

Listen to What the Man Says

On Sept. 16, Dr. John B. Smith will assume the superintendency of the Birmingham Public Schools.

What can we expect of this man? What do we know about him?

Not only is he a newcomer to our community but to the metropolitan region and the Midwest as well. He comes to us from Greenwich, Conn., where he had been superintendent since 1958.

A study of his professional background indicates that we can expect the highest of professional standards and achievements from this man.

AS AN educational administrator, he pioneered in the team-teaching concept (the use of two teachers in a class) and in the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary grades.

A Harvard graduate, he has learned the ropes as a teacher, supervisor of adult education, principal and superintendent.

His professional background pretty well speaks for itself.

But we can probably get a better idea of what we can expect from this man through his own words.



DR. JOHN B. SMITH

WHEN interviewed by The Eccentric in June, Dr. Smith said:

"The job of the schools is to develop a youngster to the fullest ability. The graduate must be able to read critically, think analytically and communicate clearly.

"If a school system can accomplish these, there is no need to worry about the other

educational goals because they will accomplish themselves."

AS FOR his interest in a quality school system, we take note of this comment:

"The Birmingham schools have a fine reputation and I will make sure that reputation does not slip. If there are ways to improve the system, they must be done.

"A school system is just as good as the community wants it to be."

We have a good school system in Birmingham because that's the kind our citizens want; that's the kind of education we wish to give our children. So, we accept this challenge from Dr. Smith with pride and confidence.

JUDGING FROM Dr. Smith's own remarks, we can expect effective communication between the school administration and the public.

"Communication," he declared, "is a two-way street. The public must present ideas in an orderly fashion. School people and the board of education don't know all of the answers."

Because he is a law-abiding man, we can expect a continuation of the crackdown on secret societies and smoking in the schools:

"If you have a law or regulation, the school is obligated to enforce the law. The board and administration have no other choice but to fulfill the law."

ON THE BASIS of his professional background and his own comments, we can expect from Dr. John B. Smith:

Emphasis on total development of students.

Encouragement for citizen participation in solution to school needs and problems.

Implementation of new, sound principals and methods of teaching.

Efficient administration of school affairs.

Effective communication between the administration and the public.

We welcome him to the community and wish him success.

The Hardest Bag to Pack



EAK

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Two Reasons Offered To Bar Secret Groups

To the Editor:

I am writing in answer to the letter of Sally Senor concerning the problem of fraternities and sororities in the high schools.

Sally wrote that strict enforcement of the state law concerning these groups is not necessary. She felt that the only opposition to a Birmingham high school, I strongly disagree.

FIRST OF all, such groups are undemocratic. It is a great disappointment to a student wanting to pledge to be blackballed. So, these clubs can exert a great deal of social pressure.

The groups can, in effect, say "Do it my way, or else!" Nor

would a large number of clubs solve this problem, as Sally suggests. Even if a school had many fraternities and sororities, the pressure might be very great to pledge the "right" one.

SECONDLY, the law should be strictly enforced because laxity on the part of parents and teens is deceitful. Some parents, by signing the board of education statements and then allowing students to join the clubs, are setting poor examples in dishonesty for all students.

Students, too, who sign the statements and join the groups without their parents' permission show that they can't be trusted.

These are my reasons for opposing the spread of fraternities and sororities in high schools. I'm sure other teens can add several more.

GRETA GRADUATE

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO

There will be held in Birmingham on Sept. 14, one of the most unique and interesting services incident to the opening of the public schools. R.R. Rev. W. M. Robb, Rev. Paul Livingstone, and the Rev. Wilson Reid of Birmingham, will join with the clergy-men in all parts of the country in a prayer for all free schools. These prayers will be uttered simultaneously in the tongues of all men. The aim is to have the Bible made a textbook in all schools.

The State tax commissioners were in Birmingham last Saturday. Crowds of Birmingham and were surprised to hear of the great boost in the valuations of their property. Land between here and Pontiac is valued at \$750 per acre.

Adam Gray, rural carrier, last Monday was telling the boys just before starting out on the daily run with Uncle Sam's mail, what a grand good old mobile his little Brush car was. Adam forgot to pound wood and the consequences was as usual. Long years ago an apple caused unlimited trouble to mankind but this time it was a pear. The particulars of the case were reached for the pear to the finish was one continuous performance. After the ball was over, the machine had a broken axle, the engine torn out by the roots, and the busy Brush auto a wreck where Adam went down.

30 YEARS AGO

A meeting of representatives of the Cities of Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills and Bloomfield Township may be held some time this week for a conference on the division of liabilities and assets made necessary by the cities' withdrawal from the township, the Bloomfield Hills Commission was advised. (See HAPPENINGS, 7-B)

Parking Meter Purchase Cited

To the Editor:

The City of Birmingham recently purchased parking meters that take nickels, dimes and quarters.

What does this mean?

City controls parking lots, more income from parking meters and additional work for the police department.

Let's take the policemen off the parking meters and put them back on the road.

MARK J. REID

350 W. Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Reid apparently makes reference to used parking meters the City recently purchased from Wyan-

dotte, most of them for the new municipal parking lot in the block south of Shain park.

STRICTLY FRESH

Some say that sophistication is the ability to do almost anything without feeling guilty.

People who cough never go to doctors; they go to concerts.

Only a woman can spend \$15 for a slip and become frustrated when it shows.

The girls who don't seem to need girldes are always the ones who model them.

THE GOLDEN YEARS

The long-time dream of a little retirement place in the country continues to reappear among 65-year-old people.

Here, as I have seen them over the last five years, are the main pros and cons of the matter:

The cons:

1. There is no Santa Claus on R.F.D. What you don't pay for in taxes you don't get... such as a fire truck if the house catches fire, a policeman in 10 minutes when you need him, a hidden sewer pipe instead of a contrary septic tank in the back yard, and sometimes telephone, water, and gas.
2. THE SERVICES a civilized suburbanite has grown accustomed to can vanish 14 miles out of town: milk men, electricians, supermarketa, repairman for the refrigerator and washer, and neighborhood boys to mow the lawn.
3. Loneliness in possibly its most acute form often comes to the retired couple sitting in an isolated farm home. Neighbors may be half

a mile away. There are few passers-by. And the old friends back in town—even if you draw them the finest maps showing how to find your home and serve them anchovies and Scotch—just don't find time to drive out for visits. This is true. Believe it.

4. DOCTORS are a bit hard to come by when you're in need of a house call. So are oxygen tanks for heart attacks. And ambulances.

5. There is a violence to life in the country, and a suburbanite may find it shocking at first. 6. As age comes on neither the man nor the wife would be inclined to leave the other alone on the farm for an evening. Certainly not for good should one pass on.

The pros:

1. The suburbanite moving to a farm to rehabilitate it is tackling one of the grand adventures of a mature life. It is simply fun to rebuild, refurbish, and make a home out of a shack. It also is practical, since labor and second-hand materials come cheap.

2. IT'S FASHIONABLE. Snobbish friends all over will envy you.

3. The taxes of the modern suburb are frightful and getting more so. The cost of living creeps on up. The retired couple, with an income that will probably remain right where it is from here on, has serious cause for concern. An economical farm is a way out.

4. Demands on the check book are drastically reduced in moving from the suburbs to a farm: charity donations, public causes, entertaining, clothes, appearances—all are less. With a garden, food is less.

There's no law against having a cow. If you can milk. And you to have a 22 rifle and shotgun, and bring home a rabbit or two, if you like that sort of thing.

5. Your nearest neighbor may be over a hill and through the hollow, but he'll be a warmer neighbor than the next-door family in suburbia. And help you more, if he can get through the mud roads.

A Word to Auto Makers

The overriding thought prompted by the Labor Day week end's highway carnage is that we have signally failed to curb auto accidents and the sort of driving that leads to them. This is not said in derogation of police and safety officials, who for the most part have worked devotedly to stem the accident tide.

Two principal means have been used in this effort. One encompasses all the pleas and warnings that come under the general heading of exhortation. This is usually referred to as safety education. The other means is the passage of traffic law, coupled with more or less strict enforcement.

Neither of these means has proved adequate to the task. The task has been complicated by the swift rise in the number of autos on the road, but this does not wholly account for the failure.

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

Certain seasonal admonitions are so old that there is a tendency to bypass them because it is embarrassing to restate the obvious. But it can also be argued that failure to reiterate some important cautions is dereliction of duty. So here goes: We are entering that time of year when driving conditions become worse and the hazards increase. Drivers should behave accordingly. As the year wears, more and more driving at either end of the day will be done in darkness. Autumn rains and fallen leaves, followed by you-know-what in winter, make road surfaces treacherous. One other factor complicates the situation and boosts the danger. Four time a day, in most communities, small children are walking to and from school, sometimes playfully darting into the street or crossing haphazardly. That in itself makes the warning pertinent: Danger. Drive With Care.

The hearts of mailmen doubtless leaped at the news that the Post Office Department thinks it has finally discovered a way to keep dogs from biting mailmen. The joyous reaction is understandable. Mailmen have been leaping for years as dogs sampled their shanks, and it's about time science came through with a remedy. The new deterrent is a chemical that allegedly makes dogs yelp and depart but does them no permanent harm—except, perhaps, to the canine ego. The hitch, as with

nuclear arms, is in the delivery system. Some of the carriers testing the new deterrent report being unable to get the cap off the container in time. Maybe putting the stuff in water pistols would be the thing—and then a little small arms practice in the Post Office basement.

The Russians veto a United Nations resolution condemning Syria's attack on Israeli farmers. Russia's purpose may be serious, but it's not Syria's.

In barring integration of Alabama a public school, Governor Wallace was carrying on the good fight—good for Wallace's Alabama political fortunes.

A former Harvard Law School dean is punished for not filing income tax returns. This proves that knowledge of the law, like ignorance, is no excuse.

Finalists in the Miss America contest weighed a total of three tons and 333 pounds, which proves that good things don't necessarily come in small packages.

Russia thinks the Berlin wall should be turned into a border between sovereign states. That borders on the fantastic.

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Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

Over Labor Day week end the Hogans and the William Downeys, Jr., decided to go camping with their children. We rounded up sleeping bags, cooking utensils, warm clothes and even borrowed a station wagon bus with which to attack the northland.

We went up to the Jordan River in the northwest part of the state and rented canoes. We got the canoe to transport our bus halfway down the river so that we wouldn't put everything in the canoes with the five kids aged 3 to 7.

Like our predecessors, Father Marquette and Chief Pontiac, we pushed away from the shore of Andy's Canoe Rentals and headed into the wilderness.

AFTER AN HOUR and a half of paddling we arrived at our camping site, just about the same time as it decided to rain. We ignored the small droplets of moisture as long as we could, but were finally forced into action.

We had not brought a tent along but we had a huge tarpaulin which we strung from the surrounding trees. It actually made a better shelter than a tent and we had ample room to lay out our sleeping paraphernalia. However, we selected a spot that apparently once was a stone quarry which doesn't make the best natural mattresses for sleeping.

THE RAIN STOPPED and we sent the kids into two directions, some to gather wood and others to see how many stones they could throw into the woods (out of our natural bedroom).

We built a fire and dined on pan-fried fresh trout, corn, potatoes and even caesar salad.

As we were washing out pots and pans with sand in a freezing river, like Daniel Boone and all of the famous woodsmen before us, some new campers invaded our primitive home.

It was a family of five in a station wagon with one of those little camping trailers behind.

Within minutes, they had pressed a couple of buttons and their trailer converted into a tent with bunks containing innerspring mattresses, plus a real icebox and stove.

THEY EVEN had the gall to take out an aluminum table and five beach chairs and turn on a portable radio. I half-expected the father to put on a tax for dinner. Slightly disillusioned, we put the rest of the pots and pans into our bus and decided to finish cleaning them when we got back to civilization.

The night was chilly and after roasting marshmallows we crawled into our sleeping bags (on top of the rock quarry) and went to sleep.

We awakened before sun-up (with five kids, you have no choice), cooked our breakfast and loaded our things into the bus.

As the sun was poking its head above the trees, we picked back into our canoes and headed for home.

AS WE DRIFTED along, the sun started to warm up the day, and amid the fresh clean smell of the woods and the quiet peaceful song of the river, you can get a small inkling of what heaven must be like.

We reached our destination ruffled, a bit tired, but purged of the cares of the outside world by our short but with nature.

The tonic was so complete that I couldn't help but think how lucky we are in this fair state to have all this natural beauty available—yet so few people take advantage of it.

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

"Staying on the job too long develops stale views," said Harry M. Denyes, Jr., as he stepped out of his role of Birmingham city commissioner in April, 1961.

"A fresh point of view makes for healthy government," he philosophized.

Denyes will have an opportunity to find out if his views have changed in the past two and a half years when he assumes his duties as a member of the Birmingham Board of Zoning Appeals next week.

HE WAS appointed to that post by the city commission last week.

Of course, the commissioners will have a chance to see what his views are now, as the appeals board acts on requests for variances to the zoning code—after commission action.

Denyes, who considers himself no professional politician, has extensive experience in government service:

He is an ex-commissioner, ex-mayor and ex-planning board member and chairman.

In November, 1949, he was one of nine men appointed by Mayor Donald S. Bell to study the city's building code.

Then he became the only member of the planning commission to be appointed by the city commission to the city's new planning board in July, 1951. A new zoning ordinance went into effect at the time.

HARRY M. DENYES, JR.

VOTERS ELECTED Denyes to the city commission in April, 1956—along with two other newcomers: Mrs. G. Howard Willett, Jr., and Manley R. Bailey. That was the year of the big State Park parking lot controversy.

Denyes served as a commissioner for six years and as (See CITY BEAT, 8-B)

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