Someone Might Decide to Teach Us a Lesson

John Knecht, a local realtor and long-time Birmingham resident, this week is smarting under a stiff rebuke handed him a few days ago by the city plan commission.

The city planners, who at first eagerly approved Knecht's proposal for a $200,000 colonial store development on the east side of Woodward just above the 14 Mile road, later in the meeting turned against him when he didn't want to trade two horses for one.

The commission asked Knecht to approve the idea of a service drive in front of his proposed stores.

Declared Knecht, "I don't want to condition my project on my approval of this access highway. If the access highway is to be, then there is nothing I can do about it. But I can't see why I have to decide on the merits of the idea right now."

Knecht, during the discussion, admitted he stood to gain more in this matter if he could put up a colonial store development with off-street parking in the rear. But he needed the area re-zoned from single residence to Business B in order for him to build this parking lot according to city zoning provisions. He owns all but four of the residential lots at the rear and offered to deed them to the city at a very nominal figure.

The planners realized, too, that the city stood to gain by having a fine commercial development at this point, compared to what could go in there indiscriminately, and that Knecht's proposal for a parking lot would certainly solve that business problem.

The commission cannot be criticized for attempting to get Knecht on its side regarding the access drive. It would mean one less objection when time came that the city and state decided to put in the access drives south of Lincoln avenue.

But the commissioners found Knecht, at this time, didn't want to say how he stood on the matter. The commission insisted, so the situation is still up in the air.

The 36-foot right-of-way, over which this disagreement centered, belongs to the state. The state could leave it as it is, put in an access drive, prohibit parking altogether, or anything else it wanted. Knecht and the other property owners, when this decision is finally made in Lansing, would have to go along with it (which Knecht bluntly told the commission he would do, whether he liked it or not).

We believe the matter will ultimately be decided for the benefit of all concerned. But we shudder to think of what might be built along that portion of S. Woodward if some out-of-towner, instead of Knecht, controlled this property. If the outsider were vindictive, he could tell the city to jump in the lake and permit undesirable properties to develop.

But Knecht, because he lives in Birmingham and wants to have and keep the city as fine as possible, will take this cuffing and attempt to wait out the matter.

However, we don't think the city plan commission can long continue its policy of "getting two for the price of one." It might possibly find itself being shortchanged by some smart operator who wants to teach the city a lesson.

The commission should be satisfied if it gets back one hundred pennies for its dollar bill.

Only One Sour Note

Last week's Memorial Day parade here came off smoothly and was ample evidence that Birmingham could, if it received more cooperation from more groups and citizens, put on bigger and better ones in the future.

For some years now the city has observed Memorial Day very meagerly; most of the "observances" were private and took the form of individual pleasures. Memorial Day, we believe, should still begin with local memorial services by the living for those who have died in the service of their country. The holiday atmosphere comes afterward.

There was, we observed, only one sour note in the parade activities, not at all the fault of the three veteran organizations which sponsored it.

As the parade progressed down the streets, **few, if any, men and women paid their respects to the national colors.** As the several color guards passed, men remained with hats on heads, women continued to talk with neighbors or busy themselves with their children.

Has the American flag lost its glory? Is it no longer something to be respected?

Next time let's do much better. Let's honor and respect "Old Glory" as we know we should.

One good brick at a time is the basis of good construction, just as one good board and one good nail are necessary to lasting building. Good government is built and sustained by good individuals, the majority of whom make for the construction of good government. Just as we need good bricks, boards and nails, so do we need good citizens. That's about all that is wrong in nations today.

The Birmingham Eccentric

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 124-128 North Woodward Avenue
Telephone 11, 12, 13 and 14

GEORGE R. AVERILL — Editor and Publisher
PAUL NEAL AVERILL — Business Manager
GEORGE WM. AVERILL — Managing Editor
HAROLD P. BUERGE — Advertising Manager

Entered 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)		(Outside Oakland County)	
One Year	$2.50	One Year	$3.50
Six Months	1.75	Six Months	2.25
Three Months	1.00	Three Months	1.50

The Eccentric is a member of: National Editorial Association, Michigan Press Association, and University Press Club.

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.

Internationally Speaking

By Eugene Hess
International Market Analyst

The hopes for the new Berlin Conference were rather high, if we go by the publicity which emanated partly from Washington before it actually got under way. This is rather astonishing. The conflict with Russia is not a "one day" or "one conference" issue at all.

We should slowly start to realize that the fundamental differences between the United States and Russia are not, basically, of an economic nature. Both nations have or can obtain what they need for their economies, by peaceful means.

It is also not a question of space, or what the Germans call "Lebensraum"—space for living and expansion. The issue is a spiritual one, and it is not the first one and not the last one for this world.

We should all start to realize the nature of the conflict and stop looking to any single conference to solve an issue which is so deeply rooted as this one.

More reserve might lead us to better results in the long run than enthusiastic comments on an international meeting which is to take place, and the outcome of which can only be one stepping-stone to the solution of a problem of such magnitude.

Ticklers By George

"Clara, why don't you bring the young man home sometime? . . . Me and yer maw would like to know what kind o' folks he comes from."

Have You Met? . . .

Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Martin who are living at 782 Colonial Court? Mrs. Martin is a teacher in Ferndale schools.

Former Detroiters, Mr. and Mrs. D. V. Mudge and children, Ronald, Gary, Karen and Jeffrey? They're residing at 2015 Windemere. Mr. Mudge is an electrical contractor.

Night Rain

I love the beating of the rain
Against my roof and window pane,
Its steady gentle tapping, tapping,
Its quiet, yet insistent rapping.
I like to lie awake and hear it
And hear it splashing on the tile . . .
Though often with its rhythmic tune
It lulls me off to sleep too soon.

It strikes up simple melodies,
As if the roof had strings or keys.
My little griefs and worries wane
While I am listening to the rain—
Pattering, spattering on my roof.
It is the very warp and woof
Of music and of poetry.
Rein coming down from heaven to me.

—BEATRICE McDONALD

Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO
June 9, 1899

The Birmingham Masonic lodge celebrated the clearing up of debts caused by the purchase of their new room over the bank building last Thursday night. Their special guest was Frank T. Lodge, grand master of the Grand Lodge of Michigan.

* * *

Call at this office to see a centipede and scorpion from Cuba. They are "b(r)utes".

* * *

Don't waste a moment but get a dress pattern from Hudson's. They are more than slaughtering prices. All purchasers of dress skirt patterns costing more than 25c a yard can have them made up, free of charge.

* * *

A certain local lady declares she will begin a shotgun policy soon if people do not stop trying to break into her home. Several attempts have been made in the past, with one man trying to gain entrance to her cellar only last week. She warns that the next may get no loot, but will get his money's worth of thrills.

* * *

A small boy with a hoop caused a lively runaway one evening last week. The team belonged to Sam'l Groves and had just purchased a load of furniture and waf starting for his country home. The wagon was capsized and the contents literally demolished.

20 YEARS AGO
June 13, 1929

A. C. Wermuth, 508 Lakeview, narrowly escaped injury Thursday afternoon when his plane crashed into a small tree at the west end of Oak street as he was attempting to take off. A wing was torn from the plane which tipped over. Wermuth escaped with minor cuts.

* * *

Birmingham tax collections will start July 1, and will continue through August 1 without penalty, according to the village treasurer. A one per cent penalty will be charged after that date, with an increase to four per cent in September and October. The county treasurer will receive the books in November.

* * *

Adison J. Pollock and John Mallett of East Ruffner are in the hospital suffering injuries received when they were struck by a truck driven by W. A. Gilmert of Mt. Clemens last week. The two boys were reportedly playing "catch" in the street at the time of the accident.

* * *

The new bank notes to be issued in July are now on display in local banks. The new bills, which have been in federal printing for several months, are considerably smaller than the old bills, and represent the first change in paper money since 1861.

* * *

E. B. Spalding, Grace Rogers Spalding and Warren P. Gibson, Birmingham dentists, will be among the 700 of their profession who will enjoy the 1929 Great Lakes cruise which the Michigan Dental Society is sponsoring. They will leave Detroit June 18.

5 YEARS AGO
June 15, 1944

George Dallas Clark will be ordained to the Diaconate of the Episcopal church on Monday in St. James church. The Rt. Rev. Frank W. Creighton, D.D., S.T.D., Bishop of Michigan will preside. The Rev. Charles H. Cadigan of Christ Church Cranbrook will preach the sermon.

* * *

Rolland F. Webber, 164 Baldwin, was installed as president of the local Lions Club last Wednesday. Ralph A. Main has been named first vice president with William Spence as second vice president.

* * *

Two bad fires caused heavy property damage here Sunday night, when the worst blazes of the year struck local residences. About $4,000 was the estimated damage to the Fred M. Harley home on Pleasant street, with $5,000 reported from the W. B. Mainland home, 945 Glenhurst.

* * *

The second annual play leaders institute will be held Monday and Tuesday, June 19 and 20 at Ferndale. The program has been greatly enlarged this year to offer greater recreational facilitfies to youngsters in this area.

* * *

The Birmingham board of education today began an extensive campaign to locate living quarters for the teachers who will begin their duties here next fall. Persons having suitable rooms available are asked to contact the board at the Hill school.

'I Dare You'

Money for National Defense Next Year Equals 10 Per Cent of Nation's Income

(Special Story From Our Washington Bureau)

By Joseph A. Dear

WASHINGTON—Federal economy depends on world peace.

Yet not one member of the Senate economy bloc has revealed the "economic" meaning of the staggering price Uncle Sam pays because of the jittery condition of the world. And, on the floor at least, few senators have analyzed the problem of economy realistically.

More than three-fourths of the national budget is tribute to Mars, the god of war. Because of the unsettled condition of the world, congressmen have come to regard recommended appropriations for the military as sacrosanct. Clearly, Congress will not be able to do much economizing if savings must start above the $22 billion level.

Require $22 Billion

To maintain the National Military Establishment next year (fifth year of peace since the end of World War II), the House has approved cash appropriations and contract authorization amounting to $15.9 billion. But this is just the beginning of the story.

The foreign aid programs cost about $5 billion, and their primary purpose is national defense, though humanitarian and economic objectives are involved. The Atlantic Pact will cost another billion. These total more than $22 billion, or ten percent of the national income.

The $22 billion does not include appropriations for the atomic energy program, primarily military, or the interest on the national debt. Most of the debt resulted from the war.

Even the suggested economies of the Hoover Commission are shaded by comparison with defense costs.

None Will Satisfy

No one today would urge United States to cut funds for the military enough to endanger the country's security. But it would seem no appropriation is large enough to satisfy the military. As a wit once observed, a general would like to fortify the moon.

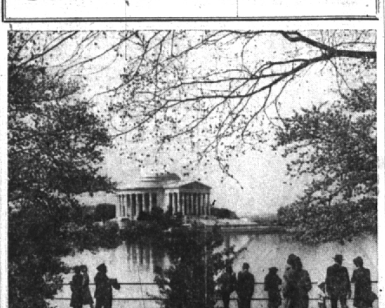
Dr. Edwin Nourse, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors to the President, warns: "A defense program that is guided by the most perfect military considerations may impair the economic and financial preparedness . . . That could be equally disastrous for United States."

More alarming still is the tendency of some presidental advisors to view a large military budget as a prop against falling prices.

Perhaps real economy could result from successful diplomacy—the kind that would enable the rest of the world to understand America better. But that is exactly the field where Congress swings the axe; as appropriations for the military rise, those for the "Voice of America" are reduced.

The wild life on an area varies with the amount of food, cover and water available.

THE ECCENTRIC'S Camera Corner



Good scenic pictures call for concentration on a center of interest, careful composition to make that center of interest stand out.

With an Eye to Vacation

A FEW weeks ago we discussed a number of ways of lending depth to your pictures, of gaining a sense of three-dimensional space in your scenic shots.

Today let's look at some of the other tricks of producing a good scenic picture—the type of shot that every picture taker hopes to bring back from vacation.

Let's start by assuming that our focus and exposure are correct, since these are technical factors. What, then, will make a good picture? The answer can best be summed up in two words, composition and concentration.

Too often a scenic shot may be spoiled by trying to take in too much. That's where concentration comes in. Instead of attempting to get as much into your picture as possible, pick out the center of interest of a given scene and concentrate on it. This helps keep your pictures simple.

And good composition dictates that the center of interest should not lie in the precise mathematical center of the picture area. Chances are that by placing your center of interest a trifle "off center" you will achieve a less static and more pleasing effect in your prints.

A second good point of composition is to keep your horizon off center—don't let it divide your picture area into halves. This holds good not only for the horizon but for any other horizontal or vertical line which appears in the scene.

And third, let your eye be led into the picture to the center of interest. Try to select an angle to shoot from which will provide the proper lines and masses to point up your main subject and help make it stand out. This can be done by carefully studying the scene in your camera's viewfinder from several different positions until you find the best site to shoot from.

All of these points are illustrated nicely in today's picture of the Jefferson Memorial. The memorial itself is the center of interest—and it's to the left of the mathematical center of the picture area. The horizon is closer to the bottom of the picture than the top. And the overhanging branches of foreground trees not only frame the picture, giving it a strong three-dimensional feeling, but lead the eye to the shining memorial.

In addition, your eye is also led to the center of interest by the figures in the foreground. It's only natural for you, in looking at the picture, to look in the same direction that the figures in the scene do—at the memorial itself and not at the camera.

So keep these points in mind in making scenic shots this summer. You'll find them helpful and you'll find they pay off in good pictures.

—John van Gailder

Michigan Mirror

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

By Gene Alleman

Like the old nursery song, "Who killed Cock Robin?" Michigan has a new political dispute to fuss over: "Who's to blame for the coming state deficit?"

Governor G. Mennen Williams criticizes the Republican legislature. In an address before the state C.I.O. convention in Grand Rapids, he urged labor to "pump some guts into the legislature to face the terrific financial situation in Michigan."

Rather than operate the state in the "red", Governor Williams intends to call the legislature back into special session. He is whooping it up for a tax on corporation profits as a "painless" way to get more money.

* * *

By continually hammering away at the legislature's refusal to enact new taxes, Williams seeks to put the Republicans on the defensive—a good strategy if it works.

In his plea for new taxes, the governor has some newspaper editorial support. Here are a few examples: Battle Creek Enquirer and News—"The major fault in the legislative session was the refusal of members to halt a financial crisis before it occurs." Jackson Citizen-Patriot—"It is inexcusable that a legislature should call its job finished while a deficit . . . threatens the state."

Robert F. Steadman, state controller, forecast on May 27 an operating deficit between $70 and $72 millions "in the light of a continuing decline in general business conditions."

* * *

John P. Espie, chairman of the house ways and means committee, is a veteran in the legislature. He is now serving his 25th year.

It has been Espie's conviction that the constitutional earmarking of state funds for return to local governments, twice upheld by the voters, would inevitably lead to a state treasury deficit. He has often suggested "it might be a good thing to run a deficit and let the people see what they did when they adopted sales tax diversion". (This amendment returns 78 per cent of sales tax revenue to schools, cities, villages and townships, leaving the other 22 per cent for state services.)

Espie's recommendations, which the legislature apparently approved: Levy no new taxes, come back in January (1950) when we can see where we stand.

* * *

To those individuals who cry vaguely for economy in state government, believing that the deficit might be averted by such legislative action, Espie is a realist from his long experience. He vigorously opposed the sales tax diversion amendment which he says is the root of Michigan's present financial troubles.

Michigan's present taxation system has produced some paradoxical situations. Only 34 counties paid as much in state taxes as they received from the state treasury.

Take Clinton county, for example. Representative Espie is from Clinton county. Clinton received $1,319,228 in state revenue during 1948; Clinton county taxpayers paid $1,117,358 to the State. The "bonus" from Lansing was $201,870. Since local taxes in Clinton county totaled $511,179, the effect was to get $1 state bonus for every $2.53 of county taxes.

* * *

Getting "something for nothing" thus is the financial blessing conferred by Michigan's present hocus-pocus tax setup upon 49 counties.

The situation becomes more involved, politically at least, when the populous counties which pay the bulk of state taxes demand reapportionment in the legislature. Then you get a city vs. county argument. It was the so-called neglect of big cities which prompted Mayor George Welsh, Grand Rapids, to join forces with the Michigan Education Association for the diversion amendment victory.

* * *

Will the legislature receive credit or condemnation for its refusal to enact new taxes at the 1949 session? The lengthening shadow of the coming state deficit presents a challenge.

It has already provided Governor Williams with a new issue: A "do-nothing" legislature which lacks "guts" to avert a deficit.

Labor Reported Out to Defeat Dondero in the 1950 Congressional Elections

(Special Story From Our Washington Bureau)

By Esther Van Wagoner Tufty

WASHINGTON—Labor is putting down the names of 39 congressmen "to go" in the next election.

The big guns of labor picked the 39 after the dust settled from the fight over labor legislation.

In Michigan, the "head hit" is Congressman William W. Blackney of Flint, and the "possible" is Congressman George A. Dondero of Royal Oak. Neither Republican won by large percentages in the last election. (Other Michigan Republicans voted for the Wood bill or against recommitting it . . . but their re-elections are not considered "doubtful" by labor.)

Will Try to Hold Gains

Labor's political problem for 1950 is to hold the spectacular gains made in 1948 and to win at least 15 additional seats in the House and seven in the Senate.

Officially, organized labor political activity is non-partisan. Republicans who vote to suit labor are as eligible for support as Democrats. In practice, labor is usually busy electing more Democrats from the North and West and different Democrats from the South.

In 1948, labor took a gamble on supporting Republican Gerald Ford of Grand Rapids, but he's on the blacklist today, along with six other Republicans for the Wood bill despite election-time help from labor forces. (The others are Democrats Jobitt of Pennsylvania, Carlyle of North Carolina, Gregory of Kentucky, Willis of Louisiana, and Republicans Hoffman of Illinois and Pfeiffer of New York.)

Chances Are Too Good

However, the Grand Rapids Republican is not in a district considered "doubtful" and his chances of re-election are too good for him to be listed as one of the 39.

On the Senate side, the labor fight has not yet reached the floor. Fifty-four of the 96 senators voted for the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, either as senators or as members of the House. This means that labor has to win at least seven seats in 1950 to be sure of itself in the upper body.

The Human Race