

Arts Festival Questioned as To Its Value

To the Editor:

There may have been, as alleged, several "goods" deriving from the Festival activities which took over Shain Park and some adjoining area in June.

The greatest good of all, I believe, came when the Big Bubble and the little ones were pulled down and carted away, leaving the park a mess, particularly the east quarter—despite the day and night dashing on it of thousands of gallons of water in this Great Drouth.

According to a report in your paper several weeks ago the taxpayers put up a tidy sum for the Festival; but the cash transfusions, despite the protests of the second one by Commissioners Ralph A. Main and Charles Renfrew.

THEN CITY crews put in a lot

of hours from the days before, during and after the activities. I do not know of any other fun-loving enterprise that is subsidized. At least not so well. Those I am familiar with use their own funds—a good idea, it seems.

Now if these annual shows do all that is claimed for them like boosting our intelligence average, provide outlets for our singing and strumming hill billies, reduce our juvenile delinquencies of one sort and another, promote the sale of hot dogs and cold pop, then I feel it is unfair to the adjoining community to "hog it" every year.

They should be cut in on these reported gains. It seems to me about one of these Festivals a decade should be enough. No community should demand more!

BUT IF another Festival is held—and it will be if City funds are made available—then some other time than mid-summer should be chosen. I have in mind our city park and all those who have come to using it in the summer.

For weeks now there hasn't been a safe place in the park to park. What with all the Coney Island activities of the Festival and now being being pulled all over the place and anybody around.

AN ECCENTRIC

Open Letter to Eccentric:

'Stop Using Plattitudes; Give the Facts'

To the Editor:

I read with interest your unsigned "Open letter to Dave Breck" in your issue of June 27. It contains several inaccurate assumptions which cloud its conclusions.

First, you say Dave Breck was elected commissioner because 3,293 residents of our city "respected his judgment," "admired his ability," and also because "he worked the hardest."

The foregoing does not explain the trend toward the commercialization of Birmingham, to bring to the attention of Birmingham residents what was happening to the character of the community.

He hit this issue hard in his campaign for commissioner. His won the election because the 3,293 voters you speak of knew the issue had merit, and they gave him a mandate to pursue it.

The issue was summed up in his statement, "Keep Birmingham Residential," only one part of which was the parking lot issue.

UNDERLYING the issue was the sentiment held by many Birmingham people that Birmingham was gradually receding from its main feature and attraction; i.e., a fine residential community. In short, that Birmingham was going commercial with the blessing of The Eccentric and the beneficiaries of the commissioners, despite the wishes of the majority of its residents.

Many of my acquaintances felt that the commission was made up of members who, for one reason or another, were in line with the local merchants; that no where on the commission was there a member supporting the residents on the "commercialization" issue, on their view that Birmingham should remain a residential community.

DAVE BRECK did much to halt the mainstream of the trend toward the commercialization of Birmingham, to bring to the attention of Birmingham residents what was happening to the character of the community.

He hit this issue hard in his campaign for commissioner. His won the election because the 3,293 voters you speak of knew the issue had merit, and they gave him a mandate to pursue it.

He should be now turn away from the people who put him in office for what you choose to call "teamwork" and "progress?"

SECONDLY, you state that a city commissioner "must give a little for the best interests of the group." The major question which you leave for the reader, and which you fail to answer, is: The best interests of what group? The merchants, The Eccentric?

The Eccentric should turn from its plattitudes; it should commence by telling the peo-

ple in plain facts. The truth is that The Eccentric is speaking in terms of "teamwork" and "progress" and "best interests of the group," submitting that Dave Breck "give in a little."

AT THE same time, The Eccentric is failing to tell the people, its readers, why it supports the local merchants and the plan to commercialize Birmingham—the reason being that The Eccentric derives the bulk of its income from the merchants. The more merchants in Birmingham, the more income for The Eccentric.

There is nothing wrong with the profit motive as long as it is exposed for the people to see; there is nothing to hide. The Eccentric should not couch its editorials and "open letters" in pious platitudes.

If The Eccentric, which purports to be the "Conscience of the Community," aspires to playing a role and function in the community life of Birmingham, then before it requests Dave Breck, the one small voice of courage on the city commission, for "teamwork," The Eccentric should begin with fair play, which means displaying the facts and The Eccentric's own self-interest on this issue of parking lots.

JOHN T. ROGERS
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Birmingham

Urban Affairs Dept. Supported

To the Editor:

I wish to commend The Eccentric for its (June 27) editorial in support of President Kennedy's proposed Department of Urban Affairs.

The logic behind this proposal is crystal clear: the economic and social problems pressing in on all urban areas, particularly on cities like New York, Chicago and Detroit, have become too enormous and complex to be solved at the local or state level.

WE ARE fast approaching the time when 80 percent of all Americans will live in cities. It is in the cities that we will face the greatest challenge in the areas of civil rights, unemployment, housing, education, transportation and crime. It is inconceivable that this major segment of the American establishment should be without direct representation in the Cabinet.

Nor is it inconsistent to be in favor of a Department of Urban Affairs but against the growing power of the Federal Government. It is the American equivalent of the ostrich that opposes both

WILLIAM LYMAN
5395 Hickory Bend
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More People's Column Letters on I-B

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Offers Some Advice On Smoking Problem

To the Editor:

Horrendous is the word to describe the task ahead of you in combating Mr. Tobacco's grip on American youth.

A boy's best friend, his smoking parent, is unable to instill the conviction which is necessary to firm up his resolve and form the decision to oppose this thing.

The parent can't defend his combative stand with the result that they argue in favor of later acceptance, passive abstinence—tobacco wins.

THE TV has a powerful persuasive voice and the laxity of the government in pinning back the mouth of advertisement has resulted in dissimulation calculated to get a near-perfect score. It's like shooting fish in a barrel.

The automatic vending machine located in the hamburger stand is a considerable source of smokes for youth. The nearby juke box, also co-operated, in assisting in detracting the attention of servers from the operation of extracting a pack of cigarettes.

KIDS GET cigarettes at tobacco counters by merely saying it's for dad. I do not say that the kids use a big brother or sis device.

Smoking is so simple to do, not an iota of intelligence required; one can't get hooked, and he is subjected to extreme discomfort the relief of which is simply to inhale some tobacco smoke.

I can speak with intimacy about smoking. Many times over a 10-year period I wanted to quit it. Then I devised a simple effective method which I followed through and so

managed to get rid of it.

I ALSO effectually got rid of the desire which they tell me causes people to commence again. Strange enough I've never met anyone who was willing to try my way and I finally gave up trying to interest anyone in it.

The stupid notion that willpower could do it is a general observation. I would like to offer two suggestions. First, it should be taught in school what actually happens that makes tobacco so indispensable to the smoker.

IN SUMMARY: tobacco action is paradoxical. When you started smoking, you took place in your body economy—your digestive glands became inhibited in action (froze up) and this becomes normal.

However, smoking a cigaret will now cause digestive action and this is where the "hit" of smoking derives. A portion of digested nutrient now enters the blood stream and you associate this with the cigaret you're smoking.

THIS IS the paradox. Soon the glands go to sleep again. Students should understand this.

Secondly, I will not offer the policeman a bounty of 10 cents for every youth arrested? This would do very well to clarify the situation. I do not of course wish to imply that the police are necessary. It is only that law enforcement is greatly impeded by many outside considerations that render it difficult.

Therefore, a simple solution would result in quick action without discredit to the law.

THURU ROSENE.

Pesticide Controls May Be Strengthened

To the Editor:

The Birmingham Eccentric is to be commended for publishing the forthright article "Pesticides Prove Fatal to Michigan Wildlife" in the June 7 issue (Page 5-B).

In view of growing awareness of the dangerous spread of poisonous chemicals by our spray-happy nation, municipalities and neighbors, many readers have felt concern that our local publishers have so long remained noncommittal on this grave subject.

CONSERVATION and wildlife organizations have long pointed out the tragic results of wide spread spraying of poison insecticides. But it took Rachel Carson's overwhelmingly documented "Silent Spring" and the attendant publicity by press, radio and TV to shock the nation into the awareness that poison is poison, whether it is applied by plane or a hand sprayer.

While the pros and cons continue to justify their positions, there seems little question that the indiscriminate use of deadly chemicals in wholesale spraying programs will never again be regarded with complacency.

WITH THIS widespread interest and the backing of the Administration, legislation for more strin-

gent controls is almost sure to be passed in the next session of Congress.

Letters from our state legislators and from Senator Natcher of Oregon (a reply has appeared in such bills) assure me that there will be a demand for stepping-up of research; for the regulation of testing, manufacturing, sale and use of synthetic chemical sprays.

This is not a partisan affair. Every citizen is affected—in his pocketbook and his environment.

ATTEMPTS HAVE been made by manufacturers to minimize the very real dangers involved. They brush off reported deaths of wildlife and humans as "emotional inferences"; "accidents due to careless handling."

But facts no longer justify such excuses or "explanations." However the chemical industry is Big Business, reportedly grossing \$500 million annually for insecticides, pesticides, etc., and they are not likely to cut profits without a struggle.

Articles such as the one in question, which present facts fairly, will go far toward influencing our citizens to seek protection of our resources as well as ourselves. MRS. J. HOWARD WENDORPH Lathrup Village

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