

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

Knocking on Wood

with JOHN H. HARDWOOD

TO BOOST PRODUCTION

A friend recently left a store job and went into a Detroit factory and the experience has had an educational discipline which can be called that. He ran into something which has existed for a long time, what is known in economics as "restriction of output," and its existence, especially in war time, was quite a shock.

"I went into the wash room one evening and a couple of boys were standing there talking. One of them said, 'Well, have you set that new guy right on his job. He turned a piece out last night in two hours when it's supposed to take four. But I imagine he'll listen to reason.'"

"And my friend went on to say: "The funny part of it is, the company knows all about this stalling. They don't seem to object to it. But the taxpayers are paying the bill and it's certainly disgusting to me."

More Pay as Incentive Increase pay is one method of clearing up the situation. Under the old plan, the W.P.B. and White House approval, both Management and Labor, are dropping their objections to incentive pay, according to a study made by William Hard, writing on labor matters, for the Reader's Digest. In an article appearing in the August issue of the Digest he says incentive pay arrangements are helping solve the manpower problem.

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Traditionally, Hard says, the biggest obstacle in the way of installing incentive pay plans is the suspicion of the workers that after they set new high production standards they will be required to maintain those standards for no extra pay. The article says this has happened to some extent to some workmen that great masses of them habitually work way below their productive power, causing the greatest single loss of human energy in American life.

Normal Output Plants are getting around this by agreeing in advance with workers' representatives on normal standards of output. At the Murray Corporation, makers of frames for trucks and jeeps, the union elected five men who were trained

to set standards for normal output. The article says this has happened to some extent to some workmen that great masses of them habitually work way below their productive power, causing the greatest single loss of human energy in American life.

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Proper Age Of Newsboys

Monday night of last week the City Commission voted to reduce the age at which boys may begin to carry newspapers from 12 years to 14 years and the action seems justifiable. The matter came up following an incident involving a young newsboy, but fortunately, such incidents have been very rare.

The ordinance is designed to protect children, and is a good thing as long as it is reasonable in character. The fact that a boy delivers newspapers does not mean that he is likely to get in trouble; to the contrary, a boy so engaged is LESS likely to have idle time on his hands in which to get into mischief, and at the same time, he is learning the habits of work and responsibility. A boy does not need protection from these things!

The entire question raises this point: How far should a city commission go in legislating the activity of individuals? Where does parental responsibility begin and end?

It was significant Monday night at the meeting that three fathers appeared with their 11-year-old sons asking that they be allowed to carry newspapers. These parents expressed the opinion that part-time work carrying from 30 to 50 newspapers was a fine opportunity for their sons, obviously implying that such work is not dangerous to the boys' health, safety or morals. Such being the case, by what right should any city council presume to supersede the parents' judgment? No doubt the Birmingham Commission realized that fact by reducing the age limit to 14.

In the future, should the police find that newspaper carrying leads to delinquency, then it would be obvious that parents' judgment is not adequate in the matter. But there is little or nothing in police records to indicate such a possibility in Birmingham; boys who have gotten into trouble have done so, it appears, because they have not had enough work or play of the right sort to keep them busy. Idleness is a far greater threat to our youth than work suitable for young hands.

We might add that The Eccentric has no direct interest in the matter because our papers are delivered exclusively by mail.

Ludwig On War's End Emil Ludwig, noted German author, gives his opinion as to the length of the war in Europe by declaring that the Axis forces will be defeated within a year because they lack the nerve to win in the face of adversity. Mr. Ludwig says that he "saw Germany lose its nerve in 1918 when forsaken by its allies," and that "there won't be any difference now." He predicts that the Nazis "will capitulate before any battles are fought on German soil."

AMERICAN LABOR LEADERS NEED TO BE STATESMEN in this hour; they must learn to be tolerant, to be willing to sacrifice, to conform to the demands of experience in maintaining economic balance during war time. Unless they do, the post-war mess we'll get into will be disastrous to all, including the cause of labor.

from Washington, which sounds very foolish. Except in cases where the family would be financially independent regardless of whether or not the father were in the service, it seems more morally and financially more sensible to take first the fathers with small families. Apparently, draft headquarters at Washington had something of the sort in mind when it vaguely made people deferment in cases of "extreme hardship and privation to their families," depending on the will of the local boards.

Happenings of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO August 10, 1933 "Our city fathers have an eye out every moment for the best welfare of the village and should be assisted in every effort." "Why pay \$150 for a bicycle when you can get just as good for only \$50? Call and see them at 'The Eccentric office.' "Everybody out of town camping."

20 YEARS AGO August 10, 1923 "The best Ice Cream sold in Birmingham is called 'Peelies.' Ask for it when you want good ice cream." Calvin Coolidge took the oath as President of the United States at Plymouth, Vt., at 2:47 a. m. Friday, August 31, 1923.

FIVE YEARS AGO August 11, 1938 "Oakland Hills Country Club will have realized another ambition in its program to provide recreation facilities for members in the completion about Sept. 1 of its swimming pool." "An operator of an automobile should rarely use his brakes, except for an emergency stop or at a light. Learn to judge the distance, and allow your car to coast to point where the stop is made. This saves the brake linings and joints in the long run and they will last almost indefinitely."

ONE YEAR AGO August 12, 1942 "A new lamp in front of the house horse to light the way to the keys has been placed by our city fathers." "The new professors are busy

"The War Manpower Commission called for a percentage increase of 4 1/2 workers."

Influence of Christianity

Dr. Lin Yutang, Chinese author, now residing in this country, has written several books which have been "eaten up" by Americans. He passes as a philosopher of considerable wisdom. Speaking the other day in New York, the Chinese writer asserted that "the dismal fact is that Christianity has no influence in business and politics, both shaping our lives." Yet, as a "theist," he declared that "we have nothing but the Bible to hold civilization together."

We are utterly unable to understand the mental processes of any student of the past who comes to the conclusion that Christianity "has no influence in business and politics." The fact is that Christianity has influenced business and politics in every country of the world except where there are no Christians.

The trouble with some philosophers, and certain religious leaders, is that they expect the millennium and fail to make proper allowance for the slow processes of human progress. Dr. Yutang and other critics of Christianity should know that it has widened the scope of men's minds and broadened the tolerance of mankind. It is making steady progress and its influence is felt in every activity of modern, Christian countries.

It is not Christianity's fault that mankind refuses to accept and apply its teachings to more of life's activities; either, the history of the past 2,000 years proves this, doesn't it?

SECOND ONLY TO A LETTER FROM HOME, the "home-town newspaper" is the most welcome regular message a service man receives. We at The Eccentric get real satisfaction in knowing that the Eccentrics sent far and wide every week to our soldier and sailor readers "from kisser to kisser," as the saying goes.

PLEASE DON'T FAIL TO SEND IN THE NAMES of your relatives who are in the armed services; mail the list to City Manager, Birmingham, and they will be included in that big leather-bound book to be placed in Baldwin Public Library. Names only of men who claim Birmingham as their home should be sent in.

The Birmingham Eccentric

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NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish brief contributions of local interest, news and questions are welcomed. Contributions are usually edited summarily so that the character, standing or reputation of any person will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the publisher.



People's Column

Reader Disagrees With Editorial Editor, The Eccentric: I feel sure that you are not a little surprised by the editorial of Aug. 5, in which you say of Mr. Wallace, "in his Detroit address he referred to American Fascists"; he meant any person of wealth or position who disagreed with street New Deal policies.

I cannot speak for Mr. Wallace but I venture to state that he was not talking of those who oppose him politically. All the angels are not in one party and all the devils are not in the other. It is not a matter of color but of the thought of our civil service employees as a certain well-known group in Congress is succeeding all too well in doing."

How about the attempt to control the associates, the reading, and even the thoughts of our civil service employees as a certain well-known group in Congress is succeeding all too well in doing? How about the recent bill of attainder passed as a rider to an appropriation bill by Congress recently?

How about the determination on the part of a large part of our citizenry in and out of Washington to disfranchise part of our citizenry because of color? How about the attacks in and out of Congress on another section of our citizenry because of their religion?

What about so-called vigilante committees which far exceed all that the law can go unpunished? I could mention many more examples of what I mean in speaking of a strong tendency toward fascism in this country. All of these things are done in Germany and Italy and good citizens discounted them (Perhaps we are all fascists at heart?)

These things can't be brushed aside by saying "It can't happen here." Power, hate and fear do strange things to the spirit of man "made in the image of God." CHARLES M. WILSON, 827 Waddington road.

Calls Attention To War Play

Editor, The Eccentric: Neighbors are people—persons who have an interest in events all around them. For several weeks past, I've been a neighbor to the Cranbrook Summer School of the Theatre. Carl and Annetta Wonnberger, mentors of the school, have performed not only neighborly deeds but lasting good for the many young people who had the opportunity to attend the school. As a further measure of neighborliness, and because I suspect they thoroughly love the school, Carl and Annetta Wonnberger extended to the senior group of the Cranbrook School of the Theatre an offer of opportunity to do one more play before closing for the season. This, by the way, is the second year of the school.

Striking out for serious drama, the seniors will present "Letters to Lucerne," Burns Mantle, the noted drama critic, found this the most appealing of the newer war plays. A school in Switzerland and its importance in containing the fire of world wars remaining there during the war, are the subject. How they are affected by this war and what it does to personal feelings, is a fine study of human beings. Two casts will make this performance, which will take place Monday, Aug. 16, and Tuesday, Aug. 17, at 8:30 o'clock in the evening. Greek Theatre, Cranbrook.

BERNICE A. BROOK, Woodward Avenue, Bloomfield Hills.

"UNCLE JOE" Editor, The Eccentric: Your good Senator Vandenberg is running true to the good old Republican form when he calls Vice-President Wallace an "American Fascist."

It seems to you Old Uncle Joe that this remark of our senator is the answer to the problem which faces the Republican party. They simply lack originality, and have lacked it for years. When "One World Wilkie" ran for the Presidency he played the mimic like his predecessors and tried to sell the goods of U. S. Republican New Deal. And his "One World" theories were, for the most part, the brain child of the present administration.

What Your City Commission Is Doing . . .

August 9, 1943 Bills approved totalling \$14,428.06, including a two-week pay-roll in the amount of \$2,125.81. Taxicab driver's license issued by Alvin Mudge. Truck for use in Civilian Defense program accepted for use during war emergency. Hearing held to consider change in zoning on Chester street. Petition to amend ordinance to permit construction of terrace denied. IRENE E. HANLEY, City Clerk.

DON'T EAT BORERS Department of conservation game men report that phantasms do not eat corn borers, which have suddenly appeared in Michigan in such large numbers. In the winter time, when the corn is fully grown and the birds' nests are empty, the phantasms will dig them out of the corn stalks, they assert, but they do not bother corn borers in the summer when there is a plentiful supply of more accessible bugs and worms. Two tin cans out of every three that never overtook the phantasms have been salvaged so far.

THE ECCENTRIC'S Camera Corner

FROM TIME TO TIME this column has discussed camera exposure, and its importance in obtaining the pictures. There is, however, another aspect to this question of exposure, for with certain subjects more interesting pictorial effects can be obtained by deliberate departure from accepted exposure points. Noting illustrations in this point, we see that in some pictures, such as those above, the foreground is much brighter than the background. In fact, the inclusion of some easily recognizable silhouette in the foreground of any scene shot will add greatly to the interest and story-telling qualities of the picture. So never overlook the possibilities. A variation from normal exposure may be necessary to get just the effect that you want, but the results will be well worth the effort. John van Guilder