

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

Knocking on Wood

with JOHN H. HARWOOD

THE WEEK'S RED FACES

PEOPLE who write pieces for the public prints sometimes go out on limbs. Among them are those commentators who felt quite sure that the Hitler blitzkrieg would sweep through the Russians like a hot knife through butter...

not go into effect until 90 days after adjournment. They hoped to over-ride veto by mustering a two-thirds majority against it. Failure to gather the strength, the Republican leadership resorted to what it thinks appears to be the only recourse left to the Governor's hand. They forgot that the State Constitution gives the Governor as much right to veto a bill as it does the Legislature to pass it.

FREE TEXTBOOKS

If the school district would save only \$1,700 by abolishing free text books it could pay for the purchase of a new building.

Pledge of Allegiance

Oakland County's very able juvenile and probate judge, Arthur E. Moore, recently confined two children of a Jehovah's Witness family to the juvenile home because of their refusal to pledge allegiance to the flag.

No Time For Tricks

Hundreds of important pieces of legislation are being introduced by their effect by the Legislature's very foolish refusal to adjourn. Republican members are moved by the Governor's veto of the anti-vandal banking bill, have concluded the brilliant idea of going to quit, knowing that almost all the recently enacted laws can

Police Laxity In Traffic Cases

While traffic deaths mount daily, we wonder why the serious offenders are not punished more severely than Birmingham for an example.

Last Saturday, a Pontiac man, arrested for drunk driving, was permitted to plead guilty to a lesser charge, that of reckless driving, so that he could escape the full penalty of the law—suspension of his operator's license.

The Legislature passed this law and, no doubt, intended that it should be applied fearlessly and honestly to drunk drivers. The report of the arresting officers, Sgt. Delyle Service, is interesting. In his complaint, written and filed before the court when sentence was passed, were these words: "This man was taking up two lanes of traffic going north on Hunter from Oakland to Quarton between 65 and 75 miles per hour, and was too drunk to the driver's car on the highway. When I got him back to the police station and got him out of the car, he could not walk straight."

Police Sgt. Earl Moody, who was in the station at the time, along with Chief John P. Hackett, later told The Eccentric that the man "fell against the counter."

He was charged with drunk driving. Later, according to Justice Forbes S. Hasall, police added a second count, that of reckless driving, and to that, the man pleaded guilty. Justice Hasall then fined the man \$50, which was paid.

Frankly, we wonder whether our Police Chief is concerned with the menace of drunk driving, and whether he feels that the situation is to be bettered by such leniency. It is not the first time it has happened in Birmingham. One of these things is a most obvious case of reckless driving was permitted to be closed by the driver getting for a defective operator's license. The police declined to prosecute because the aggrieved person "did not want to sue a colleague."

By the way, hasn't the Birmingham City Commission something to say about the policy of the Birmingham police department and the operation of the Justice Court?

Legally, of course, the Commission can't tell a court how it must be run. As a matter of practicality, any suggestion the Commission is likely to make which will bring about more respect for the law will, certainly not go unheeded by our local court.

A Warning to Small Business

The small businessman is the heart of Birmingham. He is the mainstay of the city. He is the one who creates jobs and provides the goods and services that we need. He is the one who pays taxes and provides the funds for our schools and hospitals.

Mr. Arnold, who is in charge of anti-trust litigation, says that big business, while not unpatriotic, fears over-expansion and believes that over-production will cut its dividends after the war. In the viewpoint of big business, letting the little fellow means future competition and lower prices.

Mr. Arnold charges labor organizations, though not all of them, with "putting protective tariffs around cities," restricting sales, preventing use of more efficient methods, charging small businesses and unnecessary labor, and crushing small business men in jurisdictional wars.

These charges are fairly specific. They carry distinct warnings of danger to the small businesses of America which face additional perils in the system of priorities in basic materials, letting the little fellow mean a share in defense production, restrictions on the distributions of necessities and artificially fixed prices.

In Mr. Arnold's opinion, it is highly important that there be some organized effort to resist the big fellow before it is too late to see that various regulations are not used "in such a way that they lead to monopoly control" which means that little business "may have to go out of business."

ON GUESS, THE ONLY THING for the United States to do regarding the situation is to become the biggest arsenal this earth has ever seen; no question about that, if Hitler is to be beaten, or even controlled. This will cost plenty of money for the people who live in the United States, as it should for the rest of the world.

Eccentricities

One official badly needed down at Washington is a coordinator to coordinate the coordinators. An experienced politician, going out over the broad sea of faces, will always comment on the stupidity of the masses. It is Birmingham Times-Dispatch.

McKay's Trial Not Finished

Discontent among the federal jurors trying the case of Frank McKay, 11 jurors, in the \$300,000 liquor fraud trial, has caused that McKay, defendant of the guilt or innocence of the defendant. Since seven of the jurors were for a guilty verdict, five opposed, this fact does prove that a majority over hating to nine weeks of trial was not reached.

At least one of the jurors was in a bad way before the bar of justice. Accusations by several of the jurors in favor of convicting the defendant that the opponents in certain cases were apparently prejudiced for personal reasons, has found its way into the public domain. The juror who was in a bad way before the bar of justice will be re-opened with a new trial in the fall.

In the meantime, the Republican Party of Michigan will be under a cloud so long as Mr. McKay remains one of its two national committeemen. The ought to resign, but we don't believe they will. McKay has spent five years in Michigan and he will now well a small organized minority can ride over the large disorganized majority in politics.

Hurricane Season At Hand

It may interest readers of The Eccentric that the United States Weather Bureau has set up its advanced defenses in order to detect the approach of these dangerous storms. The end of the hurricane season is in November, the Bureau will maintain listening posts on the alert to discover advancing hurricanes and warn the people of the United States of the menace advancing upon them.

Hurricanes are storming having wind velocity of more than 75 miles an hour. Most of them cause little damage because they blow themselves out at sea but, every now and then, one hits a thickly settled area, with the result that heavy property damage results and occasionally human lives are lost.

In 1931 a hurricane hit the Florida Keys and more than 400 persons were killed. In 1938 a destructive storm swept the Atlantic Coast, taking 5000 lives and inflicting heavy damage to the New York area and New England. Last year, a similar death toll and considerable damage resulted when one of the giant storms hit the coast of Georgia and South Carolina.

Air Power Depends Upon Bases

The invasion of Great Britain by German planes has been a source of concern to the people of this country. The strategists are wondering if this island country may prove to be the testing ground for tactics that will some time have to be used for a successful invasion of Great Britain.

There is every reason to believe that Germany ever manages to control the air over England the island will be in grave danger of invasion and conquest. Whether this will happen remains to be seen.

Obviously, the British are better prepared to contest aerial mastery over England than they were in Crete. Evidently apparent is the undoubted fact that Germany has hundreds of bases with striking distance of England and it is all possible, we presume, for the Germans to launch a surprise aerial attack upon the airfields of Great Britain with the idea of putting them out of commission, and the effort might succeed.

This is the danger that the British face now. Bombing in the air is inadequate to the task and it is in the air that we must win with the difference that aerial artillery strikes at 300 miles an hour. The defense will be found for night attacks and only offensive tactics, destroying enemy bases, can protect a nation from threatened disaster.

This commission explains the residence of President Roosevelt that the United States must prevent enemy nations from acquiring bases from which to launch aerial assaults upon us. It is said by some German authorities her bases toward this continent our position will be precarious.

The Birmingham Eccentric

Published every Thursday at Birmingham, Mich., at The Birmingham Eccentric Building, 2150 DORCHESTER ROAD. Telephone 11, 11, 11. Editor and Publisher: JOHN H. HARWOOD. Managing Editor: RICHARD W. WALKER. Advertising Manager: CLAUDE E. WALKER. Circulation Manager: J. H. WALKER. Second Class Post Office at Birmingham, Mich., July 17, 1941. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Birmingham Eccentric, 2150 DORCHESTER ROAD, BIRMINGHAM, MICH.

Swat That Spy!



PEOPLE'S COLUMN

The Eccentric is pleased to receive contributions for this column. All contributions must be signed and accompanied by the writer's name and address. Contributions will be held confidential upon request. Letters may be limited to 100 words, and must be in the office by Thursday noon for publication the following Saturday.

Editorial Note: Readers will remember that the editorial list work in which The Eccentric participated in the City Commission that it abandoned a policy of some years standing that of holding "working" before the regular session, because the practice had degenerated—rightly or wrongly—into a habit in Birmingham that public policy is discussed in private. First Mr. Harwood wrote letters in the Commission and he pointed out three months in particular, the policy in which he believed more public discussion would have been desirable. Two of the Commissioners have replied to the letter and stated that they would not do so.

Commissioners Reply To Editorial

Dear Mr. Averill: You invited the reaction of individual Commissioners to your editorial on the City Commission. The Birmingham City Commission, in reply to your editorial, would like to say that it is not a matter of public policy to discuss in private. It is a matter of public policy to discuss in public. The Eccentric hopes that some Commission will weigh the values and set a precedent.

Editorial 'Secoded'; Sees Traffic Hazard

Dear Mr. Averill: I believe this letter was written in an extremely critical tone and it is not, however, intended to be so. I am not a member of the Birmingham City Commission and I am not a member of the Birmingham City Commission. I am not a member of the Birmingham City Commission. I am not a member of the Birmingham City Commission.

Definitions

Generosity: Greatly admired and applauded, especially when it's not required. Tolerance: A kindly attribute about as rare as kings.

Complete Banking Service

Ray-As-You-Go. Checking Accounts. Commercial and Savings Accounts. Collateral and Life Insurance Loans. Unsecured and Co-Maker Loans. F. H. A. Modernization Loans. Automobile Loans. WABEEK STATE BANK OF DETROIT. BIRMINGHAM OFFICE—WABEEK BUILDING.

THE ECCENTRIC'S Camera Corner

Vacation snapshots provide endless enjoyment. Take general and scenic views, but be sure to get "fun" pictures and close-ups too.

Birmingham's Card Maker: Almost every young photo-grapher knows of more equipment than he has money to buy, and for that reason, is always anxious to make some odd change. Harland Smith, 467 Park Avenue, Birmingham, has solved that problem by going into the post card business.

Fireworks Negative: I finally found time to develop the negatives I exposed on the previous night at the fireworks show. They turned out rather well, with an enhancement in color display just inside the frost deep of the Eccentric office.

Disarming Answer: An fate customer, his portrait in the newspaper, is a photographer. "Do I look like this picture?" he inquired. "No, you don't," I replied. "You've given me an awful scowl and made me look like a very low priced picture."

Old Kodak: South went to a Detroit camera dealer and bought one of those old-fashioned pocket-size Kodaks very low priced. They're a drag on the market—Harland told us. Then he purchased a supply of postcards which are printed on the message side, took some pictures which he thought were representative of the city, and then, without much trouble, sold the camera for three times what he paid for it.