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

Dear Michigan GI Joe:

Paraphrasing Lincoln's immortal words at Gettysburg, the world may little note nor long remember what we folks in Michigan do this December, 1944.

The nation, however, cannot forget what you and a half million other gallant sons of Michigan—and your buddies, too, from other states—are doing on fighting fronts around the world in staunch defense of America's future.

Funny, isn't it, how we have so much in common—you on the fighting front and we in Michigan on the home front? Just because we are separated from you by an ocean and half or more of a continent, don't think for one minute that we're not a member of your team. For we are! We're all on the same team together, Joe. That makes it so difficult for both of us.

As we read your home-town newspaper and note what you have been doing, we are moved by several kinds of emotions. Of course, we are proud of you. News from your letters is being printed every week or so, telling your friends of what you are doing—that is, what the censors will permit you to write.

Then we try to imagine what it must be like, over in France or Germany or Italy. This December, 1944. The mud is ankle deep. It is cold. We remember that well from our teen-age experience in France back during the first World War, and that war was a picnic compared to yours today.

We try to picture in our mind what it must be to live in a trench of fox hole—maybe a tent, if you're lucky, or perhaps an old building—without heat and without any of the conveniences we have back here in Michigan.

You know, Joe, it's not easy for us to picture all this. The war isn't being fought in the United States. Sometimes we wonder if that isn't the reason why we sometimes act as we do—we just cannot comprehend the reality of modern war because the war is so far away. It gives us a feeling of frustration.

No, the enemy airplanes never arrived. But again we had nothing to say about that. The Office of Civilian Defense got a lot of us in Michigan to prepare for possible air attacks. Thousands of people in north Michigan and Canada volunteered to scan the skies in details 24 hours around the clock, summer and winter. Fire wardens organized to combat incendiary bombs.

In those days after Pearl Harbor our military experts at Washington were genuinely concerned over this menace. But the Nazi airplanes never arrived. No bombs were dropped on our homes.

Why? Well, it just didn't work out that way, it seems. The Germans were too busy fighting the Russians, and then there was the British navy guarding the Atlantic ocean while we recovered from the loss at Pearl Harbor.

Try as we do, we still cannot picture what a bombing raid must be like.

Last summer after you and your buddies landed on the beachheads of Normandy and the Allied break-through resulted in the great German withdrawal to the Siegfried line, Washington officials were pretty optimistic about a quick victory.

You know, Joe, the newspapers still print the news as Washington gives it out. Officials at Washington possess vital war information. Much of it is censored and not disclosed to newspapers at all.

For example, don't blame us back at home for any failure to send over enough shells. If the military experts couldn't foresee the tremendous consumption of shells by MacArthur's men at Leyte or forecast the amount of munitions to be consumed in the big push into Germany, how could we back here in Michigan be expected to produce it?

Quoting from the United Press: "The present shell shortage is explained partly by the fact that while Gen. Dwight Eisenhower has asked for two-thirds of the present mortar shell output, Gen. Douglas MacArthur has used more mortar shells on Leyte than in all his previous action. In addition, there are the demands of other Pacific and Mediterranean fronts."

We understand fully why you're sore at the war workers who quit their jobs because of some grievance—higher wages, for example. It is true that Michigan has had a lot of unauthorized strikes. They were unauthorized because the leaders, in many cases, could not keep the workers on the job. Unions have pledged not to strike. Still the workers, now and then, get mad and quit.

The daily newspaper prints the news, and a labor strike is news.

But did you ever think that these same Michigan labor strikes represented only a small fraction of the total army of Michigan people who work in war plants? And did you know that several hundred thousand folk from other states have come to Michigan since Pearl Harbor—men and women who do not own property in Michigan? They are interested in their paychecks, and when the war is over, they expect to go home.

It's our observation, Joe, that the great rank and file of Michigan residents are working faithfully and buying war bonds and otherwise doing their part pretty much as the experts at Washington have asked them to do. Why shouldn't they? These same people have sons in the service, too.

Yes, Joe, as the Christmas season returns once more, we hope you will be patient with us on the Michigan home front. We're trying to help win the war, but you must remember that the war is still a long ways off for us. Maybe you'd rather have it that way—to return to a home that has not been demolished or scarred by artillery shells or robot bombs.

The war is coming home to us, however, in the long casualty lists. Many stars on the service flag have already turned to gold. At Ironwood the residents of that mining community dedicated an honor roll on the third anniversary of Pearl Harbor. On it were 43 gold stars. The names of those men sound like an American melting pot—English, Finnish, Polish, Irish, Swedish, as well as other nationalities. They were all Americans—remember that.

In our hearts we all honor you. So keep up the good fight, Joe. America won't let you down.

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Unselfish Leadership

Speaking in a neighboring state Dr. Edwin G. Nourse, Vice-President of the Brookings Institute, urged the people "who have accumulated a tremendous backlog of wartime savings" to use it as capital to expand the businesses in their states after the war.

This is good advice and very timely in view of the fact that, under the impetus of war, abundant capital exists in most states to finance needed business expansion.

Accumulated savings, however, are not the only assets that a state needs to expand its businesses. There is required, in addition, the leadership of unselfish and far-seeing men, willing to make some contribution to the growth and progress of their commonwealth.

We do not think that there can be any argument as to the fact that tremendous savings have been accumulated by the people of most American states. Just how this financial asset should be used is a problem, but we are quite safe in predicting that the state which exhibits the most unselfish leadership will be the state to make the greatest industrial progress in the United States in the next decade.

Dr. Nourse predicts that goods to be produced after the war will provide the basis for the highest standard of living in history. He asserts that the aim of industrialists should be to produce goods to be sold at the lowest price possible, while, at the same time, providing the highest possible number of jobs. He plainly suggests that manufacturers and industrialists, if they want to retain current prosperity, should make it their first business to see that goods are sold as cheaply as possible, to increase demands, and that full employment provide the diversified income that makes a market for manufactured goods.

Not Men But Machines

Dr. Nicholas Butler, president of Columbia University, warns that vocational training is quite distinct from education and should always be subordinated to the methods and ideals of liberal education. If not, he says, "Its products will not be men, but machines."

The veteran educator also takes occasion to denounce so-called progressive education as "a most reactionary philosophy" and admits difficulty in understanding how such a "preposterous doctrine" ever received acceptance by intellectual minds.

We are not expert enough upon educational problems to exactly define the "progressive method," but we understand that it has had quite a vogue in this nation. While it may contain some improved techniques in imparting information to students, there is grave danger that moral, social and spiritual values will be overlooked in the process of making education efficient.

Too many of us are too heavy for light work and too light for heavy work.

It looks like the Germans are beginning to suspect what a blitz war is like.

For The Liberal Arts

"Nothing could be more fatal to the security and peace of our people," declares Dr. Gordon Watkins, dean of the College of Letters and Science of the University of California, at Los Angeles, "than excessive emphasis upon technical and professional education to the exclusion of the liberal and humanistic arts."

The educator calls attention to a disturbing trend, evidenced in the letters received from soldiers and sailors, showing that most of them want scientific and technical education and see no reason why they should have to complete basic liberal arts requirements.

Dr. Watkins believes that returning veterans should be equipped for occupational and professional responsibility, but if they are to live interesting, satisfying and complete lives, he believes they must be made familiar with the "priceless heritage of the liberal arts."

The increasing tendency of young people, in colleges and universities, to seek technical training along highly specialized lines, to the exclusion of a broad, general and liberal education, is no doubt explained by the economic returns that come to the specialist in later life. Just the same, the country can hardly afford to lose the valuable service that is made available to society through the education of men and women in the liberal arts.

As someone has pointed out, a technical education only fits an individual for specific work, whether engineering, medicine, the law, or something else. The purpose of a liberal arts college is to give the student a completely rounded picture of the world in which he, or she, lives, and to develop the power of intelligent thinking.

Balanced judgment is one of the attributes of civilization and intelligence.

IT IS REPORTED THAT THE U.S. HAS PLENTY OF Christmas trees for this coming Yuletide. Santa Claus is ever green, isn't he?

The Birmingham Eccentric

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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 usually 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.

INFORMATION SERVICE

An important service of Home Service American Red Cross is the committee of inquiry and information headed in Oakland county by Mrs. T. W. Eustis of Birmingham. Mrs. Eustice or her assistant is at Home Service Office, 410 Peoples State Building, Pontiac, Monday and Wednesday each week to assist persons who wish to communicate with friends or relatives in liberated countries of Europe.

Michigan's average trout season is approximately 130 days.

47,480

STATE OF MICHIGAN. — The Probate Court for the County of Oakland.

At a session of said Court, held at the Probate Office in the City of Pontiac, in said County on the 1st day of December, A.D., 1944.

Present: Hon. Arthur E. Moore, Judge of Probate.

In the Matter of the Estate of Josephine Howland, Deceased.

Mary Hutchinson, administratrix of said estate, having filed in said court a petition praying that the time for the presentation of claims against said estate be limited and that a time and place be appointed to receive, examine and adjust all claims and demands against said deceased by and before said court.

It is Ordered, That two months from this date be allowed for creditors to present claims against said estate.

It is Further Ordered, That the fifth day of February, 1945, at nine o'clock in the forenoon, at said probate office, be and is hereby appointed for the examination and adjustment of all claims against said deceased.

ARTHUR E. MOORE, Judge of Probate. 37-38-39

47,077

STATE OF MICHIGAN. — The Probate Court for the County of Oakland.

At a session of said Court, held at the Probate Office in the City of Pontiac, in said County, on the 28th day of November, A.D., 1944.

Present: Hon. Arthur E. Moore, Judge of Probate.

In the Matter of the Estate of Henry E. Wiegar, Deceased.

W. Ray Wiegar, administrator with will annexed of said estate, having filed in said court a petition praying that the time for the presentation of claims against said estate be limited and that a time and place be appointed to receive, examine and adjust all claims and demands against said deceased by and before said court.

It is Ordered, That two months from this date be allowed for creditors to present claims against said estate.

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ARTHUR E. MOORE, Judge of Probate. 37-38-39

People's Column

To The Editor:

I am a resident of the Birmingham district and of course subscribe to the "Eccentric."

Sometime when you are pressed for something to print, why not insert a few lines concerning the common practice of many of the residents of Birmingham to abandon surplus cats. I like cats. In fact, we generally have one or two at the house, but then the press of other things makes it impossible for us to conduct a home for all of the friendless abandoned cats.

During the last couple of years many cats, large and small, and frequently small helpless kittens, are dropped in neighborhoods distant from the one with which they are familiar. Perhaps some of these cats and kittens find a good home—I hope so. However, the chances of this being so are somewhat remote in the case of cats of the female gender.

In Michigan The Michigan Humane Society is quite willing to have one of its wagons pick up unwanted cats with their trucks. All one has to do in a case of this kind is to communicate with the Michigan Humane Society at 7401 Richmond street, Detroit, Michigan, or phone their office, 2-3400, and the Humane Society will be pleased to pick up the animals without charge. They will then endeavor to find homes for the animals, failing in which they will have them humanely destroyed.

Evidently some of our citizens are not familiar with the workings of the Michigan Humane Society.

Yours very truly,
SIDNEY NORWOOD,
Charing Cross Rd.

Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO
Dec. 13, 1894

"Holidays coming."

"Christmas is coming."

"Blue Cross pretty soon."

"Visit the candy booth at the fair."

"Go to the fair in the afternoon, get a lunch at the refreshment booth and stay to hear the music in the evening."

"Tom Reed had better be careful how he monkeys with fishing clubs. The temperance vote is worth having."

"We opened our mouth and put both feet in it last week when we said all were invited to the K. P. parties. We should have said all holding invitations."

"If you think there is no talent in this town just ask someone at the fair to show you the water colors done by one of our own ladies."

"Elson James doesn't make much noise in the world. He says nothing but builds fence. He has a patent wire fence machine with which he has built enough fence during the past summer to use 80 miles of wire and he is hard at it yet."

"Said a lady, when speaking of the patronage given to our own entertainments as compared with those by outside talent, 'Birmingham is very partial to its own.' Our people have never received a greater compliment."

"Mr. Herbert Sprague, the impersonator, will be heard at Library Hall Monday, the 17th. He will give 'Rip Van Winkle.'"

20 YEARS AGO
Dec. 12, 1924

"An organization to be called 'Pierce Street Improvement Association' was formed Tuesday afternoon of this week for the purpose of either paving Pierce street to the Thirteen Mile road or putting in an excellent dirt road."

"Fifteen clubs of leading fellows in as many high schools of the county will be represented at the Pontiac high school Tuesday, Dec. 16, at what is known as the 'Oakland County Council Hi-Y Clubs.'"

"Wider Woodward avenue, as far as the settlement of differences between the state and the Grand Trunk railroad are concerned is just about where it was before the Detroit-Pontiac road project received the first dig of the steam shovel, according to a talk before the local Exchange club Tuesday noon, made by Elijah B. Howarth Jr., state senator of Royal Oak."

"Christmas seals will be sold in both of the Birmingham banks tomorrow and the following Saturday at booths which will be conducted by local women. Mrs. Virginia Hewitt is in charge of the work and will be assisted by Mrs. William Dean."

5 YEARS AGO
Dec. 14, 1939

"The city commission decided Monday night that new Christmas tree dealers must pay the $25 initial merchant license fee as set up in the city's recently enacted ordinance. Persons who have been in business before are not required to pay the fee."

"In order to accommodate Cranbrook school and Baldwin high football schedule, the 1940-41 contract with Mount Clemens may be dropped, it was learned today."

"Birmingham's newest service organization, the junior Chamber of Commerce, formally came into existence at the Community House Tuesday night when fitting ceremonies attended the presentation of its charter to president William Smith."

"With the goal that no family in Birmingham shall go without a merry Christmas, the city's Goodfellows' Association will hold its 12th annual sale here Saturday."

"The opening game of the season in the Birmingham Y.M.C.A. basketball league will be held tonight, beginning at 7 o'clock in Baldwin high school gymnasium."

"Dr. James J. Reilly, Jr., was re-elected president of the Exchange club in the annual poll of the club held Tuesday noon."

"Announcement was made this week of the resignation of Charles E. Lewis, of 272 Hawthorne road, from the board of directors of Baldwin public library, a position which he had held since 1933."

PLAN WINTER CARNIVAL

Plans are under way for the annual Winter Carnival to be presented here during the holiday season, weather permitting. Plans are to be worked out by the Recreation Board and the Student Council of the high school. The event is usually held on Quarton lake.

One of the chief post-war projects for Denver, Colo., is a freeway to distribute motor traffic entering the city to outgoing arteries and to business and residential sections without overcrowding existing streets.

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RESTAURANT OPERATION SCHEDULE

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FAVORITE EATING PLACES

So that you will not be disappointed at finding your favorite eating place closed when you go there to eat, the Restaurants listed here are publishing their operating times. Knowing that you do not want to waste time, gasoline and tires, they are letting you know what days they are closed and what hours of other days they will be open to serve you. Check this list carefully, it will help you plan your dining engagements without disappointments . . .

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