

A Free, Responsible and Aggressive Press is Democracy's First Line of Defense

"Poison Pen" Stories Gene Allemen, executive secretary of the Michigan Press Association, recently attended the Governors' Conference on Mackinac Island. In a letter written later he says: At the Governors' Conference on Mackinac Island, we heard one of the most "perfect" poison stories which could be circulated against an individual. Target of the gossip was Kim Sigler, special prosecutor for the Lansing one-man grand jury. Witnesses to the tale included two upstate newspaper editors.

Pertinent to this incident is the following comment expressed by Nelson D. Brown in the Ingham County News, weekly newspaper at Mason, scene of many grand jury trials: "The stories which were circulated a year ago during the first conspiracy trial are being peddled again. Such as the 'grand jury is spending too much money,' 'no man is worth \$50,000 or \$200,000 (whatever the peddler says Sigler gets) per day as a lawyer,' 'didja hear the one about Kim back there in Barry county?'; and 'Judge Carr wants to be on the supreme court.' There are also a few new stories being placed in circulation, and we can look for others within a few weeks. "Last year at this time the stories being bruited about did not appear to have any particular source. They seemed to be just imagination fragments, idle gossip. Their recurrence now, though, leads some people to believe that the stories are planted purposely by interests who have much to lose if the jurors enter the jury room free from bias and prejudice. It takes just one story to hamstring the prosecution."

If the poison story related privately at the Government Conference is part of a deliberate smear campaign against the one-man grand jury, it is an amazing example of attempted character assassination.

Smuts Gets Field Marshal Jan Christian Smuts, Premier of South Africa, says that the Charter of the United Nations is an advance on the Covenant of the League of Nations, because, instead of being built on hope and good-will, "it has a solid core of enforcement power." The South African statesman says that this "is a very dangerous world and that nobody knows what the new groups of power in the world are going to breed."

When asked by newspaper men who the enemy might be, now that Germany was defeated and Japan was on the way to being conquered, General Smuts replied: "Don't ask who. Nobody knows. It may be one of ourselves. Our civilization is only a veneer. Nations can get mad, like individuals." Those observations may answer the questions that come from pacifists and sentimentalists who insist that if the nations prepare for war, that they name their enemies in advance. This is impossible but unless the earth is entering a new era, which we all hope has arrived, the future will bring new threats to the freedom of the peoples and the possibility of future war cannot be avoided by intelligent nations.

BEGGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSERS UNLESS, OF course, they have influence. Influence, it may be noted, often is a purchasable commodity.

Buying Power Makes Jobs There is considerable publicity being given to suggestions that income taxes be eased for business and corporations, but, so far as we have been able to see, little attention is being paid to taxpayers in the lower-income brackets.

The argument is made, in behalf of business, that reduction of income tax levels will enable them to provide employment. This seems to us to be somewhat erroneous, because employment will only be provided by a continuous demand for goods manufactured.

The way to promote this steady buying is to make certain that millions of consumers have money to spend. A reduction of income-tax levies upon citizens in the lower brackets will automatically give additional buying power and this, in turn, will mean additional employment.

Keep Records This Carr-Sigler Grand Jury is proving that something ought to be done to require State Legislative, Executive, and Committee to keep official records of their public hearings and private meetings. Many times, when a legislator appears before the Grand Jury, and is asked pointed questions about such meetings, he "has forgotten." Both the State Senate and the House are lax in this matter, since they are conducting the public's business, they ought to record what they say and do. These records then should be placed in the custody of the clerk of each branch of our Legislature for permanent safe-keeping.

Calls Lady A "Gas-Bag" Every once in a while some member of a certain class breaks out in an ill-mannered exposition of bad temper, saying or doing something that does not reflect credit upon a good legislative body.

That American Congressmen have no monopoly in this respect is apparent from the London report, revealing the reply of Aneurin Bevan, Welsh coal miner and Laborite member of Parliament, to Viscountess Astor. When the lady asked a provocative question, the miner retorted: "It really is intolerable when this old gas-bag gets up and gabbles away."

The Birmingham Eccentric Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 275-277 North Woodward Avenue. Telephone 17, 12 and 13. GEORGE R. AVERILL, Editor and Publisher. PAUL NEAL AVERILL, Business Manager. CLAUDE E. WALKER, Managing Editor. HAROLD P. BURGER, Advertising Manager. CLAUDE E. WALKER, Production Manager. Registered as Second Class Matter in the U. S. Post Office at Birmingham, Michigan, under the Act of March 3, 1879. SUBSCRIPTION RATES (In Oakland County) One Year \$12.00 (Outside Oakland County) One Year \$14.00 Six Months \$7.00 Six Months \$8.00 Three Months \$3.50 Three Months \$4.00. NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish brief constituted 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 reference 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.



Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO July 26, 1895 "Mr. and Mrs. Corson have been absent several weeks on a pleasure trip to Mackinac."

5 YEARS AGO July 25, 1940 "Tonight's the night for the gala occasion of the summer recreation program—the annual Community Sing at Pierce Field. The public is invited to join in the fun."

20 YEARS AGO July 24, 1925 "To protect local business concerns against the inroads made by transient peddlers and various solicitors, the village commission Monday night passed a new ordinance, the chief provision of which was to discourage one-day visits in Birmingham by the levying of a \$25.00 fine. The previous ordinance levied but \$5.00 for a single day's permission to do business in the village."

ACME Window & House Cleaning Company Phone 1162 424 PARK STREET BIRMINGHAM "Oakland County's Oldest Window Cleaning Service"

Bits of Birmingham (Continued from Page 1, Part 2) cot tries that is bearing even a moderate crop this year is requested by write Stanley Johnson, South Haven Experiment Station, South Haven, about the tree. Please write as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for obtaining samples of the fruit." Birmingham Methodists have allocated \$25,769 toward the \$25,000,000 "Crusade for Christ" program for the Methodist Church for war relief and reconstruction, according to the Rev. J. F. Runkel, pastor, today. Chicago headquarters for the "Crusade" reports \$27,500,000 already raised in cash or pledged with considerable more expected to be received before the campaign closes next fall. The Methodist Board of Evangelism reports a new program calling for establishment of 500 new churches. The Rev. Mr. Runkel told this Wanderer that Birmingham's contributions had not only all been received and that the gift from this city would be considerably larger by the time the entire campaign is closed.

BIRMINGHAM MOVERS MOVING • STORAGE • CRATING 277 PIERCE ST. PHONE 1343 (USE ECCENTRIC WANT ADS)

BRUCE FLOOR CLEANER Qt. 68¢ FLOOR WAX Qt. 89¢ FENCE POSTS All Sizes CREOSOTE Gallon \$1.00 INSULATION All types

UNIVERSAL ELECTRIC MOTOR SERVICE PHONES 408 - 230 392 SO. WOODWARD DOMESTIC, COMMERCIAL and INDUSTRIAL MOTORS REPAIRED and REBUILT

PECK'S Cash and Carry Suits, Topcoats, \$1.09 Plain Dresses. CLEANED and PRESERVED For Delivery by Phone 230 WOODWARD—NEAR MAPLE

LAWSON & SON 464 Forest Phone 111 FUEL AND BUILDERS SUPPLIES

LINCOLN-ZEPHYR SALES - SERVICE GENUINE FORD MOTOR COMPANY PARTS FACTORY TRAINED MECHANICS FRANK McALLISTER COMPANY 464 SO. WOODWARD Birmingham 3650 Elmhurst 5984



IMAGINE 4,300,000 Toll and Long Distance calls! That's just an average day's work for the Bell System. Service generally is good but sometimes there's an extra big crowd on some lines and people are waiting. Then the operator will ask your help by saying—"Please limit your call to 5 minutes."

FRIENDLY BANK OF DETROIT Stick with Our Boys to the Finish! BUY AN EXTRA \$100 BOND during the Seventh War Loan

WABEEK STATE BANK OF DETROIT BIRMINGHAM OFFICE—WABEEK BUILDING

MICHIGAN BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY INVEST IN VICTORY—BUY MORE WAR BONDS