able and better trained teaching staff, we suggest that more thought be directed toward the "systematic" training, insofar as it relates to mere facts and statistics, is a negligible factor in the real growth and development of a boy or a girl; parents want their children to become "students," young people "who study, who are attentive and systematic observers."

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Mistakes Made For Progress

All of us would be a great deal better off if we could only realize that the mistakes we make are an unavoidable and integral part of our growth. Hendrick Willem van Loon, author, lecturer and diplomat, declares in the current Rotarian Magazine.

Mistakes need not bring shame on those who make them so long as they are admitted, he points out, with the suggestion that with courage to confess mistakes should come the courage to begin again and try to do better on the basis of previous errors.

If Frederick the Great had chattered caudally with himself, suggests Mr. van Loon, he doubtless would have guessed that he made numerous mistakes, and that this inevitability to proceed from errors of judgment and firm failings into successes actually accounted for his greatness.

For, indeed, Frederick's strength lay in his tremendous capacity for quick recuperation," continues Historian van Loon. "The really was not a first-rate soldier. Quite often he had been his troops so clamoring that everything went wrong and the link to confess himself defeated."

But after a few hours' sleep, rolled up in a threadbare lion's coat, old Frederick would be fresh as a daisy and ready for another encounter. And what had he done? He had been humiliated, their victory with his army (Swiss) and Prussian King (whom he supposed to be leading away) would be right in the middle and everything by the suddenness of his attack, remain everything he had done.

Another King, we are told, was a person of historical rank who, confessing himself a failure, "From every possible angle—military, scientific, natural, moral—the voyage of Columbus across the Atlantic Ocean was a fully open maritime triumph. He never came within hundreds of miles of the continent he had found, yet Columbus failed even greater than that. Frederick of Prussia," according to van Loon, "was the subsequent success of the New World was based upon his original mistake."

THE DEMOCRATS who asked the judge to order his "big boys" taken out of school that he would never be able to shoot a revolver again, and as compensation for this be allowed to go free from a prison sentence, had a unique idea, to say the least. Of course, the judge decided the worst. After all, fingers can't talk.

IT IS REPORTED last week that a strange order has reached the shores of Great Britain, presumably from a portion of German-held France. Probably dictated by the dead spirits of the French people, as they layhold the weakness of a leadership that resulted in their defeat by the Nazis. However, don't forget that like those planted in the earth, things die only to be born again.

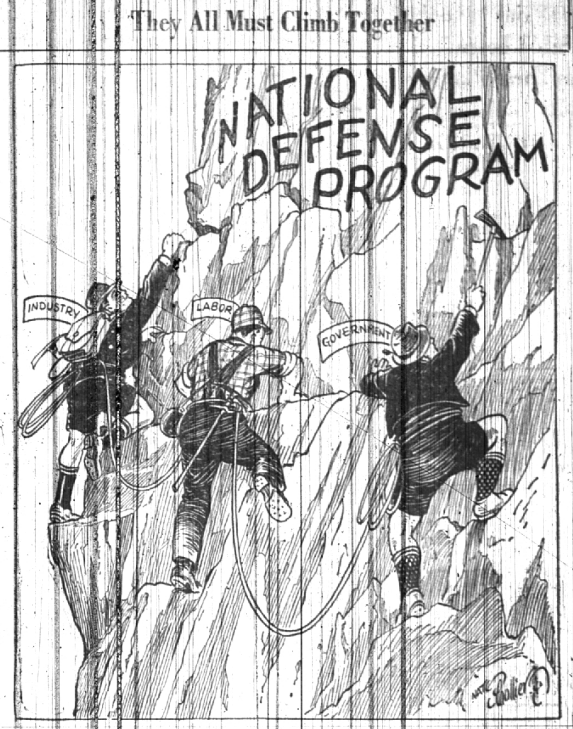
DOWN IN BARABOON, Texas, last week a 100-ton cargo vessel was launched on barges and ways that were graced with three and one-half tons of bananas. That's something new for a ship's launching—though lots of people have required but one banana each to slip their moorings.

THE VOLUME OF NEW BIRMINGHAM BUILDING last year was \$36,922, and most of that was for new homes. In Pontiac, a city six times as large, building of new homes last year totaled \$264,473, a showing the Pontiac Press tabular "massed credit." The comparison certainly speaks for itself. Birmingham is one of the fastest-growing home centers in the state.

CONGRATULATIONS to City officials for their good judgement of luck, or both, in locating the new water well at Southfield and 14-Mile roads. It is the best ever seen in Birmingham, and the driller called it "one of the best wells he's ever drilled."

OAKLAND COUNTY Probate Judge Arthur Elmore is giving himself a practical education of the problems of juvenile delinquency. Judge Moore strongly approves the County's plan to launch delinquent juveniles in private homes instead of committing them to reform school. We believe the Judge is absolutely right, and hope his ideas are copied by other Michigan authorities.

NATURE HAS ITSELF forewarned that all nations cannot sit snug together, and otherwise been placed man's water level over some of them.



Have You Met...

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph L. Skinner, 570 Aspen road. They came out from Detroit just shortly before Christmas.

The Skinners came originally from California although they lived in Detroit for 12 years. Mr. Skinner is connected with the Skinner Purifier company on Milwaukee avenue in Detroit.

They have two sons, Ralph Jr., a student at the Detroit Metropolitan College and Robert who goes to Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Me.

Strictly Fresh

THE 143-year-old frigate Constitution recently recommissioned by the navy, has been declared unseaworthy, but may be repaired by the navy for a couple well-placed islands.

Germins are reported using bombs with concrete castings in order to save steel, but any other way to cement unfriendly relations.

Any effort to label Wendell Willkie a rich man was doomed as soon as it was revealed he had five second farms.

Kite-flying has been banned in Holland as a defense precaution. "Go fly a kite" has long been a phrase distasteful to high Nazi mogul.

If a man is unhappy, this must be his right. Happiness is made him to be happy.—Eretricus

Armchair Philosopher

(Excerpt from letter to his sister, Mrs. Hope K. W. Churchman of Grand Rapids, N. Y. by Henry Edward Warner, author of "Songs of the Craft," originally a weekly feature in *ERROR & PARADOX*, and champion of attacks on printers' causes for the correction of highway slaughter and kidnapping.)

Oddbods! ... Some day I'll have a column in some paper that will let me eternally rebel against the acceptance of inevitables—such as that kids must be kidnapped and slaughtered by motor vehicles, and parents must cooperate to the end that nobody will be any better off, or anybody's else as you will. I don't care, I also spit invectives and hang propositions when it helps emphasis. But here's what I really want:

I want a column for a paper that is fresh.

I want a bleed for something as no other guy has bleed.

I want a razor that bear my hair, provided I can grow it.

I want a have a point of view so everyone will know it.

I want a be a guy that sees the holes in thought sphagnum.

I want writing on being done I want get phlogistic.

I want hammer sin like Nation wrecked.

I want a boss letter.

And make my words so plain they'll need no exclamation points!

In brief, I want a be a guy that borrows people's ears.

And speaks in words they understand, so everybody hears.

And then I want the world to say, when they hear these words:

"He may have been peculiar, but he was an earnest guy."

And then I want her herself announced at heaven's door:

"He done his handout, Peter; angels would have done his work."

Income Tax Facts

BY OTTO C. BREITFIELD

PERSONAL EXEMPTIONS

SINGLE PERSONS.—The personal exemption for single persons is \$800.

MARRIED PERSONS.—(a) Married persons who are together during the entire year are entitled to a personal exemption of \$2,000. This exemption can be claimed in a joint return, or if separate returns are submitted, the exemption may be taken on either, but divided between them in any way they see fit. A new basis of division may be used each year. Each year a husband and wife living together for the whole of the year file separate returns. Separate returns are usually advised unless the wife has no other sources of income, in which case a joint return may provide advantageous when the wife has a loss.

(b) Living together.—A husband and wife are entitled to the exemption of \$2,000 if they are living together during the entire year. However, the temporary absence of either spouse will not prevent the husband's business from being claimed as the exemption; neither does the husband's absence of one of the spouses at a sanitarium or hospital. If the spouses are not together for the entire year, the exemption of \$2,000 is available only if the husband and wife file a joint return for the year in which the exemption is claimed.

HEAD OF FAMILY.—The head of a family is entitled to a personal exemption of \$2,000. The head of a family is a person who actually supports and maintains in one household another person, or persons, other than himself, who are dependent on him for support. The dependent must be a child, stepchild, grandchild, or other person who is under 18 years of age, or a child, stepchild, grandchild, or other person who is under 24 years of age and is a student at a school, or a child, stepchild, grandchild, or other person who is under 24 years of age and is a student at a school, or a child, stepchild, grandchild, or other person who is under 24 years of age and is a student at a school.

They All Must Climb Together

INDUSTRY, LABOR, and GOVERNMENT are shown climbing a ladder together, with a banner above them that says "NATIONAL DEFENSE PROGRAM".

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