

## What Lies Ahead in '64?

Where are we headed? What lies before us in 1964? What can we as a community of people expect to accomplish in this new year?

The pooling of local talent by the Citizens Action Committee augurs well for achievements heretofore unequalled in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area.

Let's look at the CAC's statement of purpose:

"To bring the influence of a collective community conscience into focus on issues which affect the moral, economic and aesthetic characteristics of our area."

HOWEVER, before we can really decide what we wish to accomplish, we must know what we are doing now, what we have done and what we are capable of doing. Research will help provide the answers.

And research is one of the three major efforts of the CAC. It is undertaking "a long, dispassionate analysis of the area's present trends, with due respect to its past, but with special anticipation of the future."

To achieve any significant progress, the community must have citizen participation. Another major effort of the CAC is "an awakening of the abundantly talented citizenry to their responsibilities in community determinations."

TO AVOID a conglomeration of plans

and designs that would produce only a hodge-podge development, the various community-oriented organizations must plan and work together.

This, too, can be achieved with the assistance of the CAC. It is the committee's third major effort: "The design of a unifying procedure that will allow the widely dissimilar talents which constitute a sophisticated society like ours to work harmoniously and effectively together."

To help bring this about, the CAC is seeking representation from nearly all of the area organizations so that there may be a utilization of all of their many diverse interests, abilities and services.

"THIS RESERVOIR of experience and talent, if properly utilized, should present the community with its greatest opportunity for self-determination in preserving the values of the past, enjoying a meaningful present and designing an orderly transition into the future," said Robert A. Thom, one of the CAC's founders.

The goals of the CAC are, and should be, the goals of the community. With the pooling of the local talent, coupled with citizen support, there should be great accomplishments.

We can, then, expect great strides in 1964.

May it be a happy, prosperous year for everyone.

## It's a Start, Anyway

Quite a bit of scribbles has been piled on the idea that the consumer ought to be better represented in Washington. It is often noted, a bit sentimentally, that we are all consumers. This undeniable fact supposedly makes it impracticable to have anyone act as a spokesman for consumers or as a guardian of their interests.

Those who talk like that are largely pouring out a smoke screen to hide the essential truth that the ultimate consumer of goods and services lacks adequate spokesmen and guardians.

The consumer is not organized, and thus cannot effectively make his position known in Congress; he has, in short, no powerful lobby working in his behalf as do most other large groups. Nor does he have any agency in the federal government alert to his general needs and anxious to help them be met.

THESE CIRCUMSTANCES lend special interest to the proposal of Sen. Hart of Michigan that the President have a special

assistant for consumers' affairs. Though this may not be the full answer to the consumer's predicament, it certainly would be a start.

Hart sums up his idea thus: "This special assistant would have the ear of the President, would work on programs benefitting the consumers of America, would be the liaison with government agencies on consumer matters, and, on a continuing basis, would advise the President on issues of consumer interest."

AS HART sees it, "The special assistant would 'criticize policies and programs by government agencies themselves in instances when consumer interest was overlooked.'"

It is argued that the consumer has always had to look out for himself and should go on doing so. The fact is that the consumer often gets a shoddy deal and needs help in protesting this and assuring that it won't happen again. Senator Hart's idea promises to start us in that direction.

## With Hackles Aquiver

Anyone concerned about the growing invasion of privacy is sure to feel his hackles quiver in a sort of preliminary way at word that a new device is capable of dialing telephone numbers and delivering messages at the rate of 500 to 1,000 a day.

When the lover of privacy gets to considering some of the commercial and political possibilities of the device, called Electro-Com, his quivering hackles may rise to full stand-up position.

It is bad enough getting unsolicited sales pitches by telephone when these are made by human operators. But a man roused

from nap or bath by someone advising him that "he has just won five free dancing lessons, or inquiring about the state of his roof, can at least talk back.

CONSIDER the frustration of realizing that the bright voice at the other end of the line is a recording propelled at one by a machine with a steel dialing finger.

The inventors of Electro-Com are reportedly sensitive on this score and intend to restrict its use. We'll wait and see—with hackles aquiver.

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

American scientists stationed in Antarctica have protested against the U.S. government's planned inspection of other nations' Antarctic bases. They argue that this will arouse feelings of suspicion and hostility and may harm their friendly working relationship with Russian children. They further note that inspection is unnecessary, since they have had full opportunity to observe the Soviet operations. The attitude of U.S. scientists makes good sense, except for one thing. Since the Antarctic treaty permits inspection, it is important that we establish a precedent in this matter. If the inspection is handled cordially and with care, as authorities intend, no harm will have been done and the precedent will be firm.

Research suggests that one third of the students in the average junior high school cannot read the textbooks. This shocking statement was made by Dr. Elizabeth Drews, professor of education at Michigan State University. She declared that

this was borne out by a study of 600 ninth graders at Lansing. Dr. Drews told a Parent-Teacher conference that textbooks which meet the needs of one group do not satisfy others and that "we're simply not making enough books." She might have added, "We're simply not making enough children to read." If 20 per cent of the ninth graders in the country are unable to read their textbooks, something is decidedly wrong with the methods of teaching reading.

A pre-dawn blast rocked East Berlin while Khrushchev was there. Maybe he's improved his shoe-punching technique.

The big troop airlift to Europe was completed 10 hours under schedule. Fine—but what was the airport-to-down-town time?

A New York school strike threat is averted as teachers accept a pay hike. Now if only invention problems could be solved that easily.

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## Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

Every Christmas story includes a reference to the three wise men who brought gold, frankincense and myrrh to the baby Jesus. Very few include the story of the fourth wise man.

There were four great kings in the East. All had known of the prophecy of the birth of the Lord being announced to the world by the brightest star in the heavens.

When the star appeared that first Christmas, three of the kings immediately gathered up their retinue and followed the star in search of the Son of Man.

The fourth king was also prepared to follow the star but procrastinated because he had one more problem to solve before he could get away.

THE ONE MORE THING, of course, prevented the fourth king from joining the others. And after marshaling his camels and servants and finally getting on his way, he had trouble finding his way because the star no longer blazed across the sky.

It took him weeks to find his way to Bethlehem, and by the time he arrived, Mary, Joseph and the Christ child had fled into Nazareth to escape the jealousy of King Herod.

For 30 years the king followed the Christ child but never seemed to quite catch up to him.

He would return to his kingdom and wait for word and then strike out anew with his prize treasure for the King of Men.

THE 30 YEARS aged him like 60, because if he had not procrastinated, if he had followed the star immediately he would have found the baby.

Finally, a message came to his palace that the man called Jesus had been arrested by the Roman soldiers and was due to be tried before Pilate, the Roman governor in Jerusalem.

The king was set to go but a problem came up and he put off his departure for a day.

By the time he left with his gift and arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus Christ was no longer in that city.

He had been taken out to Calvary and was crucified.

WHEN THE KING arrived at Calvary, he fell down at Christ's feet and sobbed. The marble box containing his tangible gift tumbled to the ground. His gift had been simply "love."

Suppose history has very little use for the story because it is commonplace for love to be the victim of procrastination.

But had love been added to the gold, frankincense and myrrh on that first Christmas day, there may never have been a Good Friday and peace may have come to the world.

I guess the moral to the story would have to be: We are all guilty of the same habits as that great Eastern king and our procrastinations in giving love results in the love being too little or too late.

## City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

There is another side to the contention that northern ministers should not be preaching in the South on behalf of civil rights.

In the Dec. 12 column, I said this practice could only produce trouble and that the northern clergymen should not stick their noses in other people's business.

Comes now a reply from Eleanor M. Palubin, 34 W. Dakota, Detroit, who formerly resided in Birmingham and served on the PTA Council's Parent Committee as co-chairman. The Eccentric printed a letter from her in its Peoples' Column in the Nov. 29 issue.

SHE WRITES now: "Referring to your 'City Beat' article on members of the clergy going South to participate in demonstrations—I used to feel the way you do.

"In fact, I asked a minister friend why this was considered good by the clergy. His reply was that many people in the South fear reprisals if they demonstrate on their own.

"The 'traveling clergy' are there to support them in their request to be treated like human beings. (Isn't it sad that no American has to ask for this right?)

"They are there to lend an air of respectability to the effort. Like many other problems, solutions come from diverse ideas and places.

"SOME OF these men are bolstering the strength of the northern parishioners by their public stand. Most of them would take the same stand here, and did (during last July's Freedom March).

"For instance, the very fact that Eugene Carson Blake is willing to be jailed for his belief in the fundamental rights of all men gives me courage, as a Presbyterian, to take more chances for my beliefs.

"Leaders must be willing to do more than talk. The attack is in the South now because discrimination is more flagrant there.

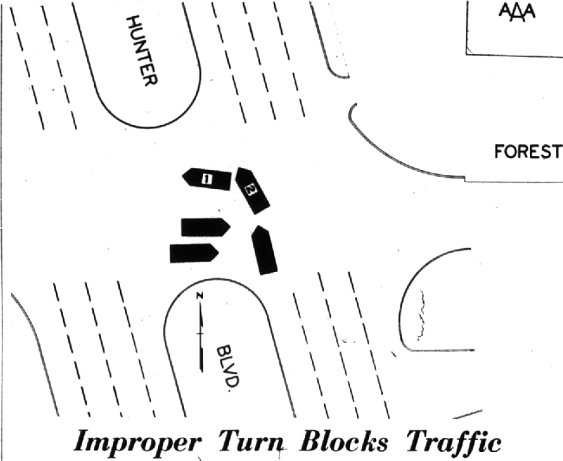
"But it will come North, and then the clergy will have had some experience on which to base their leadership."

The chances of anyone else in the world being exactly like you, even your brother or sister, are less than 1 in 70 million million unless you are an identical twin.

James H. Meredith says Mississippi is a "pure police state." We didn't know he thought that highly of the Mississippi police.

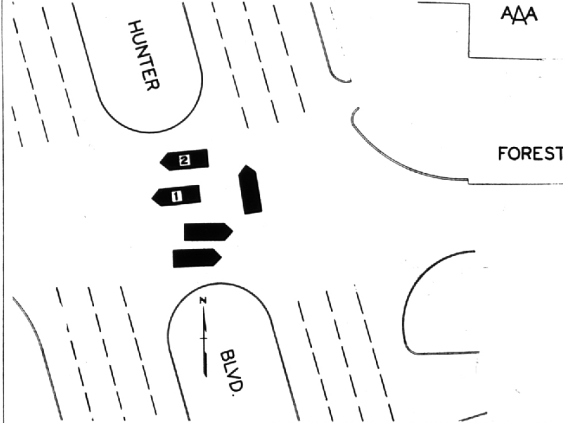
The home of the future may "think," say architects. That'll be a switch. A lot of homes now are unthinkable.

The hotel and limousine rental people want Madame Nhu to pay her bills. More of that American persecution she kept talking about.



## Improper Turn Blocks Traffic

In the top diagram, westbound vehicle on Forest (1) has not pulled far enough into the Hunter Blvd. crossover. Northbound Hunter vehicle (2), turning left into crossover, should occupy most northerly lane, allowing following car to proceed north on Hunter. Eastbound Forest traffic is also blocked. The right way to negotiate the turn is shown in the bottom diagram as the northbound Hunter vehicle (2) has pulled into the correct position in the crossover. Eastbound Forest traffic is clear and both sides of Hunter are free of congestion. This is the second of a series, presented by The Eccentric in cooperation with the Birmingham Police Dept.



## PEOPLES' COLUMN

### Says U. S. Has More Problems Than Liquor

To the Editor:

I hope the people of Birmingham realize the United States has much more problems with alcohol than any other country in the world. Why is this? Why does the United States have so many problems?

Let's take Germany for an example. Because of a shortage of milk, pure water and various other things to drink, the teen-agers are raised with it, in constant contact with alcohol. They can have it if they want it and it's "no big thing."

DURING PROHIBITION in the United States, even people who previously had been considered non-drinkers started drinking bootlegged liquor which was much more harmful to the body than the inspected, pure processed liquor we have today.

I am a student at Seaholm High School. Many Thursdays and Fridays, just before the weekend, many people come up to me and ask—"What's happening?"

If I answer nothing, often I get comment such as "I think I'll make it to Toledo."

Yes, Toledo, on the weekends, is fast becoming a hang-out for Birmingham teen-agers.

But sometimes, some of them may not make it home. Drinking and trying to make the hour's drive home on time plus the undesirable company which are at the "corner pubs" may make it impossible, one way or another, to return home on time—maybe never.

I THINK the change and lowering of the drinking law from 21 to 18 would cast away many of these problems before they actually occur.

A common attitude of the adults is that of "giving in to the teen-agers" which they don't like. The true view of lowering the drinking age is possibly saving their teen-agers' life.

A SOBER STUDENT

### City of B'ham Displays Flags; Not Merchants

To the Editor:

Regarding the letter entitled "Everything Except Flags" and signed "A Resident" in your issue of Dec. 12, it's unfortunate you didn't add a footnote to the Editor as is so often done, particularly if since you know the facts.

The American flags displayed in downtown Birmingham on legal holidays and during Michigan Week are both stored and displayed through the courtesy of the City of Birmingham.

These same flags, however, can't be short at half mast due to the slow staff and lack of fittings.

Also, to my knowledge, the flags have never been displayed en masse as advertising for special sales or bargain days.

I hope that you can send a copy of this letter to the party who signed "A Resident" as well as give this one front page space as you did the other.

JIM COUZENS  
Village Sport & Hobby Shop

(MORE PEOPLES' COLUMN LETTERS ON 8-B)

### Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO

Dec. 26, 1913

Wednesday evening, the last night of 1913, the Methodist church will follow the general custom of that denomination in observing Watch-night. The annual church-family supper will occupy the time until eight o'clock. To this only members and those who attend the church regularly, together with the families of both, are expected. But, the program, beginning at eight o'clock, is open to public, and everyone is cordially invited to be present.

That "safety men are a thousand times more important than safety things" was proven by a circumstance that occurred on Woodward Avenue the other day. A woman stepped from behind a Woodward Avenue car directly in the path of a Pontiac car. Motorman W. E. Whiting on the Pontiac car told the story, "This lady came from behind a Woodward Avenue car and I did not see her there until she stepped in front of my car. She slipped and fell down on the track. I dropped my fender and pushed her off the track." The lady was not hurt. Motorman Whiting was on the job.

Monday evening, January 5, the I. O. O. F. Lodge and the Welcome Rebekas Lodge will have a public installation. Grand Lodge officers will be present. After the ceremony there will be dancing free for all. Good music.

30 YEARS AGO

Dec. 28, 1933

The Birmingham postoffice is assured of retaining its first class rating, it was announced yesterday by Postmaster Joseph A. Byrne. Stamp sales for the year up to yesterday, Mr. Byrne said, were \$478.97 in excess of the minimum requirement, and indications are that the quota will be exceeded. (See HAPPENINGS, 7-B)