# EDITORIAL

Eccentricities

The other night a group of people were discussing vehicle safety around the bar at a local restaurant, and someone suggested that the answer to the accident problems of the state was to have compulsory motor vehicle inspection to keep all vehicles up to snuff.

This was countered by someone who quoted the statistic that only 2 per cent of the accidents in the stata, according to state police figures, result from defective equipment, thus leaving 98 percent of the accidents resulting from defective drivers.

AT THIS point it was suggested that maybe we ought to have compulsory driver inspection. A suburbanite at this point said that's not too bad an idea and related the following story:

A couple of years ago he was renewing his license in Detroit and there was a gentleman ahead of him that had trouble writing his name.

had trouble writing his name.

The examining officer, sensing that the man might be illiterate, took out a chart of common road signs and asked the gentleman to read a couple of them.

After carefully scrutinizing the chart, he finally pointed to one and said, "Stop."

The officer acknowledged that that was correct and pointed to the merging traffic sign and asked him what it said.

His answer was, "Can't vou pick an easier one?"

THE OFFICER then said the gentleman would have to go downtown because he couldn't license him if he couldn't read.

couldn't read.

But another officer on duty said, "Aw, they'll give him a license downtown anyway, why don't you issue it here and save the guy a trip?"

So the examining officer issued the license and somewhere driving around Detroit is a guy who can only recognize stop signs.

This is one of the reasons why 98 per cent of our accidents are a result of some sort of driver error.

OF COURSE, the story is an extreme and the secretary of state is doing a good job taking bad drivers off the road through the point system (nor the Grosse Polity). The justification or this is that statistics show a relationship of fatal accidents and bad driving records.

But, before we start concerning ourselves with an ex-expensive system like compulsofy motor vehicle inspec-tion, we should start being stricter on the issuance of driver's licenses.

NOT TOO many years ago only certain police stations could issue licenses, now everyone can.

By HANK HOGAN

# Let's Review Social Security

With increases in the Social Security tax rate last year and this, the time has come to take another long look at the pro-

What many people do not realize is that what many people do not relate is that both the employee and his employer pay on the Social Security taxes. Many do not know that the rates have been increased for both employee and employer.

Last year, the rate for employees went

up from 3 per cent of their paycheck to 3 and  $\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. This year, it has been increased another  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

The employer is required to match his

employee's taxes dollar for dollar. The result is that 7 and ½ per cent of the employer's total taxable payrolls are taken by the government to pay for the Social Security system.

TO TOP IT off, further increases are scheduled for 1966 and 1968 — without adding to the present benefits.

If other plans such as the proposed mediation of the proposed medi

cal care program are approved, there will

cal care program are approved, there win be even greater increases for both employee and employer. In 1966, the combined employer-em-ployee rate will be increased to 8 and ½ per cent; in 1968, it will be 9 and ½ per cent. These increases will not provide any increase in benefits to retired persons or survivors of deceased workers.

THE COST of the Social Security system has been rising consistently in the last 13 years. Started in 1937, the program saw no increase in its first 13 years; but nine increases have been crowded into the

Even more surprising is that Social Security taxes have now reached the point where many people actually are paying more for the Social Security tax than for their income tax.

Take, for instance,, the case of Mr. Hen-Take, for instance, the case of Mr. Hen-elope. He has a wife and four children and makes \$4,800 per year. At the 1963 rate, his employer will withhold from his pay \$150.80 (for the year) in income taxes and \$174 in Social Security taxes. Consider, too, the case of Mr. Cooplan.

He supports his wife and three children on \$4,000 a year. His employer must withheld a year. His employer must withhold in Social Security taxes but only

\$119.60 in income taxes.

Increases in the rate for 1966 and 1968 will place many more people in this situa-

NOW, CONSIDER these two points: 1. The income tax is the main source of money required to run the entire For example, it provides huge outlays for defense and space exploration.

2. Social security taxes are used

solely to finance one single program. no wonder, then, that we ask if things have not grown a little lopsided.

YET, WE must examine the reasons for the increases in the Social Security tax

Each year more and more people b eligible to receive old age, disability and survivor's benefits. This group actually is growing faster than the country's pay-

Thus, the rate must be increased from time to time to make up the difference. can expect this condition to prevail for at least five more years—that's why the rate is scheduled to climb to 91/4 per cent.

IN THE PAST 26 years, Congress has added to the cost of the system, by increasing benefits and by adding new ones.

If the Administration's medical care program for the aged is adopted, it will mean that both the employee and the employer will each pay another 1/4 per cent.

Furthermore, the taxable wage base for employees—now \$4,800—would be boosted to \$5,200. Thus, the maximum amount to be paid by the employee would be increased, both by the increase in the rate and the increase in the wage base.

PROVIDING FOR our senior citizens with as high an assured income as possible during their later years certainly is good

But what we must remember is that increases in benefits cost money, which must be raised by increasing the Social Security

rate.

We must guard against overloading the system, to prevent it from breaking down. We must keep it from getting so costly that workers of the future will revolt at

Employes and employers alike should examine the entire Social Security program to determine whether it is really being handled in the long-range interests of

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

The vital importance of the part the U.S. Congress ought to play in the preservation of liberty and freedom may be attributed to two basic situations: first, the almost strangle-hold that the Federal Government has on the nation's purse strings through the income tax. Second, the use of this taxing power to centralize more and more power in the Executive Office in the White House, resulting in a decrease of the applied philosophy of states' rights—and also making much of the actions of Congress, itself, dependent upon cetting tax money diverted to their own states and districts. All this, of course, because of the growth tax money diverted to their own states and districts. All this, of course, because of the growth of the wast majority of U.S. citizens into the attitude of "grimme," of dependency upon government for what really in flettious surgestion with a suppliant citizenty and a socialistic-supporting Congress, duy out think that if we lived in colonial days we would have the courage to fight for free-dom from a despotic British rule?

Broadly speaking, "economics" is the science of the most efficient production and distribution of wealth. Its best application, of course, can exist only in a free society. When it gets into the hands of political state welfarism, it reases to be efficient, even honest. Only a free enterprise system in a competitive society can bring the maximum of security to people. It is emphasis upon this type of economics that needs teaching in this and every other nation that wants to be free and prosperous. No less a person than Secretary of Commerce Luther Hedges recently stated that "iff ignorance paid dividends, most Americans could make a fortune out of what they don't know about economics."

Insofar as moral and philosophic guidance for the conduct of human affairs is concerned, it certainly is true that "there is nobhing new under the sun." For example, consider this statement, written by that famous Greek moralist Plutarch: "Men. steered by popular applause, though they bear the name of governors, are in reality the nere underlings of the multitude. The man who is

completely wise and virtuous has no need at all of glory, except so far as it disposes and cases his way of action by the greater trust that it procures him." Plutarch lived more than 1,800 years ago.

Sweden's popular King Gustaf probably in the most down-to-earth sovereign alive today. He cujoys stepping into small stores and shops and saying: "Hello!" He speaks to just about every-body, any time, anywhere. He quit drinking and smoking in 1912 as an example for all Swedes... yet he wolfs down great quantities of sweet pas-tries—the panty-waist!

"Will it ever be necessary to ask Ann Landers and her sister. Abigail Van Buren, to answer this question: How can the United States recover some of its former world-stature?"

Congressmen charge each other with ob-structionism, but they like to take credit for government projects in their districts. That's constructionism.

Adenauer says his phone sounds like it's being tapped. Some think he is hearing things—but what worries him is that others may be hearing them.

The Budget Bureau reports a deficit o \$7,800,000,000. It's money we owe ourselves though—so nobody will suffer but the taxpayers

Several farm experts have been named to th state planning commission in Red China. Widdn't know Red China had any farm experts.

War is the last thing we have to worry says Robert Welch, founder of the John Society. And possibly also the first thing.

Steel executives fined for price-flxing said they had only made errors in judgment. Such as judg-ing that they would not be caught?

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### Ground Hog Day, 1963



#### PEOPLE'S COLUMN

# **Set Poor Example** Before Teen-agers

To the Editor:
We talk much about juvenile delinquency and rudeness of teen-agers, but, I believe, we should concentrate more on adult manners and delinquency.
For in stance—on New Year's Eve my daughter and her three college roomnates decided they would celebrate by eating dinner out at a certain restaurant in Birmingham.

As is usual in this particular restaurant, there was a very long line waiting for tables.

tables.

Included in this line were three quite elderly ladies and a gentleman directly behind the girls. The hostess had to bring a chair for one of the ladies because she was unable to stand for long.

WHEN THE hostess final-

told them she had a table for them, they insisted that she seat the elderly people first. The hostess smiled and did so.

Immediately, the two cou-ples behind the girls began to make rude and abusive re-marks and after being seated at a table next to the girls continued to do so all through I believe these adult (??) people were both ignorant and delinquent when they found fault with a thoughtful and unasked for gesture on the part of four teen-age girls.

I SHOULD certainly hate

to meet up with their children (heaven help them) with that sort of an example to live with.

Let's give the teen-agers who are thoughtful credit.

MRS. J. W. KRULL 270 Harrow Circle Birmingham

# Visit to City Becomes Rewarding Experience

## Yesteryear **Happenings** From the Files of The Ecce

50 YEARS AGO
Jan. 31, 1913
Wednesday Afternoon was a time
for rejoicing at the home of Mrs.
J. E. Stewart, 170 Maple awnee
east. Birmingham, the occasion being
the 76th birthday of her mother, Mrs. E. A. Fletcher, who is
spending the with Mrs. A. E. Weller, is also colebrating her 76th
birthday at the home of her daughter in Livingston county.

ter in Livingston country.

Secretary of State Frederick C.

Martindale is one of the few republican state officials who favorthe initiative sector of the few republican state officials who favorof all these progressive measures
in an address before the members
of Capitol Grange. "The time has
passed by in our state when the
politician can tell the people what
legislation it is best for them
to have," said Secretary Martindale.

have," said Secretary Martindae.

President Teft, speaking at the
annual banquet of the Merchants
that the Merchants
that the manual banquet of the Merchants
tration's attitude in the Panama
canal disagreement with England,
declared its position was not unpatriotic or dishonorable and said
there was no reason for anyone to
oppose the proposal for arbitration
by an impartial triumal.

To the Editor:

May I, through your column, est from one of your state mental hospitals. There were content of the state o

# Maybe we ought to make every driver take both a writ-ten and driving test each time he has to renew his license. There is no question that it would take a lot of time, but what's time when lives can be saved.

City Beat KEN

Exciting days lie ahead for people interested in progress

Exciting days lie ahead for people interested in progress in our community.

We can expect developments along these lines in the large future:

Implementation of some kind of plan to modernize the downtown business district. The CBDD Plan has been talked about for a long time; looks now as if at least parts of it will become reality before too long.

Establishment of an area-wide library system or authority. Greater involvement by area communities in the financing and operation of a public library appears imminent.

minent.

Expansion of the Community House. Plans are being formulated now, but nothing definite has been decided upon as yet. Look for an announcement soon.

THE MEETING scheduled for Feb. 14 between city commissioners and other civic-governmental officials is getting more and more attention. People are talking about it and about what may transpire.

This meeting is about the CBDD. Representatives of such groups as the Chamber of Commerce, the planning board, the school board and the Community House will discuss their needs and their ideas of what should be done.

AS ONE official said the other day, "Here's a chance for these people to have their say; anyone who's been invited and toean't show up can just keep his mouth shut in the future."

So, after that community meeting more precise plans should be coming forth that call for action. The City's actual participation in any such plans will be determined in subsequent commission meetings.

These should provide for some lively discussions, making for very interesting meetings.

BALDWIN PUBLIC Library officials are studying a report on a survey concerning the possibility of creating an area library system. They are trying to solve the problemol increasing use of library facilities by other than Birmingham residents.

Voters in the various communities may be asked to approve some kind of plan for an area system, or authority, and a millage proposal to support it. As for the Community House, nothing more can be said until actual plans are revealed.

But between the three—CBDD, library and Community House—there should be some exciting developments in the weeks and months ahead.

# Once Over Lightly

After two decades and more of housekeeping, one should be somewhat qualified to hand out tips on interior decorating, home repairs and various related subjects.

So move over, experts, and listen to some practical advice.

For instance, young parents moving into a new

practical advice.
For instance, young parents moving into a new home might be somewhat at a loss as to what color to paint the doors. From long experience, I recommend black—on both sides. Fingerprints simply do not show nor do those marks the kids leave as they kick the door in when their arms are full of school books.

are full of school books.

BIBONY IS ALSO an excellent choice for woodwork and is proof against anything except clawmarks. Short of removing the toenalis from the family pets. I have never solved this problem.

As for color schemes, the best method is to hire a professional; but, lacking the funds, one can achieve interesting results with a bit of foresight,

achieve interesting results with a bit of foresight, FIRST, PICK out a group of basic, harmonizing colors and get about 10 amplies of each from the nearest paint store. Tape these together, preferably joining the same colors. Actually, it does also joining the same colors. Actually, it does not apply only a proper matcher if you mix a blue shade, for example, with a pink one, because the painter will never match it exactly, anyway, unless he is colorbind. Using these basic hues, one proceeds to pick out upholstery, drapery and fancy pillows that will provide a nice contrast. I advise spending a minimum of time on this task as the kids will reduce

them to a dubious grey shade if you're patient. Grey goes with almost anything.

NOW THAT we've got your home furnished, let's solve all those little matters of maintenance. Assuming your offspring are at the toddler stage, you will find all kinds of equipment close at hand. Crayon marks on the walls Turn the art work into an abstract and tack some fancy wood strips around it for a frame. If it's at radiator height, don't worry—some art lovers are pretty short. Springs poking out of the daverport? Cover the sharper ends with modeling clay. Leg off one of the chairs? Fut the idds to work with a wooden block and some nails.

Breaks in the concrete, say, in the basement? How about that ice cream-making machine the small fry got for Christmas. The goop hardens, believe me.

CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES in the clothing department pose a real challenge, such as odd mittens, single socks and outgrown clothes. One can get around this by sending the youngsters to diancing school or summer camp. You may wind up with another assortment but at least it won't be

with another assortiment out at least to be about the same one.

One of my proudest achievements on the home front was the solution to cupboard doors that simply will not stay closed. If I great you at the black door wearing a football helmet, foot laugh. It's really a very senable precaution.