

### How to Handle Population Rise

Apparently, no one took Donald Robert Perry Marquis seriously.

Marquis, American humor writer who was born in 1878 and died in 1937, had this to say about population in a piece he called "The Almost Perfect State":

"For a territory the size of the United States five millions of people would be about right . . .

"The human population of the entire world should be kept well under a hundred millions . . .

"If the world were not so full of people, and most of them did not hate to work so hard, there would be more time for them to get out and lie on the grass, and there would be more grass for them to lie on."

We wonder what the humorist would say if he knew that the U.S. today has 187 million people and that there are 2.5 billion in the entire world!

As for the green grass, we would have him visit suburbia — he might not find very much people lying on the grass, but he most certainly would see many mowing their lawns or slaving over a hot grill in their backyards.

**THE MOVEMENT** to suburbia is, of course, the strongest indication of the current population boom.

That it is continuing in this area is evidenced in a report last week from the Detroit Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Commission.

That report showed population projections for the next 17 years. It predicted sizeable increases in Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Bloomfield and West Bloomfield townships,

### What to Do About State Taxes?

The State of Michigan has had serious financial problems since 1958. They probably date back prior to that time, but newly enacted taxes periodically covered up the surge of rising costs without revenues growing at the same rate.

Since 1958 the state has kidded itself that the problem would work itself out without an income tax. They have kidded themselves as a result of letters by men of a family writing Lansing and saying: "Let's cut costs," while their spouses would write the same people asking for more money for mental health, higher education and other worthwhile causes.

**THE RUB**, of course, is that more women than men get out and vote and the politicians know this. It is also easy for these same office-holders to vote for more projects because they know they don't have to face up to paying for them until later.

Thus, it is too late to say: "Let's cut costs" until each and every individual says we are spending enough for the education of our children and we don't mind having waiting lists for our mental institutions.

**WITH THESE** factors in mind, The Eccentric four weeks ago gave its readers an opportunity to work out, via a poll, a tax program which would face the realities of today.

We showed our readers why in the next year alone the state costs would increase

Lathrup, Southfield, Troy and Wood Creek Farms.

**POPULATION INCREASES** affect a Community. They give rise to new problems — sewers, roads, police, recreation, schools.

To assure maintenance of the services needed to contend with these problems, the residents must maturely reconceive themselves to provide the necessary support through taxes.

Quite often, there is a temptation to put emphasis on tax cost rather than on program values. We must be careful to avoid that confusion in our role of mature citizenry.

**WITH THE** growth of any area, there tends to be an erosion of the basic community character, community values which made it attractive in the beginning and which account for the continual growth.

Constant vigilance on the part of the citizenry is the only defense to prevent this erosion.

There must be strong governmental units and citizenship interest, with an alertness to the values which relate to the specific locale.

This calls for a vigorous and energetic involvement of citizens in government.

**COMMUNITY** values cannot be maintained by apathy, but rather by an awareness of community needs and problems, by vigilance, by participation in group efforts to achieve solutions.

So, let us not be concerned with the population boom per se; but let us see what we can do to preserve the character of our community.

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

There is no end to the number and variety of recommendations for melting off excess fatty tissue. Multitudes of those more plump than pleasing read advice of this kind. Some even follow it, determined to whack off the promised amount — half a pound a day, maybe, or even more if they combine exercise and starvation. These zealots of the slim line may want to consider the method evolved, more or less accidentally, by a young Canadian student nurse named Claudia McPherson. She dropped 20 pounds — not in a month, not in a week, but in a bit over 17 hours. There is one little problem. Miss McPherson's method involves swimming the English Channel. It was in the course of this laud that she became 20 pounds lighter. So back to the grapefruit and cottage cheese, girls.

The hornet is generally looked upon as a confounded nuisance. Actually, the hornet is far more dangerous than this attitude implies. People are inclined to treat the hornet with respect, because they know by experience or hearsay that

its sting hurts like the devil. Something stronger than mere respect is called for. Extreme wariness would be more like it. Such caution is justified, because multiple hornet stings can be fatal.

The British Noise Abatement Society asks the police for quieter burglar alarms. Over here we'd settle for quieter jack-hammers.

It was a tough job persuading the Russians to accept a nuclear test ban — almost as tough as persuading the Senate to be.

A survey of teen-agers shows that many of them lack understanding of our basic civil liberties. They have this in common with a lot of adults.

Moscow accuses Red China of vilifying Soviet foreign policy with charges that "reek of hopelessness and pessimism." The feud gives the West hope and optimism.

### PEOPLE'S COLUMN

## Defends Secret Societies In Public High Schools

To the Editor:

During the past year the subject of high school secret societies has been widely publicized both in school publications and in your paper.

The Aug. 1 Eccentric containing an editorial supporting the campaign of the school board to rid the high schools of these societies.

It was mentioned in this editorial that no written opinions have been produced in support of these. In that case, I would like to present mine.

I believe it is one of the rights of American citizens to choose their close friends whether or not this is done in an organized manner, as in the case of the secret societies.

**YOU MENTIONED** in your editorial that many of these societies have a worthwhile place in the commu-

nity, and I feel that this is the case with mine.

It seems that the main reason for the pressures against these societies is the discrimination within the societies themselves. This discrimination is necessary as a protection against persons who would hinder rather than help the organization and is practiced by many other high school clubs and organizations as well as secret societies.

Nevertheless, we are held to be wrong. I believe this is unfair.

**IF I WISHED** to become a member of the National Honor Society, Dramatics Club, Ushers Club, Assembly Club or any of a number of other organizations sponsored by my school and sanctioned by the school board, I would have to face not only the discrimination of my fellow students in this

club but also the discrimination of my teachers.

If it is fair for me to be voted upon to gain membership in these clubs, why then is it unfair to afford the same privilege to a social club?

I would like to propose that each organization be allowed, without fear of incrimination to themselves, to present their purposes for existing to the school board. I also suggest that these organizations be allowed to set up membership requirements like any other school club and be allowed to choose candidates on the basis of these requirements.

In closing, I would like to say that if these organizations are dissolved, the school and the community will be gaining nothing, but will be losing the organized good of many well-meaning younger citizens.

A STUDENT

## Should Fraternities, Sororities Be Legal?

To the Editor:

In a recent editorial you mentioned that no one has written to the local state legislators in the past three years to attempt to repeal the law banning high school fraternities and sororities.

It seems to me that this is true because in the past there has been no need of repealing it. The people against secret societies were happy; they had their law. Those in favor of the societies had no complaints because the law was not enforced.

The main objection to these clubs seems to be their discrimination and choosing of members on the somewhat prejudiced whims of existing members.

**IF THIS** is so bad, why does no one object to the fact that you must be voted into many of the special interest clubs at my and other high schools that are supposedly open to all students?

I think that a far worse point against them is that they foster drinking and unchaperoned parties because they are now outside of the law and have no school or parental supervision. If they were legal and more strictly controlled this problem would be diminished.

**THERE ARE** now fraternal organizations for every age group (Boy Scouts, college fraternities, lodges) except high school. Why not have supervised high school fraternities and sororities?

I have gained much from my association with a high school fraternity and made some lifetime friends with boys I might never have met had it not been for my fraternity. I feel myself and my community

could have benefited more from this fraternity had it had the school and parental backbone it needed.

FRATERNITY MEMBER

## Physical Fitness Program—Why This Sidewalk?

To the Editor:

About three weeks ago The Birmingham Eccentric published an article about the physical fitness program taking place in Birmingham. No doubt this publicity caused an article along with pictures to be published in a Detroit daily.

Apparently our city commissioners know nothing about this. I say this because the city taxpayers are about to pay for an unnecessary walk to be built through vacant city property from the west end of Pembroke to the Grand Trunk viaduct to save a few students 15 seconds walking time. We are now building sidewalks on Graefield and Derby for them to use.

Why a walk through a vacant lot? **EDWARD W. PELUKE** 1861 Pembroke Birmingham

**Letters from readers always welcome. But they MUST be signed, although identities will not be divulged if the writer so requests.**

## Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO  
Aug. 15, 1913

It used to be a laughing affair to be nominated and elected a Justice of the Peace and everybody judged it. Under Justice A. W. Campbell the business has arisen to a dignified position and some revenue. Justice A. W. Campbell is always in, and no one can find fault with his decisions as they are always rendered strictly according to law.

The story of J. F. Rundel and his cat and chicken troubles would fill a book. J. F. loves chicken better than cats. After losing 75 thoroughbred Rhode Island Reds he declared war on cats and started a cat graveyard, and with his trusty gun soon had 17 little mounds of earth marking the last resting place of 17 Tabbies. One man declares his cat never caught a chick, didn't know what a chick looked like, much less tasted. Skill Kitty was with the rest caught coming from the yard with one in its mouth. Seeing's believing.

**Dr. N. T. Shaw** now drives one of those lead colored touring cars, and it has all the very latest "confinements" that go to make the autoist very happy. Self-starter, electric lights, self oiler, big whistle and oh, Lordy! see it, we can't tell half of its good qualifications. It is a real beauty. (See HAPPENINGS, 5-B)

## Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN



Once a year the pressure builds up to a point that I have to discuss our freeway system.

By the many releases that cross my desk I know that we have the finest free express-highway system in the country.

I know from personal experience that the trip to Mackinaw which used to take almost eight hours now only takes four and a half hours. This is certainly progress.

I have seen statistics which show that the superhighways have caused a tremendous drop in highway accidents.

**WITH ALL THESE** wonderful things I still get on one of our freeways not knowing whether I will reach my destination because of the possible lack of food, gas or lodgings.

Last year I reported that I had left an expressway at night and driven over five miles without spotting an open gas station, even though the exit was marked with a gas sign.

I have been told subsequently that this couldn't happen, but this isn't much consolation when it did happen and my fuel tank ran "E."

**THE HIGHWAY** department's announced policy about markings on the freeway is that if a gas station is within one mile of the freeway and is open 24 hours a day, it will post a gas sign.

It will also post a food or lodgings sign if there is a restaurant or sleeping accommodation within three miles of the highway.

I have no quarrel with the gas regulation if it is enforced. Personally, I'd like to cut the distance to a half a mile, but the present regulation is reasonable.

The problem is what happens if the gas station owner's wife is sick and he goes home early. As far as I can see there is no penalty, and another motorist has problems.

**AS FOR** the food and lodging signs, there is no regulation that they remain open 24 hours a day nor that they be of a certain quality. This means after nine o'clock the sign isn't worth a darn.

I know it is easy to criticize but I have a solution. We should do as the other states do! We should have gas and food stops every so many miles on the highway.

Immediately, the highway commissioner will say we can't do this because federal regulations prohibit the use of the right-of-way for commercial endeavors.

The answer is simple, put them back off the highway so they are not within the right-of-way.

The state could then rent these facilities to gas companies and restaurants and bring in increased revenue and it could by inspection keep the eating places up to par.

## City Beat

By KEN WEAVER



Mrs. Sloane Commeree impressed me as the Mrs. Willett of Seattle.

I met her at a banquet during the National Editorial Association convention in that Washington city last month. She was there as a representative of the Women's Division of the Chamber of Commerce.

She spoke of her native city with the same kind of pride and civic interest that former Mayor Florence H. Willett has displayed in Birmingham.

"Seattle and Washington live in the shadow of California," she said. "It gets all of the glory and the publicity and people just aren't aware of the beauty and the resources that we have."

**MRS. COMMERE** talked convincingly of Seattle's culture, its economy, its natural beauty.

Seattle, she said proudly, has the oldest symphony orchestra west of Chicago. And she spoke in glowing terms of Washington University and its research programs.

Seattle, situated on a long strip of land between Lake Washington and Puget Sound, has experienced considerable growth in the past few years.

It will grow even more, Mrs. Commeree predicted. "We have no real racial problem here," she said in response to a question. "But we probably will get an open housing ordinance. There has been no serious discrimination here, but we have had a few minor demonstrations."

**IN THE** last few years, Seattle has become a popular water sports vacation spot.

"No one paid much attention to our water sports until Seattle racers won the Gold Cup. Now we have the races out here."

Since 1951, Seattle has predominated as the site of the race. This year, the Gold Cup was held on the Detroit River, but the winner was—Ron Musson of Seattle.

Seattle is a city of some 500,000 people, but the pace is much slower than in Middle Western cities of comparable size. It lacks the hurried, tense excitement that characterizes our area.

Rather, it possesses a calm serenity that tempts one to stay on a little longer.

**ALONG THE** Puget Sound waterfront stands a two-layer viaduct, the nearest thing to a freeway in Seattle. Northbound traffic is on one layer and southbound the other.

A freeway is under construction that will eventually facilitate traffic out to the Tacoma-Seattle airport, but it must be at least a year away from completion.

The Seattle Center (1962 World's Fair site), with its space needle and monorail, attracts many tourists. The needle offers a spectacular view of the entire metropolitan area and the monorail a fast, smooth ride to the Center.

"**WHEN YOU** return home," said Mrs. Commeree, "tell your people about our city and our state. We have a lot of rain here, true; but we also have a lot of nice, pleasant weather. In July, the temperature ranges around 73-74, with the low in the 50's."

There is a woman completely sold on her home town and anxious to let other people know about it.

## Good Old Simmertime



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