

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

Knocking on Wood

with JOHN H. HARWOOD

A MATTER NEEDING EXPOSITION

We note that Oct. 1 to 8 has been designated as National Newspaper Week, and that Vernon T. Sanford, of Oklahoma City, Okla., is head of the national committee. Maybe we ought to write Mr. Sanford about an idea we have on the subject.

This is it: The biggest complaint you hear about the newspapers nowadays results from a misunderstanding, and we believe that the eradication of this misunderstanding would be a fitting project for National Newspaper Week.

People are confused about what they read in the newspapers, not particularly in The Eccentric which confines itself to simplicity of community life, but rather with the daily papers which are the day-by-day developments on the great national and international problems. We often hear the statement: "You can't believe a word you read in the papers."

People are sincere about it, and disappointed about it, for in the midst of all the confusion, they hope to have the truth sorted out to them.

The answer is this: It's true; you can't believe, so you read the papers for one simple reason. Much of what you read are OPINIONS on given controversies, and obviously both sides of an argument can't be wholly right.

This is the sort of thing which confuses people. General Herold says they will draft fathers by Oct. 1. Different Congressmen say that while some fathers will be drafted, by far the majority will not. Others ask: How can any layman say how big the army should be when he does not know our secret military plans?

End of the War. Then there's the matter of when the war is to end. Big Shot No. 1—who ought to know what he is talking about—says the war will be over in six months. Then Big Shot No. 2—who also ought to know what he is talking about—says the war may be over in two years. Whom are the people to believe?

But instead of blaming the Big Shots, they blame the newspapers for filling them with false news and false alarms when it is not the newspapers' fault.

Editors are no smarter than any other set of toilers, how can they print the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth when the truth is usually not self-apparent and even the wisest of them would be laid get lost in the fog? Not knowing what is what.

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WASTE FATS—Strain and keep cool. Turn in to your meat market when you have a few pounds. Rancid fats not wanted.

SCRAP METALS—GLASS, RUBBER—Leave in bin near Post Office or put at curb on your last City collection day of the month.

NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES—You can donate these to Salvation Army, which will sell for them. Phone 4014. Scrap paper not wanted.

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"Return To God"

On a recent Sunday we listened to a divine over the radio and he was exhorting the people of the Republic to return to God.

The figures for church membership, recently released, reveal that the churches of the nation have had a gratifying increase in membership.

Letters from soldiers in the service of the nation constantly remind us that these men think seriously and deeply, in the midst of death, and that many of them are convinced that they are nearer to God than ever before.

It is a little amazing, and somewhat puzzling, to know just what the reverend brother has in mind. Perhaps he tried to say that going to church may not be going God's way; merely filling a church pew may not be filling a real Christian's place in the world.

Slavery Revives

Whether the institution of slavery originated in warfare may be disputed, but the enforced labor of thousands of foreigners in Germany can easily become slavery if the war lasts very long, or if Hitler wins the struggle.

In fact, the foreigners now transported wholesale into the Reich are, for all practical purposes, the slaves of the Nazis. They work under the whip and whatever the Nazis decree and live where and how the Nazis let them exist.

If Germany runs short of food they will eat less and less. Their tasks will not diminish. Consequently, they will slowly starve while the "super race" feeds its soldiers and their families.

The deportation of workmen into Germany, from the fringe of conquered countries, ought to remind Americans of the fate that awaits any people who deal with Hitler, and his agents. There can be no faith in the orders of the Nazis and without confidence, there can be no peace.

Indefinitely Postponed

There are many problems in life that cannot be met until a crisis develops and it often happens that those who worry about impending ills find them indefinitely postponed.

The world has many serious issues that engage the attention of debaters and "leaders," but the solution that time brings is rarely in accord with the best laid plans of conferences, parleys and forums.

FOR YEARS AND YEARS it was common belief that most of the impractical, unrealistic, and academic minds of the nation lived on college and university campuses. But that was before 1933; since then the infinite variety and extent of the federal government's bureaus and commissions has been filled with many of these boys who are zealously trying to make America over.

AS WE HAVE SO OFTEN STATED in this newspaper, one of the best investments for Birmingham would be one or more good apartment houses; they would be snapped up like hot dogs at a kid's picnic.

nation's entire distilling industry is now producing war alcohol exclusively. This alcohol is used for conversion to smokeless powder, synthetic rubber, chemical warfare materials and medical supplies.

For Feeding Stock. Recovered protein can be sold to farmers at about five cents a pound as a supplement to livestock feed, which is becoming increasingly scarce and costly. This will result in better-fed hogs, cattle and other livestock, with subsequent enrichment of meats for human consumption. About one billion pounds concentrated protein can be recovered annually by the protein content found in 20 pounds of meat per person consumed annually.

Production of alcohol, now the chief product, may become merely the by-product of protein concentrate output at distilleries, thus revolutionizing the industry. About three pounds of protein can be recovered from each gallon of alcohol distilled under the method.

Other Uses. Recovered protein can be processed into a number of essential chemical products. One of these—casein—now costs about 20 cents a pound.

Fully developed, grain alcohol production costs will be cut 50% or to the level of molasses and synthetic alcohol.

This cost-reduction will be a boon to grain-growers who have long yearned for new outlets for their surplus crops. It will open the door to large-scale production of grain alcohol for synthetic rubber, motor fuel and other industrial products in the post-war period.

Going a Little Too Far. Bride—How did you and your husband's family treat you? Bride—Terribly! Why, your three fine all over us!

Bride—Yes, but that's quite the usual thing, isn't it? Bride—Yes, but this rice had been cooked.

Making Money

Here's a governmental corporation that has made money. The War Damage Corporation has just ended its first year, with \$124,000,000,000 of insurance in force and practically no damage to pay for.

War risk insurance is being renewed all over the nation. There is the prospect that most of the \$270,000 policies will be renewed, and that the corporation will receive, in premiums, another \$131,000,000.

Those who have War Risk insurance policies will do well to keep them effective. The premium is small and it guarantees the property owner against damage as a result of war's activities. It is a good buy.

The government corporation is wise, we think, in not reducing its premium rates. There is no telling when it will suffer a major loss. The random bombing of one large city could result in huge claims and it is just as well to have a large cash reserve.

No Miracles Ahead

The American public is gradually acquiring the idea that when the war ends the nation will be flooded with miraculous new devices. The idealists lure the spending power that has been built up by war conditions.

It is just as well to get rid of the notion. There will be no sudden outburst of dream products. Gradual improvement of many devices will arrive, but buyers will not have the opportunity to revolutionize living conditions through startling inventions.

The way some people are talking about post-war miracles one would think that a new electrical store is being prepared that will not only sell radios and cook hobs and eggs for the family breakfast, but that it will have a device that will automatically produce the food.

FOKS WHO SMASH INTO YOUR CAR WHEN YOU are away from it, and do not try to make amends, are poor citizens. One way to make this menace to note the license number of both cars, and report the offender to local police. This isn't being a "stool pigeon" at all—it's being a citizen can help himself against having the same loss come to him.

The Birmingham Eccentric

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in The Eccentric Building, 412 Adams Street. Telephone 11, 17 and 18.

Subscription Rates: One Year (Outside Oakland County) \$1.00; One Year (Oakland County) \$1.00; Six Months \$0.50; Three Months \$0.25. All newspaper and advertising copy must be in The Eccentric office by Wednesday noon to obtain insertion rates for that week.

The Eccentric is a member of National Editorial Association, Michigan Press Association, and University Press Club.

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish brief contributions of material provided by its readers. Contributions are usually edited superficially so that they are readable and interesting. Any constructive reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or institution, appearing in the columns of The Eccentric will be gladly returned to the contributor by the attention of the publisher.

Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO. Aug. 24, 1893. "These people who in their century does yet seem to their century does will please attend to it at their own expense as the funds of the society are running low."

Another real good rattling rain on Thursday last. Let the water come.

"Miss Mamma Taber is the proud and happy owner of a brand new piano that is a fine instrument and first-class in tone, finish, and appearance."

"Charles Knowles, who lives on the farm known as the old Ed Adams farm, nearly killed himself recently by falling down a haystack in his barn. He nearly broke his neck and was partly paralyzed for a few days. He is rapidly recovering under Dr. C. M. Raynolds' care."

"Miss Daisy Sibby started for her school duties at Iron Mountain, Mich., last Monday with her mother. She will have a ten days' visit at the Fair and then go on to Iron Mountain to attend school. This young lady a brilliant success in her chosen work."

20 YEARS AGO. Aug. 24, 1923. "At the Commission meeting Monday evening, Manager Starr was authorized to purchase 1,000 feet of 2 1/2-inch fire hose for the 'Village fire department.'"

"Mr. John R. Ormond of Wadlington drive, A. R. Glancy and Mrs. Harry C. Hill of Bloomfield Hills have been named by Governor Murphy to draw plans for broad reforms in Michigan's governmental system."

"Mrs. Barbara Rupp, daughter of the Carl Ruppas of Chicago, former residents of Birmingham, is coming to Birmingham with her mother and two young sons during her fortnight's visit here. She is the house guest of Miss Betty Ann Pease."

The Game Gets Rougher



People's Column

Marine Criticizes Rep. Dondero

Editor, The Eccentric: Assuming that "Congressional Communes" is Mr. Dondero's intended report to his constituents on the manner in which he is representing them in Capitol Hill, we are extremely disappointed to note, in the July 22 issue of The Eccentric, Mr. Dondero's remarks on the occasion of the (H.R. 2906) consideration. "That our representative finds the military appropriation of \$22,000,000,000 'to be beyond human comprehension' is also discouraging to find him making it down into its component parts. We unhappily picture our good representative poring over military and naval appropriations and the total expenditures of the War Department in World War I; the amount of invested capital in the United States in 1938; the amount of invested capital in the national wealth in 1940. We sincerely hope that he does not retain such uninteresting information on the tip of his tongue. We are lastly discouraged to have him end his comments by talking the life into the American flag. All that we can winnow from his article is that he cannot comprehend the appropriation at all; he is willing to vote for it all day, because it is as American as Yankee Doodle."

We assume in our khaki G. Y. simplicity that Mr. Dondero did read the life into the American flag. So, but we expect our representative to find it comprehensible, but talking the life into the American flag and less "colossal" parts, or by talking with someone who does understand such matters. We expect him to come to us with his pocket and awe at the enormous size of the appropriation at all; we expect him to give a flag-waving reason for voting for a bill that he obviously cannot understand.

CORP. HARVEY E. WHALEN, JR., U. S. Marine Air Group Service Staff, Marine Air Group Fifteen, Marine Fleet Air West Coast, U. S. A. A. S., Camp Kearney, San Diego, Calif.

'Uncle Joe' Delves Into Teacher Problem

Editor, The Eccentric: The situation in our school system is becoming alarming; every week one or two more teachers resign, and replacements are reluctant to take over.

We tell your "Old Uncle Joe" in Pontiac, where they will now be at home to their friends."

5 YEARS AGO. Aug. 25, 1938. "Mr. John R. Ormond of Wadlington drive, A. R. Glancy and Mrs. Harry C. Hill of Bloomfield Hills have been named by Governor Murphy to draw plans for broad reforms in Michigan's governmental system."

"Mrs. Barbara Rupp, daughter of the Carl Ruppas of Chicago, former residents of Birmingham, is coming to Birmingham with her mother and two young sons during her fortnight's visit here. She is the house guest of Miss Betty Ann Pease."

High on a windy hill? Perhaps—but a picture of this type might easily be made in a rocky meadow by shooting from a low position to exclude foreground and background details. "MAKING is always a disadvantage word, and yet often a bit of false or crookedly placed shadow obtain an interesting effect—one that wouldn't naturally be possible. "For example, in the picture which accompanies the article, the writer does not know whether the subject was taken, and it probably was a genuine hilltop picture. However, the point is that it could have been made in any meadow or field—anywhere. You could produce similar results by choosing a low angle of view, and tilting your camera upward so as to exclude all identity details in the background and foreground. If your subjects were dressed in mountain-climbing gear, the effect would be even more striking. I want to emphasize that last point, because costumes and similar 'stage properties' may a major role in the production of authentic-looking 'faked' pictures. For instance, if you show subjects in hunting costume, photographing a canon through pine woods—any pine grove will do—you'll get the feeling of a North Woods scene. If you show a Naval officer taking a reading with a sextant, you'll get the effect of being on a shipboard—although you may be miles from the nearest water. Your own ingenuity should provide you with other examples, and you should let it guide you when it comes to working out ideas. One photograph recently pictured a man balancing a stack of eggs on the edge of a table knife held between his teeth. The "eggs" were metal shells, blown empty and strung on a thread that hung from the ceiling, while the subject held the knife so that the bottom egg just touched it. Try your hand if you can, and these trick effects. They're fun, and they yield pictures of distinctive novelty and interest. John van Outlander.

THE ECCENTRIC'S Camera Corner



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"At least we don't have to worry about her leaving to work in an airplane factory."