

## The Money Was Tainted

A tainted dollar bill arrived at The Eccentric the other day.

It came with some unsigned, misleading literature—literature that insults the intelligence and integrity of this newspaper and its readers.

Purpose of the anonymous note was, ostensibly, to persuade us "as a public service to assign someone . . . to investigate the possibility of some way to remove fluoride from Birmingham's drinking water."

The money was to go "toward the salary of your employee who will let us know of some way to remove fluoride from the water in Birmingham, after the date the commissioners say we have to ingest it."

FIRST OF ALL, there is as yet no fluoride in the local water—and no date has been set for adding it to the water.

What the city commissioners actually did, at a recent public meeting, was to recommend to Detroit that it fluoridate the water supply. Detroit has not yet decided to do so.

The unsigned letter also carried this comment:

"George Washington—whose picture's on this bill—tried to guarantee to the people of America the right of choice about their own bodies and their own minds and spirits."

The insidious insinuation here is that we no longer have this right. It is an obvious attempt to confuse medical science with political and patriotic emotions.

"IF SOME WAY was available to remove fluoride from the water," the literature stated, "if the five commissioners who chose to decide for 25,000 citizens in Birmingham don't care to protect themselves from the effects of long-range poisoning, at least those who were willing to make the effort to, could."

"It doesn't make sense to coerce all the people in Birmingham to medication not all need."

Note the effort to distort the picture: "If the five commissioners who chose to decide for 25,000 citizens . . ."

OF THE SEVEN commissioners elected to carry out the legislative function of the local government, five attended the meeting at which the fluoridation recommendation was voted on—the other two were out of town.

The subject was up for discussion by the commissioners as a natural course—the same as civil defense, fire and police protection, sewers and water and roads are discussed.

## A National Sales Tax?

To the many million Americans now playing that grand seasonal game called "figure your income tax," interesting news comes from Sweden. That country has recently taken steps which, it is hoped, will culminate in a large-scale de-emphasis of the nation's levy on personal income.

Not that the Swedes are fortunate enough to be able to cut taxes. But in their view the income levy has become an inefficient way to raise them. Therefore, a 6.4 per cent sales tax is now levied against a wide range of products including food and clothing.

As of now the income tax, which used to provide 45 per cent of the government's revenue, accounts for 42 per cent. Not much of a drop, but it is the intent that is important. The finance ministry has de-

These seven commissioners are empowered by the people they represent—the 25,000 people of Birmingham—to make such decisions. This is their responsibility. The city charter provides that a quorum may make decisions—and the five constituted a quorum.

THIS REPRESENTATIVE form of government is the American way of government—it is part of the democratic process. This process says EVERYONE must obey and abide by the RULES and decisions of the elected representatives.

To be sure, the minority may be heard. But when it distorts facts and seeks to incite by misrepresentations and insinuations, it violates the American system.

As for fluoridation being "long-range poisoning," medical and dental societies have testified that it is a safe, effective method of reducing tooth decay.

THIS SAME PIECE of literature, dividing the 25,000 people of Birmingham by the five commissioners, asks "why 2/100ths of one per cent of the citizens decide for all the citizens?"

It goes on to say, "That's quite a lot of responsibility they're taking on themselves, isn't it?"

Again, we point out that they make the decisions because that is what they are elected to do and that is their responsibility. They would be guilty of negligence and malfeasance if they did not.

THOUGH WE HAVE no proof, we strongly suspect that the literature received by The Eccentric came from the same group that indulged in a vicious, insidious campaign to defeat City Commissioner Carl F. Ingraham in the April 2 election.

The literature arrived the day after the election. It contains the same type of misrepresentations which were made about Mr. Ingraham in the last-minute effort to defeat him at the polls.

Mr. Ingraham accused a group that had opposed the commission's recommendation on fluoridation of conducting that final weekend campaign.

It was, he declared, "without parallel in our history . . . I hope that this never happens in Birmingham again. We do not need this sort of political campaigning . . ."

We agree wholeheartedly. And if there is a story to be uncovered in the city of Birmingham, we will do it at our own expense—not with tainted dollar bills calculated to bring about a prejudiced report.

clared that such reductions will be made periodically.

THERE IS A lesson, here, that might profitably be considered in the United States. Not that we should climb aboard the strident bandwagon of those who roundly condemn the income tax. They commonly denounce it without troubling to ponder how the nation could get along without this primary source of government revenue.

But evidence mounts that the income tax has reached the point of diminishing returns. Initiative is being squelched, to some extent; dishonesty is fostered. While the switch would be a mighty one, serious consideration should be given to emulating Sweden by establishing the sales tax on a national level.

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

George Romney, the automobile tycoon turned politician, may indirectly influence the American dieting pattern. He is a devout Mormon who believes in both physical and spiritual discipline. It was in line with this attitude that he fasted for 24 hours while making the decision as to his future political course. It seems that Romney is accustomed to fasting whenever he is about to make a major decision. Without disrespect, let it be noted that this might be the answer to the problem a lot of Americans face: How can I force myself to quit eating long enough to trim off some of the blubber? The answer: Make de-

isions. Big decisions. One a week would be good, as a starter. With, of course, each one preceded by a 24-hour fast. Watch the pounds go.

A mail carrier walked from Ohio to Washington, D. C., to dramatize a campaign for a postal pay increase. Fellow postmen gave him their stamp of approval.

The Federal Trade Commission is investigating cold remedies. A lot of cold-war remedies could stand investigation, too.

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### PEOPLE'S COLUMN

## Kite Contest Evokes A Mother's Enthusiasm

To the Editor:

I've just come home from a walk with my two little ones and now I would like to see a public commendation of a fine activity provided for the children of Birmingham.

I was at the high school to see a kite contest run by the city Recreation dept. and the Optimist Club. There must have been over 300 children, parents spectators and several dogs all there for the event and each and everyone was having a good time.

An ice-cream vendor had parked his truck nearby, so every child was wearing a rather sticky smile as well as sporting a ribbon marked "participant".

There were enough award ribbons so that at least a third of the children who entered kites in the contest carried off a ribbon.

WONDERS-OF-wonders, I saw no tantrums, tears, or long faces in the children who dived into the contest so that most certainly prove they enjoyed the competition and the lovely day.

I certainly appreciate the organization displayed by the recreation dept. and the energetic Optimists and hope they will continue to hold such an event when my two little ones are old enough to join in the fun.

MRS. RESIDENT

## New Edition—It's Like Replacing Teddy Bear

To the Editor:

Wouldn't Buster be an ungrateful offspring if, after his parents went to a great deal of expense and bother in order to replace his old tattered, worn-out Teddy Bear with a brand new bigger 'n better one, he would slip into his bedroom just to . . . see how the old one looked and felt in his arms once again?

Translating this over to the newspaper area, let us admit, without even understanding it, the strange situation of how newspapers "attach themselves to readers."

It's a relationship that's hard to explain. (Just like after a wife spends weeks with cold cream jars 'n stuff in order that her face will present a new look to her spouse and to hear that ungrateful male murmur: "Why, I actually liked your old mug just as well!")

WRINKLES, Teddy-Bears worn out and ragged. Or, a new dish

placed on the table, all fancied up, only to hear from family, "Gee, what's all this kook here?"—runs right over to the morning when . . .

The sparkling new 'Edition' falls into the reader's hands for the first time. That's the redeeming key here: The first time.

It's different. It's entirely different. And like all changes, sudden changes, even though we had been warned of its coming, it's a stranger just as in the new dish, the teddy-bear and new wrinkleless face!

IN A WAY, shouldn't pleasure be experienced here after realizing that your old newspaper was appreciated? It was good.

This new set-up, however, after it's gotten used to, will become our friend, also.

This morning? It was treated with respect as one would treat a new acquaintance. Sort of distant like. Sort of reserved.

"It's nice. Quite nice," was all. (See EDITION, 3-B)

## Yesteryear Happenings

From the Files of The Eccentric

50 Years Ago

April 12, 1912

The 10th annual meeting of the Royal Oak Women's Club was held at the home of Mrs. Leo Campbell. The annual meeting has always been considered a red letter day in the club and this meeting was no exception. The report of Mrs. Charles Sage, the treasurer, gave a beautiful edifice that the past year has been a good one for the club financially.

Easter was very appropriately celebrated in all the various churches here and perhaps with particular distinction at the congregational Church where services are at present being held in the basement, which is part of what we hope soon to be one of the finest churches in Oakland County. Those good people are to be commended for their noble efforts displayed last season when they sold their old church and secured a more eligible site and then undertook to construct a beautiful edifice that is nearing completion.

One of the biggest seasons of summer outdoor sports ever held in this country will take place in Detroit during the week of July 22, when the big Water Fete and Carnival celebrating the Michigan city's 211 anniversary will be inaugurated. One of the big features of the week will be an Automobile race in which \$25,000,000 worth of motor cars will take part.

30 Years Ago

April 11, 1932

In Birmingham school teachers Friday will be paid half of their first two weeks' wages in scrip, following a decision reached by the School Board at a hurriedly-called meeting Monday night that it must conserve as long as possible what little cash on hand. Decision to

(See HAPPENINGS, 3-B)

## THE GOLDEN YEARS

By THOMAS COLLINS

"Please explain to us how you can live in retirement on \$200 a month. We live in a nice suburban town and are paying \$80 a month rent for a one-bedroom apartment with kitchen and bath.

"We pay \$50 a month for food, and we buy the cheapest foods we can get. Insurance, clothing, toothpaste, utilities, light bulbs and the many other things are breaking my husband's pensioned back. He says a couple can't live on \$200 a month."

STILL A COUPLE can live on \$200 a month. They can do it by a new approach to their own particular finances. In this way:

—Food is normally the biggest dent in retirement income. You cut your food costs by acquiring a big freezer and loading up on foods when they can be bought cheaply; by canning foods in season; and by going in seriously for vegetable gardening.

—Housing normally makes the second biggest dent in income. And it's all mixed up with food costs. Housing on a lot large enough for a serious garden will cut food costs. Housing on a large lot in a locale where meat and produce for the freezer can be bought directly from farmers will further reduce food costs. Such a locale would be conducive to canning. Also to a cow. Also to chickens.

HOUSING, EVEN when not used to cut food costs, has a large role in a \$200 a month retirement budget. You can pay one-fourth of your net

income for housing, under the theories of the mortgage companies.

This, on \$200 a month, would be \$50. If you rent you should stick to this figure, unless you want to give up food.

A new locale (where you could keep a cow) might be less embarrassing on \$50 a month rent than suburban.

If you own your own home, the \$50 a month should take care of clothing and incidentals.

—Every other cost of retirement is tied in one way or another with housing. Better clothing is needed in some neighborhoods, more outfit for entertaining and recreation, larger contributions to causes.

Too, the couple who stays on in the housing they had while the husband worked finds that neighbors expect certain standards. It's painful not to live up to them.

—DIMES AND quarters become important if you are to live on \$200 a month. The husband may have to stop smoking. Certainly he can't afford to drink. Dry-cleaning, pressing, movies, beauty shops, picture-taking, even a telephone become suspect items in a budget.

There's little gravy on a \$200 budget. Nobody ever said, "Yet by the hundreds you can find couples in the sunnier states who are feeling no pain over . . . all the things they can't buy on their \$200 a month."

For a copy of the new Golden Years booklet by Thomas Collins, send 35 cents in coin (no stamps) to Dr. W. S. Wynn, Box 1072, Grand Central Station, New York 17, N.Y.

## Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

With both Congress and the State Legislature considering governmental appropriations for the coming year, there is quite a bit of loose use of labels by the citizenry describing the proponents or antagonists of spending legislation.

Those governmental officials who favor increased spending by their respective governmental bodies are not only tagged "liberals" but also "socialists."

In fairness to these officials, they may deserve the title "liberal," but not all increased appropriations have a tendency to transfer control from the individual to the state.

ON THE OTHER hand, those who want to stop the run-away spending of governmental bodies are tagged as both "conservatives" and "John Birchers."

This second group probably does deserve the title "conservative," just as any head of a household would say that if he tried to restrict his family's spending to stay within the family's income.

But to automatically link those of conservative philosophy with those of the John Birch Society is like confusing visitors and inmates at a local insane asylum. The John Birch Society was founded by a Pennsylvania candy manufacturer with the announced purpose of making our country more aware of the threat of Communism. Certainly no one would object to its purpose.

THE PROBLEM has been that some of its members have resorted to the use of the same methods that we are so critical of among the communists, of attacking people without substantiation.

Also, as with any secret organization, many crack-pots have used the name of the organization to gain support for programs or attacks which otherwise would be laughed into oblivion by the thinking citizenry. I cite as example a woman standing up at a recent political convention and claiming she had proof beyond any doubt that former President Eisenhower was a communist.

Another example is the present movement in Michigan to defeat an inter-state mental health compact, because they say that its sole purpose is to allow states to send Birchers to an out of the way mental hospital in Alaska.

THE BIRCH Society was named after a missionary turned jungle fighter who was shot by a Chinese Communist officer after his capture because he talked back to his captor. He did not die because of his intense love for the American way of life which he had shed many years before.

We hope that the Society does not use its name-sake as an example.

Nevertheless, my point remains that you can be a liberal without being a socialist and you can be a conservative without being a Bircher.

## City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

When teacher Daisey Janke's fifth graders from Pierce school visited the Oakland County courthouse, they were much impressed by the jail.

So pleased were they that they wrote thank-you letters to their host, clerk of the court Boris Sellers, a Birmingham resident.

Mark Daane displayed a sense of humor: "In my opinion I think that you were so very nice to show us the way around . . . that I can't express my gratitude toward you."

"But you were so mean, so ruthless to lock us in jail that I despise you. (I am on jesting because you are kind and you did let us out!)"

Expressing a liking for the jail was Neil Humphreys: "That cozy little jail room looked quite inviting except that it didn't have any bed to lie on while you're waiting . . ."

NANCY JONES wrote that she "liked the jail very much and hope to come back—but not to jail!"

Then there was this reaction from Linda Griffiths: "I think it would be awful if you had to go to jail and sleep without a pillow. Do you think that they would let you bring your own?"

When Brad Shafer went into the jail, he "thought they were sleazy there. Another thing I didn't know before and that was what they eat."

What Larry Obey enjoyed most "was being locked in the jail and seeing the dark room. I wish we could come again."

AND JANE Loechel declared: "Although your jails look very nice, I would not like to be there."

A surprised young man was Chris Moorhead: "The first thing I enjoyed was the jail. There I thought they had mattresses and pillows, but I was wrong."

"Another thing I didn't know was that they got a good meal. I always thought they got bread and water like in the movies."

"I liked the trip very much," wrote Bobby Schulze. "I liked the jail best of all because it made me feel funny, and I didn't know that they had a library in that building."

GOING THROUGH the courthouse proved to be an education for Shirley Zukowski:

"I didn't know that the people in jail did not stay there all night . . . I didn't know that the courthouse cost three million dollars. I did not know that they had cases in our county before the signing of the Declaration of Independence."

Although he liked the jail, Hilary Garman wrote that he "would not like to be put in one."

Our educators are blamed for the fact that children can't read. This situation would be corrected immediately if they had to read the TV commercials.