

Editorial Page of The Birmingham Eccentric

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



Whether the State of Michigan is to have an adequate post-war planning program during the next five years will depend, to a large degree, on what the state legislature does—or does not do—during the next few weeks.

General reception of the program has been favorable by legislators and the public, due chiefly to the careful preparations made by the state planning commission in consultation with key legislative leaders. But the big test is to come.

Editor General Vernon J. Brown sums up the situation in these words: "The program as developed and approved by the State Planning Commission is based upon the assumption that the experience of the State of Michigan in the matter of finance over the past five years will be matched by a period of equal affluence during the next five years."

In other words, the sales tax revenues will remain high and the State Treasury will be able to accumulate and retain a surplus.

Of course not even the auditor general can determine with any accuracy today what the economic trends will be during the next five years. He cannot forecast whether the present high level of sales tax revenue will continue to permit, during the next five years, a continuation of the annual surplus that has blessed the state treasury.

But, assuming that the ordinary period will continue for several more years, then the next hurdle before the post-war planning program is already discernible. It is the pressure of local governments—cities, counties and townships—for a greater share of the state's surplus. The township supervisors have already informed the state that they want some of the Lansing plans, and the governor has informed them that the state's need should have priority.

Actually the records for 1943 show that now, when local governments received 62.5 per cent of all state-collected revenue.

The Kelly administration has adopted the following program for use of the surplus state funds: "To create a reserve fund for post-war contingencies. As Auditor General Brown explains it, the program of expenditures is based upon retaining at all times approximately half of the total accumulated surplus as an emergency fund against any contingency which the state should have priority."

SALVAGE MEMO

TIN CANS—Rinse after use, remove label, open bottom end and flatten with foot. Place in tub 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 engravers' 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 Detroit Service Center, 4014, forenoon from 8 to 1 o'clock.

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WABEEK STATE BANK OF DETROIT

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A Free Press Must Be Real

There is a vast difference between the right to a free press and the existence of a free press, as will be discovered if the people of the world accept the idea that constitutional or treaty provisions can insure a free press.

It is necessary, of course, that the peoples of all countries get the news of the world. This means that their governments must permit uncensored news dispatches to be freely sent to all lands. It requires the freedom to print news dispatches, uncensored, from other countries.

The naked right to send dispatches and to print them, however, does not establish a free press, upon which the future peace of the world largely depends. There must be capable and courageous journalists, ready and willing to print the news, as fully and impartially as possible.

We have, by law, a free press in the United States but if anybody thinks that both sides of a political campaign receive equal publicity they have not read the papers in the last five years. There are newspapers in the United States that reflect certain interests, without being bought, but with little or no consideration being given to the opposite side.

It may be presumed that in international affairs the newspapers of every country will naturally gravitate to the support of their government. It is difficult to imagine these newspapers giving much space to the arguments advanced in other nations against our policies. Some of them will print some news items from the foreign nation but not much space will be given to matters that undermine the American conviction.

Upon the editors and owners of the newspapers of the world (and the magazines and radio stations) will devolve a tremendous duty if we are to develop that understanding of other peoples which makes us sympathetic with their difficulties and anxiously desirous of obtaining settlements, just to all.

Accept the Risks of Peace

The President's message to the people of the United States revealed high confidence in the organization of the nations for peace, after the war ends.

Mr. Roosevelt made it perfectly plain, however, that there can be no sure peace unless the nations are ready to use force to maintain it.

This is important. Any people willing to pour out blood and treasure, after being attacked, should be willing to act prudently and intelligently to prevent the attack.

Let us assume all the risk when aggressor nations seek to plunder the world. Is it too much to ask that we take some risk to maintain peace?

MANY A U.S. CONGRESSMAN HAS RISEN to his feet in Washington, to make a "great speech" for freedom; of some of them really meant what they said, and would back their words with courageous actions. But not enough of them thus act; "words are cheap." So are those who utter them.

Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO Feb. 8, 1894

"Good winter weather now."

"Rooster is talking up a Reading room for its young men. Good idea."

"Milk sellers can now sell their milk at a fair price and deliver once a day and not have to make a drive on Sunday, which ought to be satisfactory."

20 YEARS AGO Feb. 8, 1924

"Believed to have been caused by the effect of sudden changes in the atmospheric temperature, a huge slab of concrete roof, covering about one-seventh of the entire floor of the new high school, snapped from its fastenings a few minutes after six o'clock Thursday night of last week."

5 YEARS AGO Feb. 9, 1939

"Seven hundred dollars worth of snow fell in Birmingham last week during the record-breaking storm. City Manager Donald C. Ebert reported to the City Commission Monday evening."

TOWN HALL SPEAKER

Robert St. John, NBC news commentator, will report on "The News in Washington Today" before the Detroit Town Hall audience in the Fisher Theater Wednesday, Feb. 16 at 11 a. m. St. John covered the war for Associated Press in 17 countries before joining the National Broadcasting Company as its radio correspondent.



Education and Democracy

"We cannot run democracy with an illiterate electorate," says Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, who stresses the necessity of education.

This is very true but there has been a tendency in this country, in recent years, to deride educational qualifications in connection with suffrage.

We are unable to discover any wisdom on the part of a republic which would permit ignorant people to cast ballots and thus control political decisions.

As we see it, too many ignoramus are voting in the United States today. In some of our states, we understand, the ballot is extended to those members of whom are without the faintest conception of the principles of the American system.

We have tremendous faith in the composite judgment of the people of the nation but their verdict must represent intelligent individual decision.

Today we have too many voters tied in a bundle and delivered in mass by political leaders. These voters accept the advice of their leaders which is often based upon what is promised for the economic benefit of the group.

Jefferson's Works

Backed by a \$200,000 gift from the New York Times, Princeton University will publish a comprehensive edition of the works and letters of Thomas Jefferson as a memorial to Adolph S. Ochs, publisher of the New York newspaper for more than forty years.

As we understand the plan, the work will include fifty volumes, to be brought out at the rate of three or four a year. The edition will be limited to 1,000 and sold by subscription.

The estimated cost of the undertaking is \$344,300. The importance of making available the full fruit of Jefferson's philosophy is worth the money. Nothing is available as to the cost of the complete sets at this time, but it would seem that there should be a demand for more than 1,000 sets.

The Birmingham Eccentric

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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 from its readers. News items, letters, and comments are welcomed. Contributions are usually edited and shortened to fit the space available. No return is made for material not used. The Eccentric office will be glad to accept orders for that week, except Classified—4 p. m.

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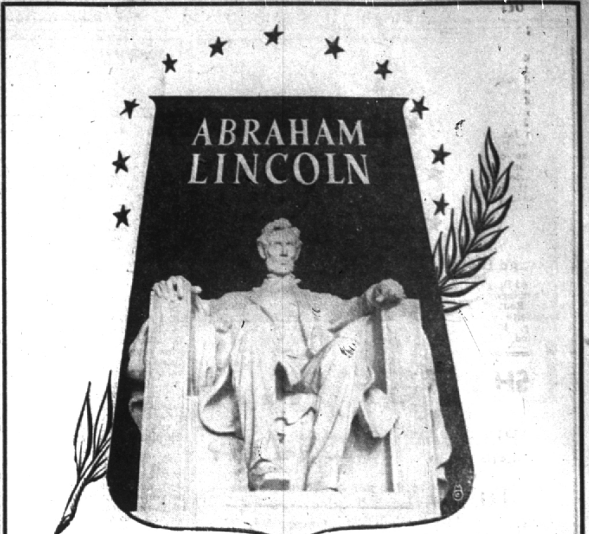
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"LET US DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT."

Abraham Lincoln was a clear-sighted, practical man. And also one of the greatest humanitarians America has ever known. His duty as he performed it, was to consistently reject and fight against deceit and selfish greed, to uphold our democracy's doctrine of freedom. That is evident in his supreme acts of statesmanship in national crises of the past. As a soldier in his youth, as president later, Lincoln knew the real horror of warfare. His plea for legislation to make the Civil War "short, sharp and decisive," gave sound to his animosity to all that war meant. . . . gave voice to his courage in preserving liberty and justice at even so great a cost. Lincoln's enemies again ravish peace-loving people today, in the form of the vicious Axis powers. Let us honor Abraham Lincoln's name in deed, by doing "our duty as we understand it!"

People's Column

To the Editor:

I have been much impressed with the blood donor service program of the American Red Cross. They have done excellent work in collecting plasma for our armed forces. This need for blood is growing and in all probability when the invasion of Europe is started all communities who are visited by the mobile unit of the Red Cross will be asked to collect more, rather than less, blood.

All American citizens between the ages of 21 and 60 who are in good health should consider themselves as potential donors. Of course, I cannot recommend that my patients give blood at this time, for obviously they would not be coming to me if they were entirely well. I am happy, however, to give my professional opinion regarding the advisability of donating blood for any individual whom I have treated.

Blood is one necessary war material which everyone of us citizens who is healthy can give as our part in this war. I have every hope that the people in Birmingham will support this very worthy and essential cause.

Geo. P. Raynaile.

THE ECCENTRIC'S Camera Corner

If you want to keep on making snapshots of this quality, and you should—don't fail to keep your camera in top-notch condition.

With the continued scarcity of film and photographic equipment we should all make a resolution to see that every click of the shutter results in a good picture. That cameras and accessories are given the best of care.

Here are some important things to remember about the conservation of film:

1. Don't shoot pictures at random. You'll get the best results if you will look before you shoot and make sure that you are taking a picture; then get it on the first shot, if possible.
2. Watch your exposures. Inaccurate exposures ruin many otherwise excellent snapshots. Protect your own against such failures. Invest a dime in a pocket-sized exposure calculator, and follow it faithfully.
3. When snapping a moving object be sure that your shutter speed is fast enough to stop the motion, or action. Very moderate movement can be "frozen" at 1/250 of a second. As the speed of the object increases . . . and the nearer it is to the camera . . . the greater the shutter speed needed.
4. Camera movement spoils many potentially fine snapshots. There are two ways to correct this: Place your camera on a tripod or brace it against some steady object such as a post or a tree; or, secondly, use a camera with an eye-level viewfinder which can release the shutter without jarring. Note: Using a cable release often makes a camera wobble.
5. Always check your focus before taking the picture. Make sure the camera is focused correctly. Whatever you do, don't guess at distances in close-up picture taking. Always measure the distance from camera to subject for anything nearer than six feet.
- Remember that snapshots from home are welcome indeed to all service men—so take every snapshot frequently and send them with your letters. Everything new and interesting that happens around the house is a legitimate subject for a picture. So keep some soldier happy with snapshots.

John van Guilder

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