# Public Bodies Should Rarely Have to Bar the Public

There are times in the life of any governmental group when it is desirable to close the doors to the public as the group seeks to decide on a course of action regarding a matter of considerable concern to the community it serves.

It may be that premature disclosure of information t obe discussed would set back or, ruin the project in an early stage of development.

Or it may be that members of the

development.

Or it may be that members of the group—having worked long and closely together—wish to save time by using short, simple language, which if heard by an audience or representatives of the press who reported the statements just the way they were said, would cause considerable embarrassment to the public officials.

HOWEVER, SUCH CLOSED sessions should be called only after careful con-sideration of their effect upon the public. The rarer these closed sessions are resorted to, the greater the public will tolerate and keep their faith in their public servants.

If too many of these secret meetings If too many of these secret meeting, are held, the more the public will become alarmed that possible "skullduggery" is happening, and they soon lose respect for and faith in these same officials.

But once the public group makes a de-But once the public group makes a decision in a closed meeting, it should immediately be made public, probably through the press. And all applications of this policy, which requires action by the group, should be made at sessions at which the press and the public may attend.

ONE SUCH CLOSED SESSION WAS held last week in Birmingham by the city plan board. It was explained that the board was attempting to decide on some long range planning policies which could be recommended to and adopted as a guide by the city commission.

by the city commission.

The public will expect an announcement some of these flays soon as to what policies are to be recommended. If the plan board can't arrive at a majority decision, it expects to hear that, too.

Secret sessions which result in secrets can reduce a community to ignorance. Secret essions which shortly become public knowledge can be tolerated and also supported. Secret sessions which produce "announcements" that give the public the impression its thinking has been already done for it, often cause an adverse reaction done for it, often cause an adverse reaction from the citizenry.

Go sparingly on secret sessions and promote the public welfare!

## They Have Short Memories

Politics is filled with paradoxes. When Kim Sigler was Governor of Michigan in 1947-48, he obtained legislative co-opera-tion in changing the State's prison laws; the policy-commission form of control was

abandoned in favor of a one-man control.

Austin H. McCormick, admittedly the nation's outstanding authority on penal problems, approved the change and was asked to recomend a director of prisons; he came up with Joe Sanford, who was given the job.

IN 1949 GOV. WILLIAMS succeeded Sigler; Sanford was forced to leave his job. This year the Legislature restored the commission form of control . . and now the commissioners are asking McCormick, and two other penal experts, to recommend a director.
All of which shows how short are the

memories of politicians.

#### Racketeering Union Bosses

Judging from years of reading about the activities of union loosses, it appears to us that the boys running certain locals of the Teamsters' Union are closest to outright racketeers. Taking advantage of the right of labor to organize, some of these leaders prey upon employeers early

the right of moof to organize, some of these leaders prey upon employers, exact-ing sums of money from them illegally. To expect this type of racket-ridden union to become and remain honest is to expect too much.

# Yet, alas! the decent men who belong to the union's ranks are practically power-less (or so they think) to do anything about correcting the situation. So the rank and file are used merely as "bait by the bosses, who are veritable dictators over them and their employers. Let's hope that Detroit's Judge Miles N. Culehan's grand jury does something to bring about the arrest and conviction of all these racketeers.

From The Eccentric's Point of View . . . the populace. Completely surrounded as it is by the city—and thus almost impossible for Troy township to serve with water, sewers, and other municipal facilities—it appears only logical that the 40-acre area should become part of Birmingham. While we can understand the Troy board's feeling that its township residents should be consulted on whether to let go of some of its area, it seems like this particular instance could save both Troy and Birmingham some money by not having it come to an election. The most economical action would be by resolution of the city commission and the Troy township board.

The recent decision by the Birmingham

A Wisconsin editor commented recently that the beautiful wild flowers in and near his town are so thick this year that passersby can hardly see the beer cans scattered over the landscape.

So They Say . . .

W. Sterling Cole, Congressman from New York, and Chairman Joint Committee on

From what we have been able to read in Detroit's newspapers, Mayor Cobo's unsuccessful opponent, James H. Lincoln, resorted to the usual political clap-trap to win votes. He argued that about everything Cobo has done is wrong—although informed observers agree that Cobo is one of the beat Mayors Detroit ever had. To us, Jim Lincoln havilty recently. To us, Jim Lincoln hardly measures up to the political traditions of the name he

It is being urged that the South de-velop more Republicans . . the urger on this occasion being a Wisconsin Democrat. To be sure, Sir—no doubt the Republicans would get to like those mint juleps just as well as any Kentucky Kunnul.

Arthur Godfrey has become some sort of entertainment "institution" in this country. Millions of his admirers think him the total personification of everything that is fine and good, including "humility". His recent bout with singer LaRosa and orchestra leader Blyer suggests that Arthur has his weaknesses, too.

It comes as somewhat of a surprise to learn that annexation of the "Porritt property" on the east side of Adams road may only come as a result of a vote of

# The Birmingham Eccentric

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National Advertising Representatives Weekly Newspaper Representatives, Inc. 1618 Guardian Bidg. DETROIT 26, MICH. NEW YORK 10, N.Y. The Eccentric will publish contributed material providing it has news value. Suggestions are well-comed. 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 if brought to the publisher's attention.

Atomic Energy:
"I don't find it hard to choose between financial ruination for my country atomic destruction." Carlos P. Romulo, Philippine Delegate to "It is better to fight with words than with bullets."

Arthur S. Flemming. Administrator, Of-fice of Defense Mobilization: "Soviet Russis is capable of delivering the most destructive weapon ever devised by man on chosen targets in the United States."

Once Bitten---Twice Shy



## Happenings of Long Ago

Bits Of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric-The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

50 YEARS AGO
November 6, 1903
All over the country the reports
are that the turkeys are few and
prices high. The person who insists upon eating turkey this year
will have to pay 20 cents or over
per pound for the bird.

Dr. Daniel M. Johnson has seld his brick house lately purchased by him from the Wooster estate. Mr. Plumstead is the purchased and \$2,500 is the price paid. Lucky Dan. Lucky Plum.

Dan. Lucky runn.

A quist reading was celebrated in our village last week Thursday, as also how of storage F grant and the how of the storage for the storage

ineas for several years past.

Lost—A pair of gold bowed, over the ear spectacles. Finder please leave at the Eccentric office.

Just notice our new postoffice improvement now, it's all residual colors—the green provided by the provided b

30 YEARS AGO Nov. 9, 1923

Nov. 9, 1923

Recent calculations show that approximately \$85 is spent annually for periodicals by the Baldwin library, and that this money is well spent is indicated by the large circulation of these periodicals among the patrons of tha library.

the library.

Shades of the good old school days in the "little red school house" will be brought back to life early in December when the pupils who attended the old brick road, escaped uniquired after she need to be a subjects.

Nancy Day, 17, 822 Suffield road, scaped uniquired after she need to a subject of the pupils who attended the old school building, which was cycle, who was also unhart:

built in 1854, and which is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Clizbe.

To date more than \$300 has been contributed by residents of Birmingham and Bloomfield Township in response to the annual Red Cross Roll Call, according to information given out this week by Mrs. Louis Hupp, West Maple aven, local director for the country Red Cross Chapter.

A fire which was discovered at 2:30 o'clock Saturday morning at the home of George F. Smithson, 312 Park street, resulted in a loss of approximately \$4,000.

The 1938 football program for the Thanksgiving game to be play-ed this year at Birmingham, marks the silver anniversary of regu-larly scheduled football relations between Royal Oak and Birming-ham.

Birmingham Rotarians Monday noon at the Community House were given glimpaes of the early days of Rotary International, its world wide program, and its first days in Birmingham, when six of the local club's members made five minute talks on the various subjects.

#### HORSE SENSE AND NONSENSE BY ALICE E. MORGAN

The recent decision by the Birmingham city commission to limit the Springdale park golfing facilities only to Birmingham residents, starting next season, will be encouraging news to local "duffers." Many of them in past years have shied away from using the local municipal fairways and greens because so many non-residents were enjoying them.

THE OVER all implications of "God fearing", however is another thing, entirely.

In another column in this week's bir ming ham Eccentric is a line state of Michigan. It is a report assuring us of food for our own uses and food to share with the state of Michigan. It is a report assuring us of food for our own uses and food to share with the state of Michigan. It is a report assuring us of food for our own uses and food to share with the state of Michigan. It is a report assuring us of food for our own uses and food to share with the state of Michigan. It is a report assuring us of the state motor which fund four for the third quarter of 180s will be \$3,326.62 and Onkland county will gain \$826,048.47.

The motor valied fund results of the state with the state of the state of

"Painful emotion marked by halarm: drear; disquiet; ..." for it has happened in our own exalarm: drear; disquiet; ..." for it has happened to friends and we do not like the phrase, "God fearing." The other night we overheard a transport of the district o

hem two such contrauctors, bout God. Can't we clarify it for them?

sermon at reading fear of God in every sentence? For God in every sentence? The fear of God in the control of the control of God, that from High God of God of the control of God, that from High God of God

### ONE THING OR ANOTHER

Most every male newspaperman out-wardly belittles his or any other newspaper's society coverage, although deep down he realizes its value to the paper and the nmunity.

He professes to anyone who will listen, "I wouldn't be caught dead writing a so-ciety item."

But every male newsman, as a result of this artificial attitude, adds, "Now if I were to write one, here's what it would be . . ."

A brave editor, from time to time, will blossom out with his version of a wedding, engagement, or tea—as he wants to write it.

MOST TIMES, IT INVOLVES himself or some member of his family, whose out-bursts at the published result he usually can control. Or else it is fictitious, and written as satire and for an effect.

written as satire and for an effect.
One such venturesome newspaperman is Robert E. Quillen of the South Carolina Tribune. He decided to see what wedding story would look like if the facts really were the following:
"The groom is a popular young bum who hasn't done a lick of work since he got shipped in the middle of his junior year at college. He manages to dress well and to keep a supply of spending money because his Dad is a soft-hearted old fool who takes up his bad checks instead of letting him go to jail where he belongs.

"THE BRIDE IS A skinny, little idiot "THE BRIDE IS A SKINN, ILLUE INDUCTION WHO has been kissed by every boy in town since she was 12 years old. She paints like a Sioux Indian, sucks cigarettes in secret, and drinks corn liquor when she is out joyriding in her Dad's car at night.

"She doesn't know how to cook, sew or hear house."

see house.

"The groom wore a rented dinner suit over athletic underwear of pale green imitation silk. His pants were held up by

lavender suspenders.
"His number 13 patent leather shoes matched his state in tightness and harmo nized nicely with the axle-grease polish of his hair. In addition, he carried a pocketknife, a bunch of keys, and his usual look of imbecility.

"THE BRIDE WORE some kind of white thing that left most of her legs sticking out at one end, and her bony upper end sticking out at the other.

#### By George Wm. Averill

"The young people will make their home with the bride's parents, which means they will sponge on the old man until he dies, and then she will take in washing." End of Mr. Quillen's piece. Libelous per se, if any names had been used, of course. Which is why such a wedding account—even if it happened to be the community" "eye view" of the situation—would never appear written this warmen. appear written this way.

Birmingham telephone customers next week (Nov. 20), in addition to being able to dial direct 14 U.S. metropolitan centers between the East and West coasts, will be able to immediately dial seven cities in outstate Michigan — Athens, Battle Creek, Bellevue, Cadillac, Sault Ste. Marie, Midland and Munger.

The Birmingham Eccentric's editor and publisher. George R. Averill, indirectly is responsible for one of if not the best seamans' libraries on the Great Lakes. Some months ago, the Detroit Free Press' automotive writer, Leo Donovan, write a piece about his experiences during the maiden voyage of the William Clay Ford, the Ford Motor Co.'s newest freighter.

freighter.

In the article, Donovan mentioned that. the crew didn't have much of a library to use during its spare time.

A FORMER MANAGING EDITOR of A FORMER MANAGING EDITOR of The Eccentric in the late 1920's, Donovan knew considerable about GRA's experi-ences as a marine engineer on the Great Lakes and oceans prior to his becoming publisher of The Eccentric. Donovan also knew GRA used to read all the books kept in the forward cabin (where the owners, their families or guests stayed during freighter trips), as well as other books he brought aboard with him.

h him. 'Much of my modest success I attribute

"Much of my modest success I attribute to the good books I read during my sailing days," GRA repeatedly told Donovan.

So the lack of an adequate library on the new vessel got back to the man after whom the boat is named, William C. Ford, vice president shd general manager of Ford's special product division.

He vowed his ship would have the best crew's library on the Lakes—and it now is in the process of being accumulated.

### Deer Hunters Can Register To Get Messages

The Michigan State Police and should inform the state Conservation department again will offer a free registration inservice for Birmingham deer hunters who desired by the state of the service should register at the state police post or conservation in the state police post or conservation officer. A hunter desiring to avail his will be will be stated to be motified in the hunter is registered. The masself of the service should register at the state police post or conservation officer. The state police post or conservation officer.

