

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

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 220-222 North Woodward Avenue.

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

NOTE: The Eccentric will publish contributed material providing it has news value; and suggestions are welcomed.

You wouldn't call Henry Kaiser a class-conscious proletarian, yet the fact is that Henry, a very conscious capitalist, is in the vanguard of that "dictatorship of the proletariat" the doctrinaire Socialist drools about.

The fact was underlined by his recent loan from the RFC—bringing the total of the taxfunds made available to him to a round \$186,000,000. When in due time he is unable to sell his products any longer there is a depression—Henry will necessarily default on his interest payments.

There will be renegotiation and reorganization and, finally, foreclosure. The government will find itself the owner of a huge plant, which it will operate "in the public interest." That will be Socialism.

Another news item that heralds the advent of the millennium comes from New England. A group of capitalists—all good Americans and hateful of Socialism—have decided that the section could do with a steel plant; it should be put up in Connecticut.

Since it is unfeasible these days to finance large undertakings with private funds, as the pioneers did, the capitalists have put the matter up to the Governor of the state. He happens to be of the same political persuasion as the President.

Latest reports are that Connecticut will "borrow" one hundred million from the U. S. Treasury for the venture, giving its own bonds as security. In effect, this transaction will slither the Federal Government, in partnership with Connecticut, into the steel business. Harry Truman promised as much shortly after his election.

These are but instances of how the republic, with the connivance of "free enterprise" capitalists, is buying its way into Socialism—with our tax-money. Quite an improvement on the revolutionary method advocated by Karl Marx.

Nothing in Common With Franco. There are a number of individuals in the United States, including some members of Congress, who, for reasons satisfactory to themselves, continue to pump up the suggestion that the United States needs Franco Spain as an ally in the war against Communism.

This is nonsense of course. Franco needs some help from this country in order to retain his present strangle-hold upon the people of Spain. He is a dictator of the worst type, his ruthlessness being different from that of Russia only in that he professes to be a great believer in religion.

While there may be some reason for the eventual establishment of diplomatic relations with Spain, there is none what-

ever that we enter into any agreement with Franco that will tend to keep him astride the Spanish people. He recognizes none of the freedoms which the people of this country consider essential.

There was talk some months ago that we had to have Spain as a base in the event of war with Russia. There is no doubt of the fact that the Franco regime will fight Russia, to the limited extent that it can do so.

It would be a mistake, however, for the people of this country to believe that they can secure any assistance from Franco and his regime. It is totalitarian in essence, regardless of the rights of the opposition, and about as much different from American ideals as the Russian government.

There is no reason to believe that the present Spanish government would be the champion of democracy—at least, until Franco puts many democratic principles into practice in Spain.

Refugees From Communist Lands

News dispatches from Geneva, Switzerland, say refugees are pouring into Western Europe from Russian-dominated areas at the rate of 2,500 monthly.

This is not a large number but, in view of the border patrols, it is indicative of much unrest behind the Iron Curtain. No assistance is given the refugees, according to Michael L. Hoffman, New York Times reporter, who thinks that it is politically short-sighted not to assist the refugees from Communism.

This may be true in regard to most of the refugees, but it is just possible that the best way to screen the refugees is to let them make their way to freedom without too much assistance. In this way it is not difficult to determine the sincerity of the refugees.

The United States has suffered in the past through immigration attracted to this country by the lure of easy money and a more prosperous life.

Those who come primarily for the material benefits they expect to receive are not concerned with the ideals of western civilization and many of them have shown little inclination to acquaint themselves with the fundamental traditions of freedom-loving peoples.

Recent elections in Australia and New Zealand are cited as evidence of a trend running against liberal government throughout the world, with particular reference to Great Britain where the Tories confidently predict their own victory in the general election to be held this year.

While it may be interesting to speculate upon these elections, it is practically impossible to draw any lesson from an election in any foreign country and the results, seemingly apparent, have little or no bearing internationally.

Debts of state and local governments have gone up in the past year, according to the Census Bureau, which reports that they reached an all-time high of \$20,875,000,000 last June 30th.

This looks like a large amount but it is nothing compared with \$252,000,000,000 that the Federal Government owes.

Happenings of Long Ago

50 Years Ago JANUARY 5, 1900 HAPPIER NEW YEAR! We greet the turn of the century with best wishes for everyone in Birmingham.

FOR RENT—A nice comfortable modern home of seven white rooms and seven baths a month. See Whitehead and Mitchell for further details.

The holiday vacation is now a thing of the past. The excitement of school life was resumed, in most cases with reluctance, by our boys and girls on Tuesday morning last.

Here's a chance for a man with a little money to get a good investment. The John McCarroll place in the Woodward district, 11 acres of fine fertile land and lots of fruit trees.

A young lady from Detroit who is a member of the Boy Scout class in Birmingham. The terms are very reasonable if a goodby party can be arranged.

20 Years Ago JANUARY 5, 1910 W. E. "Pasty" Johnson, "the world's most colorful advocate of prohibition" with Major F. E. Woodard at a mass community gathering Sunday afternoon, Jan. 19.

The formal opening of the F. W. Weston store and restaurant will be held Saturday, Jan. 11. The new store will be located in the Briggs building at the corner of Woodward and Maple.

The Baptist church will be the scene of a very interesting service of Honor Jan. 24. Dr. C. B. Lundy, president of the Detroit area council of churches, will preside during the ceremony when several local businessmen will be honored for excellence in Scouting.

Dresses and lingerie valued at \$1,739.90 were stolen early Monday morning from the Beverly shop in the Woodward district. The thief saw the broken window in the shop as he parked his car at the rear of the building.

Three Toledo youths paid fines in court for driving on the wrong side of the street. The driver of the car was fined \$50 while each of his companions was fined \$25 when they resisted arrest.

5 Years Ago JANUARY 11, 1925 Mrs. Fred Pew has received information from her husband to the effect that he has been advanced in rank from captain to major in the United States Army.

A joint meeting of all PTA groups in the city will be held in Barium Junior high school Monday, Jan. 22 at 8 o'clock. Donald A. Murray, program chairman for the PTA, has endorsed this program of Commissioner Henderson.

The new stage of the Birmingham Rifle and Pistol club will be opened at 134 North Woodward. The building is located in the basement of Northwood store. Weekly shoots have been arranged for the balance of the winter, to be held Monday evenings, beginning at 8 p.m.

The quarterly meeting of the Lions club was held Sunday in the Community House, with 67 members of 11A present. John Medgough of the Pontiac club, zone chairman, presided. James J. Kelly, historian of the local club, talked on the club's activities and his duties as historian.

Another record growth for the year has been reported by the Birmingham National Bank. Herbert H. Gardner, president, reported that the stockholders' annual meeting said the bank had enjoyed the busiest and most prosperous year of its history.

March of Time

By BEATRICE McDONALD

I used to love the autumn wind, I used to love to watch the leaves turn gold, And rapt delight was mine When winter swept its way across the world.

Help Wanted

As a step toward contributing to trained physicians to Michigan, President David D. Henry of Wayne University, Detroit, has asked Governor Williams that a request for \$200,000 be presented at the 1950 special session of the state legislature for construction of a Medical Science building.

Who pays for these taxes? One-fourth of the current cost of Michigan-made automobile is the hidden cost of taxes. It is estimated that each family in the United States last year paid a total of \$37.18 in corporate income tax alone.

Equivalent to an increase in wages will be the 1950 decline of living costs now forecast by economists. From all time high of September, 1948, living costs dropped 10 per cent.

Another quote from the Police Journal: "Meanwhile in Detroit the number of drunks brought into the city has increased at a rapid pace during the first two weeks of October while Recorder's Court each day continues to handle the early sessions, he heard an average of 50 drunk cases daily."

More classrooms and more teachers—both of which will require more tax money—will be needed by Michigan public schools during the next six years, according to the State Department of Public Instruction, Lansing.

Total debt of governments in Michigan—state, county, cities, school districts, villages and townships—are \$850,000,000 or about \$119 for each inhabitant. Interest on the debt is about \$45,000,000.

Here's a little more news from the Birmingham Eccentric which has done a superb job of serving the citizens of Birmingham and vicinity and that is because you and your entire staff have diligently reported the news and published the facts. Your editorials and column are a credit to you.

We are all mighty fortunate to be living in such a wonderful county, state and city with so many good friends. Here's wishing you all a very happy New Year.

A Texas man was in a rifle match and unaccountably missed every shot at 100 and 200 yards. He scored bulletless, however, with every shot at 500 yards.

Well, said the Texan, "back home in my home state I can hit anything less than 500 yards. We just throw rocks."

"Any Way You Slice It" BY HAL P. BURGER

You're all good kids, so I'm going to give you a little tip to be used on future occasions when the opportunity arises. This tip will be especially appreciated by the fun-loving individual who continually raises the mournful cry that good entertainment is becoming scarcer and scarcer as the years go by.

Well, brother I've got the answer to that one. I have exposed to this type of entertainment on numerous occasions and feel that I can give it my four-star endorsement. It is the kind that was provided last Thursday evening at the Music Hall.

I've been excited to this kick for quite a number of years and ever since I was privileged to live in a college town I have been patronizing college talent shows and other productions. If you are not already aware of the fact, I can assure you that the average university is talent to burn.

Another tip, if you'll take it—get your tickets early. If you don't you will find yourself so far up in the balcony that they will take you to your seat in a helicopter. When you arrive you are apt to have a nosebleed, unless you get one that is prevented.

Getting back to the Mask and Wig Club and their marvelous production, let me explain that it is tradition on the campus of the Philadelphia institution. Their first production was that of 1889 and it has been repeated nearly every year since.

For those who are not quite familiar with the club, I might explain that it is an all male organization that features entertainment calling for a cast of both guys and gals. Of course, the girls are fellows from the campus.

The skits are rendered by men of much talent and rare comedy appeal. The singing, all accomplished without the fake falsetto approach that usually accompanies the act of men mimicking women singers, is just a wee bit short of sensational.

One amusing thought flitted through my mind as I watched the new Penn skit through their dismal gill-toothed through clever dialogue and render the snappy songs of Adamant Eve. I couldn't help today of one disagreeable task the Mask and Wiggers of today have to perform that their predecessors of by-gone years never dreamed of.

Internationally Speaking By Eugene Hess. In the last notes published with regard to foreign affairs in these columns, I stated that the situation in India is a critical one. Let us set now, today, a large quantity of our own surplus grain aside, say one million tons of wheat, and ship it to India.

A Helping Hand. The 95th Anniversary of the woman at least twice his weight. After the ceremony he asked some of the guests to drop some flat. The best man looked doubtful.

Pico-Tours of Europe. ITALY: WHERE MANY OF THE WORLD'S GREAT-EST OPERA COMPANIES PERFORM. IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF THIS POPULAR ART. BRITAIN: THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW, WHICH EVERY AUTUMN DRAWS LARGE CROWDS TO LONDON.

STRICTLY FRESH. FOUR men armed with machine guns held up a dice game in Kentucky and took \$5500. That's a pretty fair roll. The cost of getting a college education keeps going up, education in other words, higher education is getting higher and higher.

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