

Not Yet, George; Not Yet

George, we read with interest your remarks before the National Press Club stating that if drafted you would run for the presidency.

We are sure that you are motivated by the fact that the only two announced candidates for the Republican nomination for that job represent extremes, which you have always fought.

But, George, Michigan needs you more at this time than does the Federal Government. There is time enough for Washington after you have finished the job in Lansing.

You have only been our governor for one short year, but in that time you have brought the state from a whopping 85-million-dollar deficit to an estimated surplus of 35 million dollars.

NATURALLY, your opponents will say that it wasn't your doing, it was a good automobile year. But you know, and we know, that we have had two good automobile years in a row and the state went deeper in the hole during the first year when your predecessor was steering the ship of state.

You have proven to us that you are a man of ideals, courage and integrity.

You took the bull by the horns, rolled up your sleeves and worked for tax reform. None of us like the idea of an income tax, but we recognize that it is necessary if you are to reform the rest of our tax structure.

You'll get that tax reform through if you keep working, but we doubt if anyone else can.

YOU HAVE shown us in the last year that you can get programs through that have been defeated in the past.

You got through the legislature a solution to the Ford-Canton labor situation. Maybe Labor or Management didn't stand up and cheer at the result but it must have been fair, for neither party particularly liked it.

You successfully asked for and got legislation putting Michigan under the federal ADCU act. We have not reaped the benefit of this yet, but it will be worked out if you stay around.

YOU LED the fight to bring a new constitution to Michigan, which would be a tremendous accomplishment to an ordinary type man.

You accomplished election reform by legislation requiring the clearing of deadwood from the election registration lists.

Your administration helped reform a basic concept in mental health with the enactment of "Community Mental Health" legislation.

Yes, George, Michigan is on its way forward. We are no longer looked upon as that "Bankrupt State." And you must be given much credit for these accomplishments, just as you would have received the blame if they hadn't happened.

But there is much more to be done. Don't look to Washington before you can finish the job here.

A Welcome—and a Caution

Announcement last week of the formation of a home owners association council calls for close scrutiny by the citizens of Birmingham.

This organization offers the possibility of local residents joining together to demonstrate a standing interest in the development and character of our city.

It has the potential to support the movement and goals of the Citizens Action Committee, which have been reported and discussed on this page on previous occasions.

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

THE ANNOUNCED purpose of the property owners group, which has assumed the name of Birmingham Residential Association Council, is to exchange ideas and information.

The group hopes "to study matters of community interest relating to residents." Certainly, there is value in a unified approach to such undertakings.

Yet, we would urge this new group to work closely and cooperate with the CAC in seeking similar goals for the community. Together, civic-minded groups can provide support and energy toward common goals.

AS FOR the BRAC, itself, we are mindful of the inherent dangers facing such an organization if it follows a path of narrow

self-interest rather than one of overall community progress.

This new group has said there are no politics involved in its formation. Let us hope that this will prevail.

We note that its secretary-treasurer is Robert Verzyer, president of the Central Birmingham Residents Association. This latter organization was founded shortly before last spring's city election with David F. Breck as one of its founders.

Breck, of course, is now a city commissioner. The CBRA, and particularly Verzyer, have been active supporters of Breck.

WE TRUST that Verzyer's participation in the CBRA and newly-formed council is coincidental and not politically planned.

One thing we do not need in this city is another pressure group seeking to gain legislative action to accomplish narrow and limited interests.

If the property owners association council adheres to its announced intention of assisting in the communication of information, it can—and should—accomplish much good.

If it joins other community groups in participation with the Citizens Action Committee, it can expect to receive community-wide support.

To combine talents and efforts for the overall betterment of our community is a worthy citizen participation that is to be commended.

Their Service Is Appreciated

The City of Birmingham is to be commended for its action last week in connection with an auxiliary policeman. It amounted to a recognition of the valued service rendered by the auxiliary police force.

We make reference to the City's granting a volunteer officer \$500 for injuries sustained while on duty last May 8.

The circumstances were these:

The officer broke his leg and was unable to return to work for about 10 weeks. He was paid \$484.50 under the workmen's compensation insurance program.

But at that time the City's insurance that gives protection to the auxiliary force was not yet in effect (a contract was signed in October). If it had been, the officer

would have received an additional \$500 in benefits.

UPON RECOMMENDATION by the administration, the city commission voted last week to award the policeman \$500, anyway.

This demonstration of the City's appreciation of the time and effort contributed without pay by the auxiliary policemen is a manifestation of a philosophy which makes us proud of our community and its officials. It goes without saying that these volunteers perform a valuable, though usually unheralded, service for us.

The fact that the City went ahead and voted a sum for a man with no legal claim to it graphically attests to our community integrity.

From The Eccentric's Point of View ...

A new camera with 56 lenses photographs in all directions at once. This ought to come in handy keeping tabs on Democratic vice presidential aspirants.

That strained look on a lot of congressmen's faces comes from trying to remember whether they ever had their picture taken in Bobby Baker's night club.

The world's biggest radio telescope is finished

in Puerto Rico. Let's hope the first message heard from outer space doesn't come in Russian.

Discovery of an old settlement's remains confirms that Vikings found America 500 years before Columbus. But they didn't do anything with it when they found it.

A new type of dollar bill goes into circulation. Unfortunately, there is no provision for making it easier to get hold of.

After-Holiday's First Big Problem



PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Baldwin Library Site For Historical Museum?

To the Editor: Hank Hogan suggested in his column Jan. 8 that it would be a good idea to start an historical society in Birmingham.

I agree with him—up to a point. The history of Birmingham along with pertinent mementos should be maintained (especially since the downtown area is turning into a gigantic parking lot) but, frankly, I doubt if we need another club, society, group or what-have-you.

IT SOMETIMES seems as if we already have as many organizations as we have parking meters.

Rather than start afresh, why not take advantage of existing facilities to preserve local history and artifacts?

It seems to me that the Baldwin Library is the ideal organization and place for this responsibility. Perhaps one small section of shelves could be set aside for documents pertaining to our town and a display case installed for a series of exhibits of photographs and other memorabilia.

To provide direction and continuity, what better group could we find than the Friends of the Baldwin Library?

THEY MIGHT establish a committee of local history buffs to consider the matter with the cooperation of Miss Jeanne Lloyd, our most capable librarian.

Along with the carefully preserved records of families in the community, The Eccentric itself is an invaluable source of Birmingham history. I've spent many productive hours going over back issues at the library digging out details for articles on our town in days gone by and am much indebted to your associates for their assistance in my research.

J. B. McMECHAN
1551 Pilgrim
Birmingham

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Supports Gallery For New Concept Of Art World

To the Editor: In regards to Carolyn Hall's article of Dec. 27, 1963, on "The Arterie." I cannot help but recall the memorable words of Professor Smedley Force of the University of Texas, in his article entitled: Responsible Criticism.

"I am against irresponsibility and criticism. There are still certain standards and I recall when it was conceivable that a man might be both a scholar and believe it or not—yes a gentleman!"

"These industrious and ingenious little graduate students looking as if they were scarcely off the boat from Eastern Europe or worse batching out of various suspended PHD factories, invade our minds with their incites, their canes, etc."

I HAVE BEEN most fortunate to pass much time in Paris, Florence, Venice, Rome, Madrid and London. Loving the Arts, I feel personally there is room in the world for everything and everyone.

America knows this and Carl Sandburg puts it well: The People, The People.

I believe a mature, responsible art critic has the ability to investigate, evaluate and place things where they belong and uses it. The author of your article, if she has such ability at all, is keeping it to herself.

Original pieces of art should be

Can't Justify '63 Top Events

To the Editor: As a subscriber to the Birmingham Eccentric I would like to know how you can justify headlining the tragedies of 1963.

Haven't these families suffered enough. Why tear out their hearts anew.

Put yourself in their place. If you take a little time to think about the impact, you will wonder why too.

A Subscriber made available to everyone that is interested.

THE ARTERIE is bringing into being a new concept where "the people" are not snubbed, or made to feel inferior due to lack of money, knowledge and/or education.

They are made to feel most welcome and receive information in a charming and gracious manner and can walk out with or without a lovely \$12.00 original oil, encouraged to explore the field and someday know the pleasure of the Arts and Cultures of the World.

The arts are not solely for the upper half of 1 percent.

Three cheers for the new Arterie and its advanced idea. I wish them much success.

LEATRICE D. BETTER
21646 Stratford Ct.
Oak Park, Michigan

(MORE PEOPLE'S COLUMN LETTERS ON 8-B)

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO
Jan. 16, 1914

At Monday night's meeting of the village board, the long talked of fire apparatus was ordered for our volunteer fire company which now numbers 24 men with James W. Cobb as Chief of the department. Two hundred and fifty feet of best Paragon Eureka registration fire hose was ordered, also a hook and ladder truck equipped with six ladders, four chemical fire extinguishers, lanterns, axes, bars and scaling ladders. Rubber hats, coats, boots and other fire fighting equipment will be purchased for our brave firemen.

Complying with the State board of health our City fathers have had compiled a complete record of our water system. Our record shows that since the installation of the present water system there has been nearly 7 miles of water main laid, 72 fire hydrants placed and we now have 15 six-inch wells varying in depths from 45 to 75 feet and plenty of water and one of the best pumps on the market.

Wonder what kind of liquor refreshments our old friend, Mr. S. H. Rogers is now taking. We have heard of drink that showed to its users long green and yellow snakes, pink elephants, pink alligators, red bears, etc., but it takes our old R.R. carrier to see one day refreshments.

(See HAPPENINGS, 8-B)

Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

The Fisher Theatre has a policy that if you are late you must wait around 15 minutes before you are permitted to take your seat.

Whenever I did arrive on time, I noticed that sometimes they would enforce it and other times they would let some patrons sneak in.

What the management is trying to do is to keep the latecomers from disturbing the performance for the rest of the audience.

THE PROBLEM IS that instead of the latecomers interrupting the beginning of a show when little is happening, under management's rule the latecomers interrupt the middle of the first act when hopefully something of interest is going on stage.

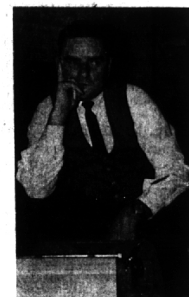
To accomplish what they want they should make the rule—no seating except between the acts when the lights are on.

Then, of course, they should refund the price of the tickets to any patron who is not seated under this rule because there is an old legal maxim that a person who has paid for something should not be denied the enjoyment of it by the seller.

IF LATECOMERS are such a serious problem, naturally management should have no qualms about bearing the cost of this luxury to its patrons. This is good public relations. It should be obvious that this column was prompted by the fact that my spouse and I were victims of the no-seating policy the other night.

Probably the thing that disturbed me most was the at-

(See ECCENTRICITIES, 8-B)



MR. HOGAN

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

Reactions are still coming in on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

A Birmingham woman, who asked not to be identified, wrote a letter of inquiry to some friends in England. She has sent us the response because she feels "the message is inspiring, especially since it originated in another country."

The letter follows: "Very naturally you ask what in Britain feel about the Kennedy affair. No need for me to say that we were all profoundly shocked, and I think that it would be fair to say that 99 per cent of the people of this country felt a deep sense of loss."

"If he had his detractors, they were a silent minority.

"IT IS strange that we had always taken him much for granted, recognizing his merits in an affectionate sort of way without ever plumbing our true feelings about him and about Jackie.

"With his death, he and his wife suddenly sprang into focus and we saw them for what they were, with tears and admiration.

"My wife says she has never shed tears over a politician before, but she has cried often since, and has been doing so whilst reading your letter.

"The news did not come to our personal notice till the Saturday morning—we had just happened to miss broadcasts—and we were cast down all day.

"ON SUNDAY morning, in the few moments between waking and rising, my feelings crystallized into the lines of the verses which I send with this letter. This is to be sung to the tune of a very old Scottish air called 'Mary Hamilton.'

"I must close this, which I do with our most sincere good wishes for your own prosperity and that your people and your country may continue to be inspired to greater things by the tragedy of your late and most great President."

THE LETTER was signed by Ian J. Peacock; Dale, Anstable, Carlisle, Cumberland, England.

The following poem was sent along with the letter:

THE DALLAS LAMENT
(Set to the old Air: Mary Hamilton) by Ian J. Peacock

Word is to the whole world gone
Oh, that it could not be fair
That some dastard down in Dallas town,
Has murdered John Kennedy.

There rode the President in his car,
So proud and so alive,
But a coward sly in a warehouse high,
Was sighting his six point five.

His finger foul the trigger drew,
His bullets sped their way,
To find their mark in a brave man's head,
And his life to take away.

Let one and all their heads hang down,
In grief and misery,
To think what happened in Dallas town,
To a champion of the free.

Search in our hearts, aye, each and all,
To see if there should lie,
The rank of evil seeds of hate,
That made John Kennedy die.

Aye, let us search and let us seek
To cleanse them if we can,
That we may join, because he died,
The brotherhood of Man!

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