

Use Phillips Method to Get Group Opinion

By HELEN BRUNSON

Have you been part of "Discussion 66" lately? It's also called Phillips 66, but has nothing to do with gas and oil. It's a technique worked out by J. Donald Phillips, now President of Hillsdale College, for sampling the thinking of a large group of people, say 100 or more, who are gathered together in a PTA, town or other meeting.

In such meetings, when opinions are called for from the floor, people seem glued to their chairs. They hesitate to stand up on their two feet and say what they think.

Some are afraid they'll be judged as show-offs. Others are just naturally self-conscious. They have opinions worth expressing, yet go away without saying a word.

THE PHILLIPS "BUZZ-SESSION" technique works like this: You have a crowd of say 150 people and you need their opinions and their help on the problem: "How can we provide housing for our overcrowded schools?"

The plan is to break up this large group into small circles of six people each, and in six allotted minutes, obtain the thinking of each one. A skillful over-all leader is necessary—a person who is used to handling people.

THE QUESTION is written on a blackboard, very clearly stated, and the leader explains that each person's help is needed in solving it. Then he says,

"Some of you turn your chairs around, right where you are, and we'll form committees of six. Appoint a chairman and a recorder in each committee." Recorders are provided with pencil and paper.

THE NEXT STEP is "Get Acquainted." The chairman goes quickly around his circle of six, asking each person to give his name and one fact about himself.

Now the six minutes begin. The chairman goes around the circle and asks each person to give his opinion on the big question on the blackboard. It's all short and snappy because of the time limit.

The over-all leader calls time, and each committee of six takes a few more minutes to screen its ideas for the best one or two. The recorder reports these to the leader, who writes them down. There you have the thinking of six people summarized for the benefit of all.

Don Phillips and Larry Taylor, while on the faculty at MSC, travelled extensively, helping community groups develop better programs. They found that the above technique would produce a truly democratic result because of the naturalness of the small groups and the informality of the setting.

THERE IS ANOTHER factor here. Psychologists tell us that when we want community backing for a needed program, we should work from INTEREST to PARTICIPATION to SUPPORT.

People show interest by coming to a meeting. If they actively participate in a discussion, they will be likely to support the issue at hand, by working on committees, ringing doorbells, or voting bond issues.

As Ed Grim, Lansing school-man puts it: "People who care."

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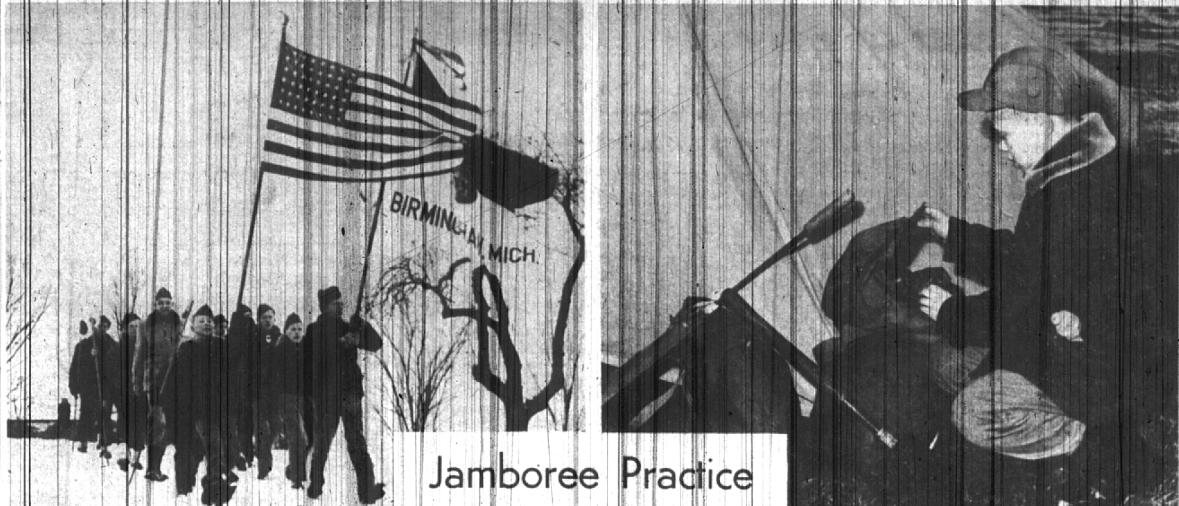
DETROIT

SUNDAY TIMES

ALSO READ: ARTHUR GODFREY AS HIS SPONSORS SEE HIM

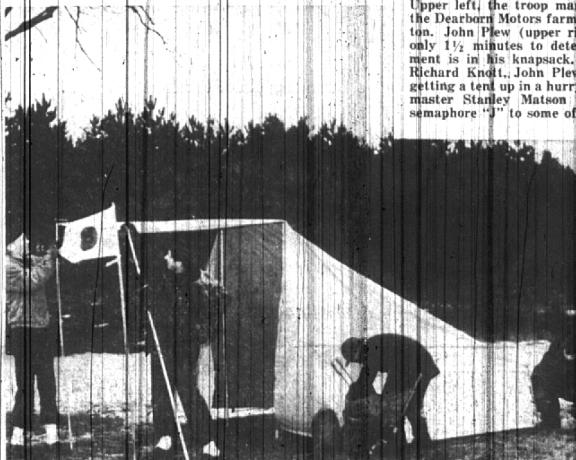
In conversation with a friend the other day, he said: "Being a professional author and presenting myself to the public people often feel as though I am living a very perfunctory, mechanical existence; as though skimming the surface, not the depths, of life."

The Birmingham Eccentric



Jamboree Practice

JUST IN CASE some of them can get to California next July when Boy Scouts hold their Annual Jamboree at Santa Ana, the B-1 Troop held a "test-day" recently. Upper left, the troop marches to the test campsite at the Dearborn Motor farm, Dearborn Hills near Clarkston. John Plew (upper right) checks his gear having only 1½ minutes to determine whether his equipment is in his knapsack. Lower left, Michael Hartoff, Richard Knott, John Plew and Frank Mathey practice getting a tent up in a hurry and in a limited space. Scoutmaster Stanley Matson (lower right) demonstrates a semaphore "I" to some of the troop members.



See Bee Praised For Amphib Duty

LITTLE CREEK, NORFOLK, VA.—John G. Ralph, construction man in USNR, attached to Amphib Corps, Battalion Two, was presented a letter of commendation here for his excellent performance of duty while on an operation with the Sea Bees.

Ralph, who enlisted in the navy in Jan. 1951, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Ralph, 24625 W. 10 Mile Road, Southfield Township.

On Caribbean Cruise

Jere W. Woodall, chief boatswain's mate, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. V. P. Blais, 1087 Glenhurst, is serving aboard the submarine tender USS Fulton on a winter cruise in the Caribbean.

Want ads cannot be accepted after 5 p.m. each Tuesday.

Change March Meeting For Recreation Board

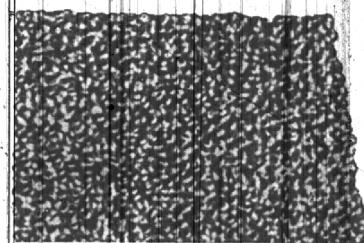
In order to get on the proposed budget for 1953-54, the Birmingham recreation board will advance its March meeting date one week, meeting on Tuesday, March 12, at the city hall.

A tentative budget of \$11,879 presented by Director Frank Whitney at the Feb. 19 meeting, was voted "incomplete."

Whitney was asked to prepare a new budget and the advance date met the request. The budget will be presented to Birmingham city commissioners for study and inclusion in the annual city budget.

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