Editorial Page of The Birmingham Eccentric

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

Michigan Mirror

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

By Gene Alleman

As the writer of a column that appears in approximately 200 Michigan newspapers each week and which seeks to interpret news of interest to Michigan people, we are frequently humbled by the stark realization that the role of a contemporary historian offers many hazards.

First, limitations of the writer's mind serves as an unseen censor. The writer must gather facts, sift the facts, and correlate the facts until he arrives at some judgment as to a collective trend. Success or failure of his undertaking will depend to a large degree, upon how thoroughly he does these three things. Also, he must possess a willingness at all times to change his mind, for the parade of people and events moves on, unendingly, and life does not stay still. The interpreter must move with it.

Second, limitations of the reader's mind serves as the second censor. Each person colors his judgment in the light of his knowledge, or lack of it! His background of life which involves his environment; and his established prejudices which he often inherits from his ancestors.

All of this is preliminary to a brief inventory of the Michigan Mirror interpretations since Pearl Harbor.

We were honest in our interpretations. But were we right? Let's take a look at the record.

Three-Year War Is Planned

Jan. 7, 1942: "Despite the encouraging headlines of Nazi defeats in Russia, the facts remain that Washington now plans for a three-year war. Production of arms, growing as it has been, is totally inadequate to meet new needs. Unless the German nation collapses from weak morale or a lack of needed supplies, we must wait until 1942 and possible 1944 before there are sufficient arms and trained men to justify a full-fledged military offensive. Unless we strap for action quickly, we may be 'too late.'"

"We in Michigan Are Not Blind"

May 29, 1942, we reviewed the situation involving gasoline and rubber, with coupon rationing to begin July 1, and commented: "American war production will not be felt in tremendous force until 1943. We in Michigan are not blind. Our armed manpower will approximate 4,200,000 by December, 1942. These ABC factors prompted Charles F. Kettering, chief of research of the General Motors corporation, to forecast allied victory by 1944 through an invasion of Europe. Defeat of Japan would be the next objective. And then, when the war was won on all fronts, the Allied Nations would police the whole world during the armistice or 'cooling off' period prior to the treaty, and then during the peace itself."

* * *

One Year Later: May, 1943

May 14, 1943: "Lieut. General Brehon B. Somervell, chief of the army services of supply, visited Michigan last summer. Recently he declared that the U. S. army will not be completely equipped until late in 1944. Only in the field of ammunition is there a reserve. Rumors of over-production were called the work of fifth-columnists."

* * *

"War to Continue 18-24 Months"

June 18, 1942, we deplored the prevalent attitude of over-optimism and ventured the following interpretation: "According to all facts which can be assembled, we can reasonably anticipate that the war will continue for 18 to 24 months. Even if Germany collapses by 1943, a minimum of a year would be expected to transport troops and supplies to the Orient for a decisive showdown with the Japanese. The public is being deluded if it expects anything but a long, long war with great sacrifice. We should face the facts. The situation is very serious."

13 Months Later: July, 1943

July 23, 1943: "Instead of fighting one war—and with France, Italy, and Japan among our allies—we have two wars on our hands; our troops are yet to land on the continent of Europe; only four of our divisions saw action in Tunisia!

"We still have a long way to go before the boys march into Berlin and Tokio."

Can We Win the Peace?

Sept. 24, 1943: "As the casualty lists grow longer, splashing our silver bars with gold, what will we think and do? Will we return to nationalism, and its renunciation of world responsibility for winning the peace?"

"Germany Has 300 Divisions"

Oct. 22, 1943: "Germany has 300 well-trained and well-equipped army divisions in Europe. Most of these are on the Russian front. The American army and navy at the end of 1944 (fourteen months from today) will have about 7,500,000 men overseas and 3,750,000 still on duty in this country. Today, the reverse is true. Our overseas armies are not concentrated in France as they were 25 years ago; they are scattered around the globe. At the end of the two years of preparations, we are just about ready to transport a big invasion army to Europe. Our big test is yet to come."

* * *

Peace by Christmas a Mirage

Dec. 10, 1943: "Germany's capitulation by Christmas of 1943 now seems to be a mirage. Hopes that Allied leaders were secretly considering peace terms have now vanished. The significance of the Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin-Chiang conferences, already termed to be unsurpassed in historical importance for a century, is beginning to crystallize here back home. We are pledged to make frontal invasions upon Germany; to impose near annihilation and destruction on Japan. The verdict is extreme; the terms are harsh; the price of peace is high. . . . We must gird ourselves as never before for a costly assault in Europe, for a long war in the Orient."

* * *

Channel Invasion April-June, 1944

Dec. 30, 1943: "The big channel invasion is likely to take place between April and June . . . The time is here for frontal attack by the doughboy, supported by air and land artillery. Air power alone will not knock out Germany. We predict: Unconditional surrender of the Nazis by late autumn (1944)."

* * *

A Glimpse Into the Future

What is ahead for us in the post-war period?

Can we win the peace? Can we preserve free enterprise?

Next week's Mirror will review objectively some facts about tomorrow, as we know them today, and then present some interpretations for you to think about. It isn't important that you should agree with what we say. But it is important that you should THINK for yourself about what we say. Then this column will have served a useful purpose.

Want Ads will do it.

A Municipal Heating System

Everybody has heard of the hot springs of Iceland and many of us have speculated upon the convenience of piping hot water to homes for heating which has been undertaken in some areas of that island.

The idea has been adopted by the people of Virginia, Minnesota, a municipality of 12,264 souls. Virginia is said to be the first and only community in the country where a central heating system provides steam heat for all the homes, stores, schools and churches in the city.

The municipally-owned heating system, operated as a non-profit enterprise, burns 43,000 tons of bituminous coal a year at $7 a ton, according to information to the International City Managers Association. If Virginia householders—the community has a population of 12,264—stoked their own furnaces, they would consume approximately 40,000 tons of anthracite—at $17 a ton—anually, city officials say.

The average householder in a five-room house in the city pays $70 a year to have his house and water heated, about half of what it would cost on an individual basis. In addition, the community and its residents profit through an auxiliary use of the central heating plant, since the steam is first used to generate the electricity the town uses before it is piped into homes and business establishments.

Every street in town has a steam main, and a master thermostat controls the temperature in the individual houses. After the steam has done its heating job it drops through waste pipes as water to be weighed and recorded by a special meter before it is discharged into the sewer.

The one central heating plant has made the city virtually smokeless, resulting in lower cleaning bills, fewer colds, less laundry and better morale for citizens. There are no ash cans, eliminating some refuse collection problems for the city, dwelling fires are down 40 per cent and Virginia's store owners receive 5 per cent "protective credit" on their insurance premiums.

New Testament Revision

An interdenominational committee of eighteen Greek and biblical scholars, representing various Protestant organizations, has completed seven years' work and their revised version of the New Testament is ready for printing when the paper shortage and other war-time factors permit.

The principal reason for the revision, according to Dean Luther A. Weigle, of the Yale Divinity School, chairman of the Revision Committee, is the discovery of ancient Greek writings in Egypt and elsewhere, which explain many words not heretofore understood in original manuscripts.

While the new version is considered modern, it will retain the essential characteristics of the King James version. The committee thinks that it will "carry what the Bible has to say as no other translation does."

Ninety-Nine Per Cent Honest

Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury, basing his remark upon income tax returns, asserts that "they show that ninety-nine per cent of the American people are honest."

Undoubtedly, the vast majority of people are honest, but the fact cannot be proved by the percentage of income tax returns that fail to reveal efforts to cheat the Government. The average American is no fool and he has a lurking suspicion that his income tax arithmetic will be checked thoroughly.

There may be differences of opinion as to the exact percentage of honest people, with some thinking that ninety-nine per cent is an optimistic estimate. We have no statistical rule, we are quite certain that there is more honesty in the world than many people believe.

Foolish Parents Plague Children

Dr. Morris Fishbein, editor of "Hygeia," urges parents to be careful in selecting names for their children and warns that an odd name or initial combination will plague the youngster all of his life.

This, it seems to us, is advice to be heeded by some parents who are inclined to give their offspring "cute" or arresting appellations.

While most parents seem to use good judgment in naming their children, one occasionally comes across an example which indicates that there ought to be a special organization designed to protect babies against freak names bestowed upon them by foolish parents.

Perhaps the outstanding classic in this relation were the two names given to his daughters, years ago, by a man named Hogg, in Texas. One of them he named "Ima," the other "Ura."

APPROXIMATELY 55 TONS OF PAPER WERE collected during Birmingham's recent waste paper drive. Assuming that most of it contained reading matter, it does suggest that our community is a literate one, doesn't it?

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NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish brief contributed material providing it has news value, and suggestions are welcomed. Contributions are subject to edited superficially so that they conform to general newspaper style. Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation which may appear in the columns of The Eccentric will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the publisher.

GIRL SCOUTS

By MARGARET BARNEY

Brownie Troop 12 with Mrs. F. E. Pomeroy as leader has been doing active Red Cross work the last two months. Mrs. Robert Dudley gave the girls first aid instruction for two meetings. This was followed by two talks on home nursing. Later the girls made scrap books for the Red Cross.

Many have learned to knit under the instruction of Mrs. James Wagner and an afghan is in process of construction. Reports from hospitals say that these warm, clinging covers, made by sewing together the squares all are so familiar with, are great favorites with the soldiers.

On March 21 Mrs. Fred Broock, vice-chairman of Volunteer Service for Red Cross in Oakland county, gave an interesting talk before all Brownie and Scout Troops of Adams school.

She brought, for exhibition, a clothes basket full of the many things Red Cross workers are making. The kit-bags so impressed the girls that they determined to earn money to purchase some for the Red Cross, which gives one to each soldier before he leaves this country.

Mrs. A. K. Teepfer and Mrs. Martin DeBats assisted the Brownies Saturday afternoon in making 175 corn balls, and Monday afternoon Mrs. H. D. Pahl helped a group to make cookies and cake. Adams school children bought these commodities Tuesday afternoon and the proceeds amounted to $20.

Mothers with young children can still do their part in making surgical dressings for the Red Cross at the Community House. Mrs. Charles Richards and Mrs. Stanley Ross are taking care of little tots in the Girl Scout room on Tuesday and Friday mornings from 10 to 12.

The children are usually from two to five years old. They play with toys and have a story hour and singing. The high point is "refreshments" which consist of cookies and glasses of water, preceded by the asking of a blessing.

This project began originally as an activity of Brownie Troop 15. When summer comes the Brownies expect to help again.

The toys in use have been donated by interested friends. The children would appreciate a few more, if anyone has some to spare.

A new training course for Girl Scout leaders from among Pierce school mothers opened Wednesday evening at 7:30.

The Girl Scout Council will hold its regular meeting Friday, April 14, at 10 a. m. in the Girl Scout room at the Community House.

The Intermediates of Troop 1 will be more able to hold their own with their sailor brothers after this, because Miss Miller taught them various useful knots such as the bow line and square knot at their last meeting.

RECORD DEER KILL

More hunters got their deer in 1943 deer hunting season making the highest total deer kill on record except for the 1941 season when antlerless deer could be taken on a camp license, the conservation department's tabulation of returned game kill report cards reveals. The final count places the number of deer killed at 65,087 and the number of hunters in the field at 211,576.

Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO
April 12, 1894

"All most politicians need to learn is—who to vote for."

"Mrs. E. P. Jarvis has had measles of the German type the past week."

"The last oysters of the season at the M. E. church next Wednesday afternoon and evening."

"Austin Parks will put in new shelving and largely increase his stock to occupy the space in this store formerly occupied by the postoffice."

"Theo Bookham is busily engaged in repairing and overhauling the Eugene Brooks home, when completed it will be a nice big comfortable home."

"Forty thousand copies of 'Samantha at the World's Fair' were sold the first three weeks after it was published. The Ladies' Library has one."

"The L. O. T. M. will give a social at Claude Harris' April 20. Supper 15c. All are cordially invited and a good time is guaranteed."

"Commodore Gerry's daughter must have grown out of the reach of papa's society for the protection of children as her engagement has been announced. The commodore has probably broken more 'engagements' than any other man in America."

"Episcopalians and their friends are invited to meet this Thursday evening at the residence of Hon. E. G. Stevenson on Maple avenue for the purpose of organization."

20 YEARS AGO
April 11, 1924

"'A fire in Schlaack's meat market' came a cry in the midst of the Firemen's ball in the Odd Fellows' Temple last Friday evening. Women were left stranded in the middle of the dance floor, without a partner, conversations were broken off at a most interesting point while the firemen dashed off to the conflagration spot."

"Statistics show there is 17 times the amount of money spent on luxuries—cosmetics, tobacco and confections as is spent on education in this country."

"What is said by manager Starr to be the first real attempt to make the principal improvement at any Birmingham dirt or graveled street was started this week when T. D. Lynch and others residing on Frank street formally petitioned the village commission for the re-graveling, regrading and installation of a curb and gutter on their street."

"At a banquet to be held in the Masonic Temple Tuesday evening the charter of the Birmingham Exchange club will be formally presented to Roulette S. Ford, past president of the Detroit Exchange and district governor of the National Exchange clubs."

"Six local men, three each from the Exchange and Rotary clubs, have been appointed to represent and investigate conditions surrounding the proposed widening of Woodward avenue through town."

"The senior Washington group will leave tomorrow at noon for their ten-day trip to Washington, D. C., and other points of interest."

5 YEAR AGO
April 13, 1939

"Mayor John E. Martz, who has served Birmingham as mayor since 1936, was re-elected for a fourth term Monday evening at the usual organization meeting of the City Commission."

"A definite request for the reclassification of the Birmingham school district from a graded to a third class district was laid before the Board of Education at its meeting Tuesday evening by a group representing parents, taxpayers and local organizations concerned with civic and educational problems."

"City Manager Donald C. Egbert, assisted by Treasurer-Engineer Harold H. Colson, this week is visiting a dozen or more cities, villages and school districts in southeastern Michigan, printed material to enlist their combined support to amend Act 155, passed by the 1937 Legislature, so that local units of government may not suffer unnecessary losses in the liquidation of delinquent tax property."

"Charles Turner, talented young Birmingham violinist, will be sponsored in a concert on Tuesday evening, April 25, by the Young People's Society of All Saints Church in Pontiac."

"Students at Cranbrook School and their guests will don formal attire on the evening of Saturday, April 22, to attend the annual Spring Formal, to be held in the assembly hall."

GAME REPORT READY

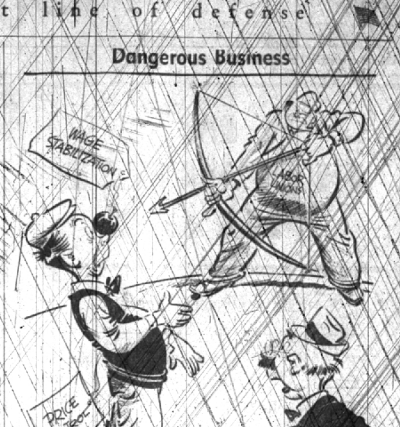
Questionnaires on the abundance of small game species sent annually to sportsmen, conservationists, trappers and farmers by the conservation department are being mailed a month early this year, the game division has announced. A new law making it necessary for game regulation changes to be printed earlier than usual is responsible for the change. Information received on the questionnaires is used in working out game regulations for the next hunting season.

Little Man

"Twas the day before Christmas While chores broke a window with a snowball, passed his mother, got his new suit full of slush, broke the dial on the radio and took father's fountain pen to draw pictures with.

"Thank goodness," sighed Papa Jones, "my boy is not a hypocrite!"

Dangerous Business



Tax Calendar

April 10—Federal income tax withheld, due date to pay amount withheld on wages in previous month, if more than $100 to authorized depository.

April 15—Estimate of 1944 income.

April 15—Michigan sales tax. Return for month of March, 1944, and payment of tax to the Michigan Department of Revenue.

April 25—Michigan unemployment compensation information return and payroll tax return for the Unemployment Compensation Commission covering the first quarter of 1944.

May 1—Federal tax on admissions and dues, facilities, oil processing, and poon sales by retailers and manufacturers of articles subject to excise tax return and payment of tax for preceding month to the Collector of Internal Revenue.

May 1—Federal old-age insurance tax. Last day to file with the Collector of Internal Revenue federal old-age insurance tax return on Form SS1a, covering first quarter of 1944, and to pay tax shown.

May 1—Federal unemployment tax. Last day to pay second quarterly installment of tax to Collector of Internal Revenue.

May 1—Federal income tax withheld. Last day to file with Collector of Internal Revenue return of income tax withheld on wages Form W-1, for first quarter of 1944, and to pay any undeposited amount shown on return.

May 1—Federal income tax. Last day to file return of tax withheld on bond interest, first quarter, 1944, on Form 1013.

LOAN FILMS TO SCHOOLS

With a total of 251 film loans averaging 1008 reels each made to schools and organizations during March, the conservation department ended the month with a record of the highest number of films sent out since 1938. Two-thirds of the loans were made to schools with the other third going to parent-teacher associations, Boy Scout groups, and other organizations. Most popular films of the thirty-five subjects available on all phases of conservation and wildlife were "Canoe Trails," "Timber Harvest," and "Michigan Marsh and Share Birds."

(Try an Eccentric Classified Ad)

SALVAGE MEMO

TIN CANS—Rinse after using, remove label, open bottom end and flatten with foot. Place at curb for last City collection day of the month. Keep dry; keep separate from rubbish.

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. Copper engraver's plates and old keys may be left at the library.

NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, SCRAP PAPER—Pick-up of these may be arranged for by calling the Salvage Desk, at the Municipal Building, Phone 1230, between the hours of 9 and 12 o'clock, Mondays through Fridays. Regular city curb pickup first Friday of each month.

PECK'S
Cash and Carry
Suits, Topcoats, Plain Dresses $1.09
CLEANED and PRESSED
For Delivery Service Phone 230
WOODWARD—NEAR MAPLE

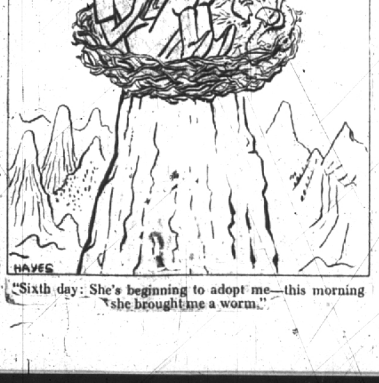
"A FRIENDLY BANK"
WABEEK STATE BANK OF DETROIT

Pay By Check!

Cancelled checks afford the safety of a receipt for each bill paid—and your check stubs detail each expenditure. Open a Pay-As-You-Go Checking Account with as little as $1.00. No minimum balance required.

WABEEK STATE BANK OF DETROIT
BIRMINGHAM OFFICE—WABEEK BUILDING

TICKLERS by HAYES



"Sixth day: She's beginning to adopt me—this morning she brought me a worm."

THE ECCENTRIC'S Camera Corner

By giving a little attention to a few important details you can improve your pictures and make them more appealing

THE main purpose of most pictures is to present a subject clearly—and to please the eye. The picture may also tell a story, or express an idea—but whatever its purpose, the eye should be pleased.

Picture arrangement has a great deal to do with this matter of pleasing the eye. This applies particularly to the arrangement of your subject matter within the picture space. If it's done properly, you obtain an attractive result. If it isn't properly done, the picture just doesn't quite hit the mark.

You have probably read a bit about pictorial composition, perhaps even learned some of the formal rules. These rules are fine, as a sort of general background—and they do help you analyze pictures so that you can tell just why the good ones stand out. For example, if a striking action shot catches your eye, you will usually find some snappy contrasts or some will some vigorous lines when you analyze it more closely. The rules bring out these things clearly—and they also help you anticipate certain possibilities when you're planning a picture.

However, it's not quite wise to make all your pictures fit certain rigid rules or formulas. In many cases, you will do better by studying the subject and deciding how it can be arranged to present your idea in a clear, pleasing manner.

For example, take the picture

John van Guilder