

**The Birmingham Eccentric**

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**What Is the Proposed Central Business District Plan?**

A few weeks ago the Birmingham Plan Board approved "in principle" a long-range plan of the Central Business District Development Committee to modernize and revitalize downtown Birmingham by anticipating its future needs.

The committee was formed and financed by downtown Birmingham businessmen, who sought to prevent the city's business district from drifting into old age.

The committee's goal was to separate vehicular and pedestrian movements; increase vehicular access into the business area; provide adequate parking; compact the commercial development; divert non-business traffic; and "landscape" the area to preserve the tradition of the community.

NOW THAT the businessmen and planners have mullied over the subject, The Eccentric feels that the non-business residents should review it and offer suggestions for improvements.

At the right, you will find a map setting forth the "ideal" arrangement in the minds of the committee members to accomplish their six goals.

At first glance, many citizens may negatively respond because it represents change. However, after analyzing the overall plan, they may see it as the only way Birmingham can keep its specialty shops and avoid the trend toward downtown ghettos.

Bear in mind also that this plan is designed to be effectuated over a 20-year period, although some of the steps should be accomplished in the next five years. There will not be an immediate tearing down of buildings or costly construction of highways.

THE COMMITTEE suggests that its goals be attempted in four stages.

The first stage would be to plan a belt around the business area so that non-business traffic could be diverted and some of the congestion lessened.

The second stage would be to provide for increased parking by acquiring some new land.

The third stage would include the com-

pletion of the road-belt and the conversion of some of our present public parking areas into multi-level structures.

The fourth and final stage will be the closing of certain streets and the creation of a mall or concourse, as shown on the map.

WILBER MASON, chairman of the merchants committee, emphasized that this is an "ideal" plan brought about by compromise, one that is flexible enough to be changed even during its execution, if such a change is desirable.

He indicated that to preserve Birmingham as it is today, we must relieve downtown congestion. If shoppers can't get to the stores easily, they will go elsewhere to shop.

Under the plan a shopper will have to walk as far as he does now at Northland Center. Also, no shopper will have to drive up and down the street looking for a place to park and then struggle with parallel parking.

MASON INDICATED that the plan took into consideration possible improvements to 14 Mile Road and the improvement of Quorton Road to lessen traffic congestion downtown.

He felt that the businessman influenced the architect just enough so that the plan combines beauty with effective business operations.

He felt that it would not change the overall visual image of the town, but would add beauty to the downtown area.

WE HAVE TRIED to give you a capsule summary of the CBD plan. We will in future editorials discuss many of the complications and implications of the plan, such as its cost, how it should be financed, the merits of specific parts such as the mall and traffic flow.

We think this is an important step for our community to take, and should only be taken after all the citizens have decided on how to proceed and when.

We earnestly solicit your comments.

**A Poem for Thanksgiving**

For things to eat, for things to wear,  
For sheltered home, for all the care  
That Thou hast shown my every need  
I'm thankful, Lord, in word and deed.  
For friends and loved ones I am glad  
To thank Thee, Lord—for when I'm sad  
They come to me with words of cheer,  
And thus Thou liv'st with me each year.

Oh, Lord, I pray Thee make me worth  
The loveliness of this good earth!  
Oh, smile upon this greed-torn world  
Until in every land's unfurled

The banner of a love that's fit  
To wear the robes of Holy Writ.  
For sun and moon and stars above,  
For love of life and love of love  
I'm bending on my knee this day  
In true humility to pray  
My thankfulness, my gratitude,  
For every Christ-Beastitude.  
And, as life tumbles on its way,  
I hope that each Thanksgiving Day  
Will make my song of thanks ring clear  
On every day throughout each year.

—George R. Averill

**From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .**

The Justice Department, alarmed by the growing infiltration of hoodlums into plush residential areas across the land, has appealed for the support of public informers. But apathy and fear deter the average citizen.

As criminals become our close neighbors we are aware that they derive their huge incomes from human degradation and misery, that they are forcing young girls into prostitution and trapping other youngsters into drug addiction.

We know they buy immunity by corrupting public servants and that they use the narcotics victims they enslave to expand their criminal operations.

By such crimes, as well as by blackmail, extortion and murder, they build fortresses which virtually enable them to defy the law.

But because of the quiet luxury with which their enormous "take" enables them to surround themselves they overawe us. Most citizens fear to help "put the finger" on them or the officials they corrupt.

Some of us, envious of their wealth, secretly admire them. Thus they become the uncatchables.

No wonder the men of the Justice Department, watching this octopus grow, plead for help. The public should respond to help prevent a national tragedy.

Little is heard, these days, about the profound moral question involved in atmospheric nuclear testing. Yet future generations may well judge us by how we resolve this question.

There are two moral questions involved, really. The more immediate of the two is whether, if

refraining from atmospheric tests weakens our military position relative to that of the Communist world and thus potentially endangers freedom, we have the right to refrain.

The other question which particularly concerns future generations—if that is, nuclear war is averted; if it is not, the men of the future will have plenty more to worry about. The question is whether we have a moral right to create additional radioactive fallout which may irrevocably damage mankind genetically.

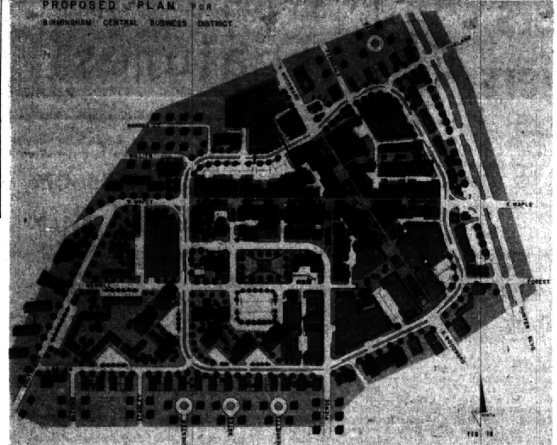
The key word is "may." Biologists simply do not yet know how severe or widespread genetic damage might be, even if there were prolonged fallout at a higher level than is now the case.

But the biologists do more or less agree that damage would result—that increased radiation increases the chances of monster births years in the future.

Presumably the masters of the Soviet Union are not much troubled by such considerations. There was news only the other day that a Russian scientist making progress on means of lessening the harmful effects of radiation was transferred to another field of research.

But the United States must be concerned. Would we be justified in resuming atmospheric tests and thus possibly handicapping children yet unborn? It is a question we cannot and must not evade.

He who uttered this statement uttered a lede: "They tell you to keep your eye on the ball, your shoulder to the wheel and your ear to the ground—but how can a fellow do much work in that position?"



**How CBD Would Appear**

This map illustrates the Central Business District plan for Birmingham as proposed by the merchants Central Business District Development Committee. It shows the peripheral route to carry traffic around the business area, locations of the stores, access routes to the stores, parking facilities and pedestrian malls. (See editorial at left.)

**PEOPLE'S COLUMN**

**Tells 'Peace' Writer To Be More Specific**

To the Editor:  
The "Strike for Peace" letter writer (Nov. 9) is quite unimpressed. She asks for "peace and petitions." Note: these "peace" petitions never talk of liberty and freedom, only "peace."  
She suggests that our nation unqualifiedly give up our defenses, regardless of what the Soviets do. It is sad that in this day and age, 45 years after the Red Terror began, people still openly suggest such absurdities.  
Can you imagine a letter in 1940 suggesting that we lay down our arms and sink our ships to show Hitler the way to "peace"?

AS IF the Communists are less brutal than the Nazis!  
The only difference between them is that we learned about Hitler in less than 10 years; yet 45 years ago we had no idea of the evil he still play the part of the monkeys that see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.  
Hitler killed six million, Khrushchev and Stalin deliberately starved millions of others to death. History records other monstrous acts, both individual and mass.  
In the past, people did not recoil and surrender before such acts. They fought back for their liberty and their children's freedom.  
Can we ever forget the heroism of the Hungarians who fought tanks with stones?  
Will history record us as the first people who blindly, collectively, begged to surrender to tyranny because of unreasoned fear of war?

THE LETTER writer also demanded "unremitting support for negotiations." She is not specific. Could she mean negotiations for the freedom of the Americans in prison in China? Or perhaps negotiations for the freedom of the Hungarians, the Poles, the Tibetans?  
Does she wish to brook both the pitiful Tibetan refugees and the Cubans? Does she demand redress for the German who broke both legs leaping over the wall?  
Does she shed a tear for the Portuguese woman in her way, (including babies) butchered by Red Terrorists in Angola?

THE PRACTICAL effect of the "peace petitions" on the Russian government is nil. Russia answered the UN when it asked for a cessation of tests by letting go with the biggest bomb in history.  
Russia truly understands world opinion. The effect of the petitions on our own government is more serious. They could have the effect of causing our government to falter, to hesitate before resump-

ing the tests so desperately needed.  
So desperately needed to maintain our strength and to show the free world (and those behind the Iron Curtain) that we remain strong, free and still their great HOPE for salvation.  
SUCH A hesitation on our part would give the Soviets the chance to catch up and might convince our allies that their American friends are desperately attempting through petitions and otherwise, to keep us from testing.  
For American property owners, family men and women, and believers in God, to sign such petitions is a form of self destruction.

Daines and Bell's big new store building on Woodward Avenue is going rapidly forward. A goodly number of brick-layers are pushing the bricklaying right along. From appearances it is to be one of the best constructed business blocks in the village.

Work of tearing up the tracks along the old Grand Trunk right-of-way, between Lincoln Street and Lone Pine Road, where the new right-of-way intersects, was begun Monday following cessation of operations on the old line Saturday. The tracks must be up before Dec. 1, by order of the state highway department which intends to grade the stretch between Oak Street and the intersection of right-of-way for the new Wider Woodward pavement this fall, according to H. Minton, local Grand Trunk agent.

A gala program of music and entertainment features is being planned for Dec. 11 at the Franklin M. E. Church, according to Rev. R. D. Richards, the pastor. The entertainers will include Mr. Richards' vocalist, Eddie Edwards, Birmingham pianist; a vocal quartet; a magician and a comedian.

Members of the Parent-Teacher Association of the Barnum Intermediate School will give a "poor man's party" and chop supper at the school this evening. Prizes will be awarded for the most appropriate costume.

Birmingham's annual Christmas party for its youngsters this year will be highlighted by a miniature circus. Howard Hahn, manager of the Birmingham Theater, announced this week. The party will take place at the theater, complete with trained animals, tight-rope walkers, clowns—the circus will be an hour-and-a-half of excitement for the youngsters the morning of Dec. 14. Deemed one of the city's most (See HAPPENINGS, 6-B)

The Power of Suggestion, which continues to live in the sub-conscious mind and finally do its worst long after the time of impression, was never more fully demonstrated than in an article which appeared in the Los Angeles Examiner a few summers ago.  
"Three Long Beach teen-agers had killed a liquor store owner in a hold-up. The mother of one of the boys, who was but 17 years old, was shown holding a picture of him in

A local woman called the office recently and asked of one of our reporters, "How are you today?"  
"Oh, pretty, thank you," the reporter said quickly.  
"Funny thing happened on the way to work today," he started.  
". . . I got here on time."  
Two teenagers were looking at a puzzle on the shelf in a local drug store.  
"Can't you figure out the way it's supposed to work?" one asked the other.  
"Well, it looks kind of mixed up to me."  
"Oh, come on. Just use a little common sense."  
"But common sense isn't so common."

**Happenings of Long Ago**

50 YEARS AGO  
Nov. 24, 1911  
The beautiful home of Harry M. Shepherd in the new Oak Grove addition is finished and the owners snugly settled. It cost about \$3,000 and is an ornament to the subdivision.  
The very artistic posters in the show windows of Spencer and Co., Erwin and Smith and Charles J. Shain were all done by Mrs. Alice Hagerman Thurber of "Wine Lake." They tell of the splendid Thanksgiving dinner to be given by the Auxiliary of the Franklin Cemetery Association at 1 p.m. at Franklin Public Hall Nov. 30.

30 YEARS AGO  
Nov. 21, 1931  
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**Suburban Sidelights**



By HANK HOGAN

As you sit down for Thanksgiving dinner tomorrow, consider yourself lucky that you are not one of the Detroit Lions participating in a food experiment.  
Normally the morning before a game the team eats a breakfast of consomme, steak and a baked potato or ham and eggs.  
Recently some nutrition experts found fault in steak; they said it leaves a big lump in ballplayers' stomachs during a game. As a result, Mildard Kelley, the Lions' trainer, concocted a milkshake-like drink called autogen, which probably could be called a lump-less steak.  
It is a food concentrate that is more energy-producing, yet more digestible than other foods given to ballplayers.  
Only a few of the Lions are experimenting, so as you watch the game tomorrow, see if you can pick out the steak eaters and the milkshake drinkers.  
However, for Thanksgiving you rather have solid turkey or liquid energy?

SPEAKING OF foods brings to mind lobbyists and Con-Con's struggle with minimizing their influence.  
Convention delegates are discussing plans to have all lobbyists register and report their expenses incurred during the convention.  
As you know, a lobbyist is a paid legislative agent who rooms capitols trying to stop laws that will hurt his employer and promote laws which will help his employer. He is really just a glorified salesman.  
His tools of trade are a glass, a knife and a fork. The only way he can get the ear of a legislator during a busy day is to buy him a drink or have a meal with him.  
Legend has made the lobbyist an evil giant, whose sole purpose is to bribe legislators.  
In fact, they are an important part of the legislative process. There were over 1000 bills introduced in the last session of the legislature.  
It is virtually impossible for a legislator to personally research all these bills to determine which are good and which are bad.  
THE LOBBYIST can fill in this research. It is a tremendous help as long as the legislator is smart enough to listen to proponents of both sides of the bill.  
Apparently, Con-Con delegates have not learned how to use the lobbyists and are concerned about the legend. There is little trouble in Lansing today with those lobbyists who will register.  
If the convention is concerned about a delegate selling his vote for a drink, that type of person will sell it for something else if the drink is not available.  
Possibly the area that Con-Con should really study is that involving proponents of changes in the Constitution who normally wouldn't be required to register, but who spend more time influencing legislation than the paid agents.  
People like those who represent local school districts or individual colleges, or groups of people favoring some social change.  
Some of these same people have been elected delegates to the Convention.  
Maybe delegates of this type should register with the lobbyists?

George Romney and Charles Ferry criticized their political party.  
And as a result had to settle for Con-Con positions less than what they, reportedly at least, aspired to.  
Romney spoke out before he announced as delegate for Con-Con on the Republican ticket.  
Ferry, siding with the more progressive element of his party, stung on the matter of reorganization. A former newspaperman, he possessed the quality of objectivity.  
As the leader of Citizens for Michigan, Romney expressed quite freely his views of both the Republican and Democratic parties.  
Both men, intelligent and learned in the ways of politics, must have been aware of what the consequences might be.  
Yet, both had the conviction and the courage to speak their minds.  
And for this they should be highly commended.  
Because all too often people in the public eye side with the popular view rather than taking their own stand.  
Or, like television star Jack Paar, take the drastic, the extreme viewpoint to capitalize on the showmanship it entails.

I WAS BORN 50 years too late.  
How splendid it would have been to have been born in the era when the horse was the main mode of transportation.  
To ride through the valleys and over the mountains of the West.  
To follow the course of the streams that snake their way through those valleys and mountains.  
To climb to the peak of one mountain only to feel an irresistible urge to see what's on the other side of the next one.  
Instead, I was born in the era of the automobile.  
And I seldom get off the main road, let alone back to the paths and trails of the mountain country.

GETTING SERIOUS again, I wonder what would have happened if there had been a United Nations at the time of the American Civil War?  
What would the UN have done then?  
How effective could it have been in settling the differences between North and South?  
Would there have been a precedent to the current Congo-UN situation right here in our own country?  
And what would the UN have done back in the days of our Revolutionary War?  
Would it have ruled in favor of England or the Colonies?

COMPLAINT DEPT.—Sales clerks who say, "I want to be honest with you, but . . ."  
Is it usual for a salesman to be honest?  
"You're a good customer, I wouldn't want to mislead you."  
Does this mean you might be misled if you were not a good customer?

**Talk of the Towns**

By DENI SCANLON

Excerpts of things heard and overheard locally:  
While shopping in town, I met a friend. He was sitting in a car with his two children waiting impatiently for his wife to return.  
His first words of greeting were:  
"Know anybody who wants two slightly-used kids? One of 'em is slightly-housebroken."  
There's a gal who frequently comes into the news department here at The Eccentric. She's starting now to write me a little notes commenting on things I've written.  
In a note that came last week, there was a clipping from The Wall Street Journal (Nov. 9). It's one of today's most read and about topics:  
"The Sheltered Life: A Chicago apartment project plans a sub-basement fallout shelter for 1,000 persons. And, in Nebraska, Roberta Dairy Co. starts building a \$33,000 concrete shelter for 250 Georgians cows."

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