

Editorial Page of The Birmingham Eccentric

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



By GENE ALLEMAN

That the Michigan "battle for war production" is entering its most urgent phase since Pearl Harbor appears to be the real news for Michigan's 52nd week of 1944. This column started out to be a review of the home front news in 1944.

It is remembered that in January, 1942, Justifier Pearl Harbor, we noted that "Washington now plans for a three-year war", that production of arms, growing as it has been, is totally inadequate to meet the needs and that "unless the German nation collapses from weak morale or a lack of needed supplies, we must wait until 1942 and possibly 1943 before there are sufficient arms and trained men to justify a full-fledged military offensive." That was approximately 26 months ago!

D-Day did not come until 1944.

In May, 1943, Lieut. General Breton H. Smezer, chief of the army services of supply, visited Michigan. He warned then that the U. S. Army would not be completely equipped until late 1944. He called rumors of over-production the work of "fifth-columnists" and declared that only in the field of ammunition was there a reserve.

One year ago, December of 1943, the American home front was flush with optimism and confidence that Germany might capitulate by Christmas. Again the optimism persisted in the minds of many persons that the war would be over soon and should be jacked up to be more tense and grim.

Late in January the W.P.A. decided to suspend production of hold up for the present any sizeable increase in civilian production.

The army's new decision, which prevailed, was that this was WAR and not, as it had been, a peacetime production of war goods.

In March the domination of the military, as to the future course of war production, was noted still more. Quotas were set; orders were issued accordingly. The White House issued an order, the review of deferments, the need for replacements was publicly acknowledged.

The warm days of spring focused the public's thinking on the coming of D-Day in Europe. Still the assumption prevailed that the invasion would be successful, thousands of miles from our shores and with American homes secure from enemy air raids, the civilian

"Charter" Mis-named

Anyone with even a average amount of knowledge of political human nature would have agreed that the famous "Atlantic Charter," when it was announced to the world by Roosevelt & Churchill, could never be more than "a scrap of paper"—the times being what they are. You will recall this "Charter" declared itself in favor of fairness as among all nations, insofar as self-determination of their own type of government is or will be concerned. For example, when a German-held nation was released, as in the cases of Italy, Greece, Rumania, Poland, etc., each nation was to determine its destiny.

That "promise," of course, has since been invalidated. Internal strife has risen in each of them—and all the reading and listening world now knows that Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin no longer agree on such self-determination policies.

So, when President Roosevelt returned to his office last week after three weeks of vacation in Georgia, he admitted to reporters that the "Atlantic Charter" consisted only of a number of scribbled scraps of paper, signed by himself and Churchill individually; no formal document ever was drafted, affirmed by the President, though the world was led to believe that such a document really existed, as real and as sacred as the very U. S. Constitution that is guarded in the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C.

Now, folks, we don't want to appear weel-minded on this subject in the opening paragraph of this comment, we state that such a thing as an "Atlantic Charter," in these times, could be little else than a scrap of paper.

We only regret that Roosevelt & Churchill appeared to make it seem like a world-shaking, thunderous set of Great Principles just dropped from High Heaven, via them; and the President, with as much glibness as a chap shaking the salt shaker he passed to him, washes himself of any personal current responsibility to make the "Atlantic Charter" work.

Too bad, isn't it, that it wasn't more correctly named "The Dead Sea Charter," that a political lily upon the great vastness of this earth's second largest ocean?

Who Reads Thirteen per cent of American Bibles?

The survey revealed that only one percent of Americans make it a daily practice to read their Bibles, according to a nationwide survey just completed by the American Institute of Public Opinion.

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Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO
Dec. 27, 1894
"There is little danger that the new bill, known by telephone, will ever succeed the old way."
"H. A. Poppleton and son, Knox, are enjoying Christmas vacation with relatives at Louisville, Ky."
"The face of Mr. Ir. Redwood—home from Alton, Ark.—again greets us. Glad to see him."
"The occupants of the White House sentry boxes must not mistake Santa Claus for a burglar or an assassin."
"If Christmas talk doesn't make your blood circulate faster you are either growing old or are in need of medicine."
"You don't want to see the horrible blue cross do you? It would be terrible to pay an electric bill and you'll feel better."
"Will it be the Randall or Hendrix condenser that gets the Birmingham franchise for the electric road? Personally speaking, we do not care a plastic, but we hope the road will come and it looks like it now, when the high and mighty ones of the big wicked city get scrapping over the franchise as they did at Royal Oak last week."
"A new and delightful episode is all the rage in different parts of the state. It is called the "union social"; young ladies stand in a row. One of them bites a piece out of an onion and the fellows pay ten cents to see which of the fair ones bit it. The correct answer kisses the other five girls, while the clumps kiss the first one. The union eater averages more kisses than the remainder of the girls, and there is said to be great rivalry among them as to who shall bite the onion."

20 YEARS AGO
Dec. 28, 1924
"Previous to the little family gatherings about each divorce and Christmas, the Birmingham village folk will meet as one great family this afternoon and evening about our Community Tree. Then they will gather round the community fireplace to add to their chocolate cups."
"While hanging window shades in the Baldwin auditorium Monday afternoon Herman Howatt, of Pontiac, fell."
"Lois Lynch, of Birmingham, general manager of the Fishy Boy Co. plant in Pontiac, and a member of the Pontiac Rotary club, outlined in her Monday the movement under way by Rotary to aid crippled children in Oakland county."
"The Grand Trunk railroad will start to move its tracks eastward within 24 hours after the starting of Michigan provides a new right-of-way. We are perfectly willing to spend from five to ten million thousand dollars of our own money to assist in widening Woodward street by widening our tracks." This statement was made to the Eccentric Saturday afternoon by W. H. Woodard, general manager of the Grand Trunk lines.
"Street intersections of the much traveled streets, corners intersecting at stop streets and par-



particularly hazardous part of the state. It is called the "union social"; young ladies stand in a row. One of them bites a piece out of an onion and the fellows pay ten cents to see which of the fair ones bit it. The correct answer kisses the other five girls, while the clumps kiss the first one. The union eater averages more kisses than the remainder of the girls, and there is said to be great rivalry among them as to who shall bite the onion."

5 YEARS AGO
Dec. 28, 1939
"Although Santa Claus didn't appear personally, he was kept in spirit last Wednesday night when 200 needy Neato youngsters in the Northport area of Detroit, an area completely called 'Hell's Half-Acre'."
"The annual East River of 2nd Year contest, sponsored by the Executive and Birmingham chapters of the Y. M. C. A., closed last night with the first arrival in the city after the attack of influenza, Sunday."
"Orest Martin, barber living at 1218 South Woodward, whose name was named prize winner in the Get Results With Want Ads."

A Good Definition

An official of the National Association of Manufacturers, President Robert M. Gaylord, believes:

"The free private, competitive enterprise system describes a system privately owned, operated for profit, regulated by competition and policed by the government."

The definition is not bad, especially when accompanied by the declaration that Mr. Gaylord deprecates a conception of private enterprise which would allow corporations to operate without regard to the rights of others.

In general terms there is nothing the matter with the ideal outlined by Mr. Gaylord, although there will be, of course, considerable difference of opinion as to the amount of competition and policing that should be in operation.

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SO YOU WILL FIND THEM OPEN WHEN YOU GO TO YOUR FAVORITE EATING PLACES

ALL of us in the telephone business appreciate your help and patience during the Christmas rush on Long Distance.

We hope you'll try to keep the lines clear New Year's Eve and Day, too. Many important calls will be going over Long Distance then.

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RESTAURANT OPERATION SCHEDULE
SO YOU WILL FIND THEM OPEN WHEN YOU GO TO YOUR 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 hours. Knowing that you don't want to waste time, trouble and tires, they are letting you know what day they are closed. And when they are open they will be open to serve you. Check this list carefully, it will help you plan your dining engagements without disappointments.

THE NORMANDY LUNCHEON DINERS 5 S. Corner of Woodward and 10-Mile Rd. Daily Hours, including Sunday Breakfast 7:30-9:00 P. M. Dinner 11:30-1:30 P. M. CLOSED ALL DAY ON TUESDAYS.	CORNNINGS' ET PATTO Woodward Ave. near Center Highway "It's always a dining table at Cornnings' Champagne and All Sorts" Open Evenings and All Day Sundays Closed on Mondays We Cater to Groups Phone 6-11-9222	BROOK'S COFFEE BAR Woodward Ave. near 12 1/2 Mile Rd., from WEEKDAYS—12 Noon to 7:30 P. M. 10 P. M. in Midtown SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS 7:30 P. M. to Midnight TUESDAYS—Closed All Day
DIXIE DINER 255 E. Merrill WEEK DAYS—8 A. M. to 8 P. M., including Saturdays CLOSED ALL DAY SUNDAY And Every Evening.	KINGSLEY INN N. Woodward at Long Lake Rd. Open Daily from 12 Noon to 2:30 A. M.	FOX & HOUNDS INN Birmingham Center Woodward Ave. near Lake Rd. SERVING DINNERS Sundays and Holidays We Cater to Groups Phone 6-11-9222
MIL-PEX COFFEE SHOP 138 S. Woodward Birmingham Open at 6 a. m. and Close at 2 a. m. Daily Except Sat., Sun. and Holidays Sunday Open 'til 1 a. m. Closed All Day Monday	MINTS ICE CREAM CO. 1300 S. Woodward, Birmingham WEEK DAYS 11 A. M. to 8 P. M. including Saturdays CLOSED ON SUNDAYS	