

The Birmingham Eccentric

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Hopes Rest With Our Delegates

The Constitutional Convention has now convened, after four hectic elections. Our congratulations are offered to Messrs. Romney, Woolfenden and Van Dusen, our local delegates to the convention.

Along with these congratulations go our sincere hope that they and others of their caliber can influence the convention into taking steps necessary to give the People of the State of Michigan a modern, effective constitution.

ON THE SHOULDERS of the 144 delegates rest the responsibilities of making our Executive Branch able to perform its work without administrative red tape. They must decide which state officials should be elective and for how long a period.

And they must decide a fair and equitable arrangement of electing a legislature that represents all the people.

If they were to provide election of both of our legislative houses on a population basis, there might be no need for county houses. Areas such as Oakland County must be better represented than they presently are.

HOW OUR judicial system should be modernized is of great concern.

How should supreme court justices be selected? Should we abolish the justice of the peace courts and have county-wide small courts?

In addition, they must decide the financial and tax picture for the state in the coming years. Should we have an income tax? If not, where should the money come from to run our state?

Should there be an earmarking of certain revenues, such as gas tax for highway construction?

Much consideration will be given to our educational institutions. Should we tie together all of the higher education administrative boards and have central control?

SHOULD WE have county-supported community colleges to relieve the load on our major institutions, at a much lower cost per student?

Should we continue to earmark part of the sales tax for primary and secondary education?

Lastly, the delegates must decide the role of local government in Michigan. Will they make it stronger or weaker?

It has often been said that responsibility of government to the people lessens with every mile that government is away from the people.

Our three local delegates are highly qualified to undertake the responsibilities handed them.

But they must extend their influence to other delegates who may not measure up to their standards.

THE ECCENTRIC does not anticipate a completely open convention. We recognize that some issues cannot or would not be discussed because of possible unpopularity if every debate is published verbatim.

Furthermore, lack of closed doors for convention committees would only mean more closed-door hotel sessions.

On the other hand, delegates do have a responsibility to communicate the convention's formal actions, its accomplishments and its defeats to the people.

We have invested our hope for the State of Michigan in these assembled delegates.

Merely rephrasing our present constitution is not enough. It is now 53 years old. It was framed before the automobile industry as we know it today came to Michigan.

It was framed when Michigan was an agricultural and lumber industry state.

Its "horse and buggy" concepts must be modernized.

Yes, delegates, blessings to you and our congratulations. Don't fail us.

Greatness as Reflected in Wilson

How do you measure greatness? Is it the fact that a man worked his way to the top of the largest industrial corporation in the world and then made that greater?

Is it the fact that the President of the United States selected him to be secretary of defense and a member of his cabinet?

With the passing of Charles E. Wilson last week, our country and our community lost a truly great man.

Great, because Mr. Wilson was a man of integrity, imagination, ability and action.

IN THE AUTOMOBILE world he was known as "C. E." Then, in Washington he won the nickname "Engine Charlie," which some people might think blasphemous. Yet, in his many earlier accomplishments, he had earned more respect than the nickname implied.

He had been looked up to and admired in his field. When he subjected himself to exposure of political life, newsmen and associates tagged him with a nickname not associated with the power and dignity of a man of high office—it was a term denoting affection and humanness.

IN RATING HIM great among men, we

include his outstanding role at the helm of General Motors in our country's moment of deadly challenge with its conversion from a peace-time service into emergency war-time performance.

And, later, he played the part of guiding back America's largest corporation into normal peace-time services, a transition fraught with problems that "C. E." was masterfully adept in meeting and doing without fanfare.

He again served his country well as secretary of defense during the critical period in the 50's with unselfish dedication and at much personal cost.

We must praise him for his valiant attempts to make the defense department an efficiently run organization, despite criticisms from both the military and the political.

BUT THE LARGEST measure of greatness lies in the fact that Charles E. Wilson lived a type of life and possessed a bedrock set of workable principles that earned the respect of his fellow man.

With the death of "C. E.," we have lost a truly great neighbor.

Welcome Extended to City Planner

Every village and city, regardless of size, reflects in many ways the ideals and the aspirations of its people—some of them elected or appointed officials, others being average citizens who may participate in various specially appointed civic committees.

Some communities manifest considerable good thinking and planning, Birmingham being one of them.

Our city has been fortunate, for many years (and also much of the time when we were a village) in having forward-looking city commissions, planning and zoning commissions, city managers—not to overlook, in recent years, a city planner.

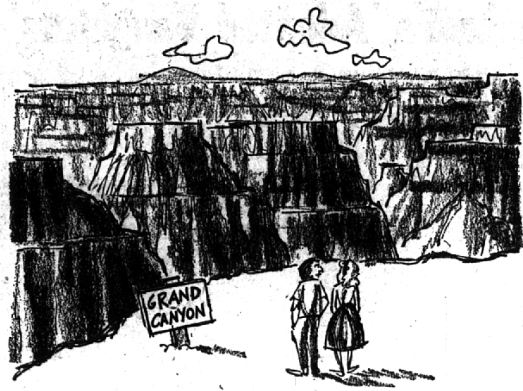
COMBINED, THESE citizens have done

a good job in their respective contributions in providing Birmingham with a satisfactory physical environment.

Newest among such a variety of persons is William R. Brownfield, who assumed the duties of city planner three weeks ago. He comes from Royal Oak, where he was employed on that city's planning department.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert L. Brownfield, live in Birmingham at 848 Smith.

Welcome to Birmingham, City Planner William Brownfield! Here you will find plenty of opportunity to lend your talents in offering ideas for solutions to numerous local projects.



"Looks as if someone needed to practice soil conservation."

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO

Oct. 6, 1911

Two gatherings have been held to discuss the forming of a new telephone company. H. H. Robinson of Detroit has been out to give facts on prices and figures. It is our opinion that two telephone companies would prove a veritable nuisance to our business men and, instead of lessening their expenses, would nearly double it.

While watching the flights of the now martyred aviators last summer, flying over the village, few people thought we would ever be able to say "Birmingham has a bird man." Accounts from Little Rock, Ark. prove that Eugene Heth, son of John Heth, in his Wright biplane has made a record in the flying world. Gene, as he was known here, was a pupil of Aviator Atwood in the east.

The Eastern Star held its installation last Wednesday night. Supper was enjoyed by all. P. Matren Bessie Munro was presented with a cut glass berry dish by members of the chapter. Among those installed were: Worthy Matron, Mrs. Martha Ash; Worthy Patron, Mr. William Wood; Assistant Matron, Mrs. Eva Newman; secretary, Mrs. Nellie Wood; and treasurer, Mrs. Smith.

30 YEARS AGO

Oct. 1, 1931

A difference of opinion among members of the Village Commission as to whether Birmingham contractors should be favored by members of the chapter. Among those installed were: Worthy Matron, Mrs. Martha Ash; Worthy Patron, Mr. William Wood; Assistant Matron, Mrs. Eva Newman; secretary, Mrs. Nellie Wood; and treasurer, Mrs. Smith.

Bloomfield Hills Village will elect its president, clerk and one of its commissioners, without contest at the annual election scheduled for next Monday. Luther D. Allen is

the only candidate for president and William M. Story the only candidate for clerk. Matthew B. Whiteley is a candidate for Village Commissioner for a two-year term. All are incumbents.

The Baldwin High School football team won its opening game with St. Anthony's High of Detroit at Pierce Field Friday, 12 to 0. The teams battled throughout in a cold, drizzle which made both the ball and the field slippery.

15 YEARS AGO

Oct. 3, 1946

Selection of the occupants for the first group of 13 Quonset huts should be completed by Nov. 1, according to Donald C. Egbert, city manager and member of the committee for selection of hut occupants. The committee met last Friday to review the eligibility rules governing selection.

Following the engineering department's recommendations for sanitary sewer construction to serve the entire area, the Birmingham City Commission Monday night set Oct. 7 as the date for a hearing on the sewer improvement for the Birmingham-Crestview subdivision.

Lathrup—David H. Redwood of Quentin Drive, director of the Chevrolet Golf Club for the past 15 years, announces the club will give a concert Oct. 15 at the Fernside Baptist Church. Two guest artists will appear on the program. Ruth Heck Hammond of Dearborn will play the Hammond organ in a duet with Melvin Zedler, regular pianist with the club. Doris Yoder, Southfield Township violinist, will also be on the program.

When a good driver and a poor driver meet head on, both get the worst of it. But, the good driver is more apt to take the necessary steps to prevent an accident. More often than not he succeeds. It clean it up.

People's Column

Writer Scores

UN Action

In Katanga

To the Editor: When the U.N. was merely a debating society it did no harm. Although it cost America millions annually, it did not serve a cause hostile to Western Civilization. True, the lack of purpose in Korea was alarming as was the Hungarian episode.

But the most recent action in Katanga is the most disgraceful. It can only lead one to the painful conviction that this "thingumbob" (as DeGaulle refers to the U.N.) deserves a painful reappraisal.

KATANGA WAS the only stable area in the chaos known as the Congo. At the time the Congo was granted "independence," the native leaders of Katanga, realizing their own inadequacies, asked the Belgian administrators and missionaries to stay on.

Order prevailed; the country prospered. Belgian, native, missionary lived in peace. I quote the liberal Democratic Senator Yarborough on the matter:

"Methodist missionaries tell me that they cannot use their missionary activities and cannot receive protection at all in other parts of the Congo under central government rule, and that the only part of the Congo in which they can feel any safety at all, and where they can build new stations, is in Katanga."

SO THE U.N. sends an army into Katanga to destroy all this and to force the people under the control of the notorious Communist Gizenga.

Shortly after the assault began, the Russians reopened their embassy in the Congo.

The U.N. failed. The Katangese fought bravely by side with the Belgians (yes, those nasty imperialists) and stayed off the U.N. mercenaries.

This arbitrary and illegal action of the U.N. must be accounted for. Let us either rid ourselves of this agent of folly and weakness or else clean it up.

FJM

Suburban Sidelights

By 'HANK' HOGAN

With the passing of Charles E. Wilson last week, old memories pop up in his relations with the press. He was the type of man who said what he thought.

Sometimes what he said made headlines for the way he said it. Other times, unfortunately, it made headlines because of unfair editing.

An example of his picturesque speech was his retort about dogs which unions played out of proportion. Wilson had been attacked by a group of women for lowering the draft call in a certain depressed area. The women felt that a high draft call would lessen the unemployment situation.

Wilson felt that the answer was lack of mobility of the laborers. He felt that there were jobs available in a nearby town but the workers were not aggressive enough to look around.

His quote "I have always liked bird dogs better than kennel dogs—no kennel one that will get out and hunt for food rather than sit on his fanny and yell" was not calling laborers dogs, but a pretty fair analogy of the situation.

His most famous quote, "For years I thought what was good for our country was good for General Motors" was a reply to a senator's question on what he would do if there was a decision to be made as secretary of defense which might be good for General Motors but might hurt the country.

His often quoted statement was only the beginning of the sentence whereby he indicated that his country always came first.

ATTORNEY GENERAL Paul Adams has asked the Con-Con delegates to consider making provisions in the new Constitution for what he calls "Governmental Bignamy."

At the present time our laws are inadequate in defining what is a conflict of interest in holding two governmental jobs.

For example, it is not a conflict to be both a justice of the peace and a legislator even though one is a judicial position and the other is legislative under our checks and balance system.

It is not a conflict under our present laws to be both a township trustee and a legislator, but in some cases it is a conflict to be both a city commissioner and a legislator.

It is also a conflict to be both a township trustee or city commissioner and a member of a school board.

It might be well for our citizenry to consider this problem and drop a line to George Romney, Henry Woolfenden or Dick Van Dusen, our delegates in Lansing.

IN THE CONSTRUCTION of Interstate 75 near Mackinaw City workers were startled one morning when they found footprints of a sizable bear in the freshly laid concrete.

The State Highway Department, instead of having them filled in, erected a "Bear Crossing" sign at the scene and instructed the construction company to prevent a recurrence on future projects by erecting "baricades."

By KEN WEAVER

City Beat

"I don't want to be critical of the plan," said Bob Page. "It's an excellent one. Well thought out. Kenning (R.S. Birmingham assistant city manager) has done a thorough job."

"It should work very well in an emergency created by a natural disaster such as a tornado."

But we're speaking of something more destructive now. We're talking about a bomb that could devastate the entire metropolitan area, including our community. "When and it comes to preparedness, we're speaking in terms of minutes—not hours or days."

BOB WAS CONCERNED about a survival preparedness plan Kenning drew up to present to the Birmingham City Commission. It is a prototype of the state and national civic civil defense plan.

Taking cognizance of the need to be ready to cope with nuclear warfare, Bob was concerned—as a city commissioner and as a husband and father—with a lack of provisions for shelters.

He said that although the peril of nuclear warfare increases with every international crisis there are many decisions about civil defense that we still must make.

Who will build bomb shelters? How will we pay for them? Who will use them?

If you have a shelter at home, with whom will you share it?

SHOULD CITY officials take the responsibility for all the city, or should they think in terms of public buildings and offices?

What about the school district? Should it take steps now to provide shelters for children in event there is an attack during school hours?

What happens if that does happen? Do you keep the kids in school, send them home, or instruct the parents to come to the schools?

Bob came up with a good suggestion for approaching the problem: Establish a citizens committee to study the situation and make recommendations to the commission. Citizens committees in the past have performed quite worthwhile in this city.

BOB IS FACING up to this problem and, rightly, he thinks the rest of us should. Actually, we should have faced up to it many moons ago.

Bob said some remarks made by President Kennedy in his July 26 address on the Berlin crisis caused him to "come to grips with this thing."

The President declared: "To recognize the possibilities of nuclear war in the missile age, without our citizens knowing what they should do and where they should go if bombs begin to fall would be a failure of responsibility..."

"In the event of an attack, the lives of those families which are not hit in a nuclear blast and fire can still be saved if they can be warned to take shelter and if that shelter is available."

THESE REMARKS, Bob said, should "form the basis for an intensified program of action at all levels, local as well as state and national."

He's right.

From The Eccentric's Point of View ...

A recent editorial observation from United States News & World Report is worth reprinting here: A size-up from the inside of the White House staff of thinkers: "When theoretical solutions to problems are discussed, the brain-trusters can walk on water, dance on air, weave magic solutions. Then let something happen in Cuba, or Berlin, or Laos or some other place. Boy, you should see them dash for, the nearest exit!"

The second pair—a bit higher and dressier—was slated for use at such events as Town Hall and social gatherings where a reporter should really "be up on things."

Ask the salesman for these two and what do you get? "The latest"—two-tone this and that, dressy suede good for maybe three bouts with winter's slush and assorted fruit boots in the wrong size.

Tell him, "No thanks. Show me the leathers," and what happens? He gets the "coming trends from Paris" pitch.

Now this guy should tell me about the coming trends from Paris? Buddy, I thought, I spent the better part of

an afternoon doping out what midday will wear for The Eccentric's recent fall fashion section.

I know and so what! I'll wear what fits—literally and figuratively.

Then up the escalator to the dress department. An estimated 25 dresses went over this gal's head before she decided on two tailored outfits that wouldn't scream from the ink smudges before getting to the cleaners.

The hat department's wants to sell me a dangle that I'd freeze in—not to mention the time I would have to spend squeezing into it.

"But lady," I wanted to say, "my work is sewers and roads. This will never do."

And talking about "never never"—oh brother, the hat department's wants to sell me a dangle that I'd freeze in—not to mention the time I would have to spend squeezing into it.

The ones with veiling were pretty too, except that I was cross-eyed from peering through those little XXXXXX's.

And the ones that were "just what I wanted" cost \$85—which was just what I didn't want!

But I really shouldn't complain. After all, the shopping is done—and that's the most important thing.

By DENI SCANLON

Talk of the Towns

Being a female reporter has its difficulties. Being a maverick when it comes to shopping for clothes also presents a problem. Pair the two and it's the story of a wild experience.

Take the shoe department for instance. All I wanted was two pair of black leather heels. One—a low version adequate for fast dashes to the backshop and for emergency calls to photo assignments.

The second pair—a bit higher and dressier—was slated for use at such events as Town Hall and social gatherings where a reporter should really "be up on things."

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