

Public's Cooperation Needed

One of the lowest forms of crime is that of making obscene calls over the telephone. This practice is not only vulgar; it is also a terrifying experience for the person on the other end of the line.

In the past, this type of offense has been extremely difficult to prosecute. The trouble has been in proving the identity of the offender and defining obscenity.

But a new state law has been passed which becomes effective Aug. 16 and which should be more enforceable. It says, in part:

"Any person who telephones any other person or causes any person to be telephoned and uses any vulgar, indecent, obscene, threatening or offensive language, or suggesting any lewd or lascivious act over any telephone shall be guilty of a misdemeanor."

The crime is punishable by a \$90 fine, 90 days in jail, or both.

WHAT IS essential now is that the apprehension of offenders depends largely upon cooperation from the public. To

track down and capture the violator, the police need to work directly with the party receiving such a call.

As an example of this type of cooperation, we point to the incident in Bloomfield Township last week in which a local woman assisted the police in setting up a trap.

After receiving the first obscene call, she notified township police. Then as the calls continued she gained information which helped the police and then worked with them in setting the trap. It proved successful. We commend the police and the woman for their efforts.

THE UNFORTUNATE aspect of all of this is that the police were not able to prosecute the offender inasmuch as the new ordinance is not yet in effect and the township has no governing measure.

But this violator and others cannot expect to get off so freely in the future.

And with the assistance and cooperation of the people receiving obscene calls we can expect the frequency of such crimes to decline.

Will It Really Work?

We would be hypocritical if we said that the recently enacted cigaret vending machine ordinance was a wonderful thing or that it will solve any problems for the city of Birmingham.

The new ordinance does one thing only to help the City of Birmingham: The license fees collected will help fill the city's coffers.

One additional stamp on a cigaret vending machine will prove no deterrent to anyone who is truly addicted to cigarets. If the intention of the city fathers is to prevent teen-agers from smoking, then they are battling the problem on the wrong war front.

THE ONLY WAY to discourage teenage smoking is by education both in the home and at school, before children take up the habit.

The education in the home must start with example. It is difficult to convince children about the evils of tobacco when they see their parents matter of factly light up a cigaret before breakfast.

The new ordinance comes at a time when hundreds of teen-agers already smoke with parental approval.

They will still use the vending machines, but they will now be sneaky about it.

IF A MERCHANT in good faith discourages the use of the machines by children—which he should have been doing under existing state law, anyway—the young smoker will only procure his cigarets by going to another store, or getting a friend to buy them or borrowing from the parents' supply at home.

Smoking is not a moral question. Scientific facts would indicate that it leads to a health question.

Legislation rarely succeeds when it tries to legislate morals; that is, when it tries to impose upon the people standards which society doesn't accept. We cite prohibition as an example.

While the new law may not hurt anyone (although it may inconvenience some teen-agers) we don't feel it will really help anyone, either.

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

This, though town dwellers tend to forget it, is the poison ivy season. Those who forget may be reminded when they go picnicking or camping. The reminder can range from a mild itch to something reminiscent of the flames of purgatory. It seems worthwhile to note that the U.S. Public Health Service regards old-fashioned yellow laundry soap as about the best first aid remedy for poison ivy inflammation. If the exposed area is lathered and rinsed several times, the chances are good that the irritating oil can be washed off before it penetrates. A precautionary word, therefore: When you venture out to commune with nature, stow a bar of laundry soap in your pack or picnic box. That gives you a way of catching an itch in time.

Some years ago the New Yorker carried an item about a diner who had solved, at least so far as he himself was concerned, the problem of how to deal with spaghetti in public. It seems that he took a small pair of scissors from his vest and snipped the stuff into convenient lengths. The effectiveness of this can readily be seen. It takes something of an extrovert, however, to employ this method. Savoring spaghetti causes talk. Happily, inventive genius has come to the rescue. The U.S. Patent Office has just issued a patent for a spoon and fork combination which, insofar as such things can be determined without experiment, promises to end the difficulty. We can hardly wait to try it—and let the sauce flip where it may!

In more ways than one, Great Britain long has been afflicted with the yen for gambling... on horse races, football pools, etc., etc., and etc. Indeed, gambling takes up much of England's national income that year now is talk in educational circles to teach the young the importance and intricacies of this famous "game." How'd you like to have your youngster taught how to lose more than he'll ever win (for that is the real story of most people's gambling)?

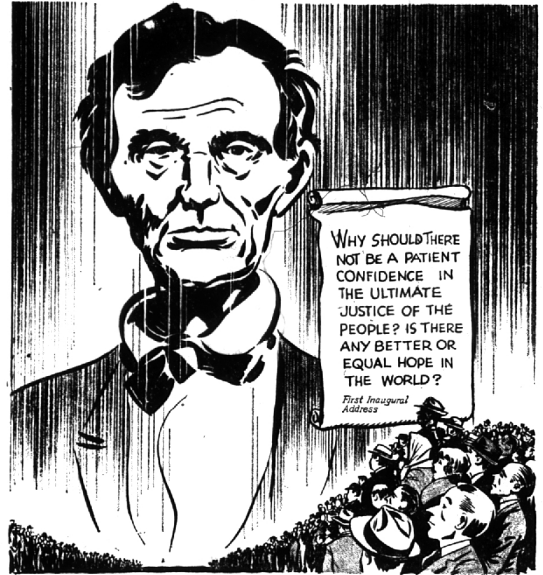
Castro's sister defects and says the revolution was betrayed to communism. There was nothing new in what she said about Cuba, but it would have been worth half the sugar crop to have seen brother Fidel's face when he heard her broadcast.

Rep. Howard W. Smith of Virginia says the civil rights law will loose upon the South "a second invasion of carpetbaggers." To many diehards this would be almost as bad as an invasion of tolerance.

Manager Yogi Berra says the Yankees will win the American League pennant because they have the best team. Can anyone think of a better reason?

Khrushchev says in Norway that the Soviet Union can make anything Norwegian. Some close harmony with the West might be suggested.

In Convention Assembled...



PEOPLES COLUMN Passive Use Of Shain Park Is Advocated

To the Editor:

Regarding the Shain Park playground controversy, I am the mother of four small children and live in a neighborhood where there are 18.

Believe me, I do not have to go downtown to observe "happy, smiling faces" as someone wrote. We moved to Birmingham as did most of our neighbors to get our children out of the city, and they are happy playing under hoses and making up games in their own yards in the hot summertime.

Mechanical equipment amuses them for a very short time, even if it were possible for us to take them down there where traffic congestion and parking for city purposes is already an unsolved problem. If anything, we need neighborhood play programs and equipment. (There is a playground across the street from us absolutely unused for each of same), so why not use these and leave Shain Park for what it was intended—to relieve traffic congestion in that area, not compound it?

MOTHER OF FOUR

Park Improvement Plans Supported

To the Editor:

May I enter my plea with many others in defense of the much-discussed plan of several years' standing to continue to improve and maintain Shain Park, including the pool and sculpture designed by our distinguished Marshall Fredericks?

This little park must be an oasis of green and beauty in the center of the popular with the young citizenry and at the same time preserve this spot for community beauty.

MRS. W. R. BARKLEY
980 Lenoxia
Birmingham

STRICTLY FRESH

When the going seems easy, check to make sure you are not going downhill.

A dollar doesn't do as much today as it once did; but then we



don't seem to do as much for it either.

An unwashed police officer is like an old penny in that they are both dirty coppers.

It's quite interesting what a good window washing can do for a dreary day.

Hope, Not Spending Rose With Tax Cut

Current consumer attitudes are characterized by optimism as well as moderation. The University of Michigan's Survey Research Center reports.

The Center's Index of Consumer Sentiment, which reached a seven-year peak early in 1964, has maintained a high plateau.

The reduction in tax withholdings, begun in March, did not touch off a wave of enthusiasm among consumers. Yet even before consumers benefited by the tax cut, the expectation of the tax cut was instrumental in warding off fears that, after a prolonged period of prosperity, a recession must be around the corner, the SRC quarterly survey in May and June revealed.

THE MOST BUOYANT component of the Index of Consumer Sentiment during recent months were attitudes toward personal finances.

In most cases people explained the improvement in their financial situation in terms of pay raises, finding a better job, overtime, better business earnings and the like.

Although anticipation of the tax cut seems to have led to some advance buying (and borrowing) early this year, the high frequency of income increases from other sources may well have played a larger role, explain Profs. George Katona and Eva Mueller, editors of the SRC's Economic Behavior Program, who directed the survey.

New survey data reveal that the vast majority of income receivers whose take-home pay was affected by the tax cut, do not feel that the

amount of extra income they receive from this source is particularly significant.

For the most part consumers' cut anticipations had a very favorable psychological impact, was followed by "Act Two" when the impact of the purse appeared small to most people, the report says.

IN VIEW of the widespread feeling that the tax gain makes only a small difference to the family's disposable income, it is not surprising that few major spending decisions are attributed to the tax cut, the economists explain.

In answering a direct question, the majority of people who were aware of having benefited from the tax cut, since previously said they had spent the extra money, but had no specific idea on what it was spent.

For the most part consumers seem to be pursuing consumption as well as savings goals which they set for themselves prior to the tax cut. Since previously set goals are reached faster because of the tax cut, new savings and spending decisions will have to follow in the months to come, it was pointed out.

THE SURVEY, based on personal interviews with a national cross-section of over 1500 adults, is one of a series conducted regularly since 1951 and is designed to measure consumer attitudes and to explore their impact on subsequent spending.

Expressed plans to buy cars, (See HOPE, 4-B)

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO
July 17, 1914

A large plate glass window in Levinson's Department store was broken Tuesday morning when a team of horses belonging to Jay Hunt became frightened at a passing threshing machine. One horse became loosened entirely from the harness and tremblingly viewed the remains from across the street. It is said that no one preceded the threshing machine to warn owners of horses that something more than a yoke of oxen was coming.

30 YEARS AGO
July 19, 1934

A free playing permit for the remainder of the season entitling the holder to shoot all the golf he wants to at Bloomfield Township Park, awaits the person who can furnish the permit. Now that the park is under the control of the City of Birmingham through the dividing of joint assets and liabilities of Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills and Bloomfield Township, the name "Bloomfield Township Park" is, of course, a misnomer. But, city officials have failed to come up with a name for it.

Edward Pettigrew, arrested by Deputy Sheriff Loren Bird, of Pontiac, for speeding in our village, demanded an examination and was fined \$25 and \$5 costs by Justice A. W. Campbell. Justice Campbell also disposed of two Detroit men, arrested for speeding. Hardly a day passes that motorists do not violate the speed limit through our village. Our authorities do a valuable service to our citizens by keeping close watch on the reckless drivers.

The city's plea that work be commenced this summer on the completion of Wider Woodward avenue through Birmingham—a plea which met with a cool response from Murray D. Van Waggoner, state highway commissioner—was referred directly to Gov. William A. Cason. Tuesday in a letter from Mayor Harry Allen, City officials are especially anxious that it be started this summer because of the increase in automobile traffic.

Preliminary preparations for the County YMGCA camp at Voorhes Lake in Augusta are rapidly taking definite form. County secretary Verburg is arranging for tents and all paraphernalia necessary for a smooth running of the camp. He expects a full house when the final day for registering comes, July 25.

Sales were reported from fair to brisk yesterday at four of the Birmingham drug stores whose proprietors have been appointed, specially designated merchants for the sale of bottled liquor, and which have already received the go-ahead day for registering comes, July 25. (See HAPPENINGS, 4-B)

Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN



"One man, one vote," a great American principle, or

Democracy and the American system of government is based on a document called the "Constitution." If anything is a principle or fundamental, we should certainly find it in this document or in the intention of the authors of this great document.

Let's see, the constitution was adopted by a vote of the people, based on one man, one vote. Well, not really; it was adopted when nine colonial legislatures approved it.

THE DOCUMENT SETS UP three branches of government, the executive, the judicial and the legislative.

The Constitution provides for the election of the Chief Executive on a basis of one man, one vote. Well, not really; it originally provided for the state legislatures to appoint as many presidential electors as the state had congressmen and these electors were to go to Washington and vote for whomever they pleased. Later by amendment the people were allowed to vote for state pledged to a certain candidate; but whatever candidate received the majority of votes in a state, he would get the state's entire electoral vote; hardly one man, one vote.

OH, BUT THE JUDICIARY must be selected on a basis of one man, one vote. Well, not really; we all know that the federal judiciary is appointed and not subject to the vote of the people.

Well, at least the federal legislature would be based on one man, one vote if it is a great American principle. The original Constitution provided that Senators were to be selected by state legislatures. The Constitution was amended to provide that the two senators from each state would be popularly elected. But since each state has an equal number of senators and vary greatly in population, no one could mistake this for one man, one vote.

LET'S SEE, THEN, is the federal House of Representatives based on equal representation? If you were to check the census figures for 1960, you would find that Delaware had almost twice the population of Nevada; yet, each state is entitled to one representative.

Oh, but the population of one man, one vote can explain away this discrepancy because each state is sovereign. But this explaining away is the reason why no one can point out where one man, one vote is supposed to have come from.

If we can't find it in the Constitution, and what we can find directly opposite to this great principle, one begins to wonder who's kidding whom?

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

"In your City Beat of June 18, 1964, you raised the question of serving liquor by the glass in Birmingham," says a letter to this department.

"You ably stated the reasons for feeling that allowing this would be a backward step. I hope the city fathers you raised will not be overlooked in any future planning of Birmingham.

"Surely it must be obvious to any thoughtful person that no community ever 'drank its way to prosperity.' Birmingham is to be commended for its present position. It stands to lose rather than gain if it accepts the practice of 'liquor by the glass.'"

The letter is signed by Kenneth R. Callis, minister of Franklin Community Church, 32473 Normandy, Franklin.

AFTER THAT June 18 column, one businessman asked who was putting the pressure on to have liquor served in Birmingham. The answer was, no one.

To date, there has been no pressure. It's just been a topic for speculation at this point.

Yet, when consideration of the development plans for the future of this city reaches the deeply serious stage this question will have to be answered.

There are those who believe that it will be essential to provide this service in the future. They view it as a needed ingredient to assure a successful, lively business community with vitality and permanence.

ONE OF the ideas suggested for one of the locations in a modernization of the civic center area is for an inn. An inn usually offers liquor by the glass, does it not? And this is proposed for downtown Birmingham.

No, I don't think we need this in Birmingham. To me, there would be an unforgivable lowering of the standards that we hold so dear.

Changes in the form of physical structures and realignment of streets and so forth we need, yes. Improvements for aesthetics, yes. Changes in standards and principles—No!

AS FOR development plans for Birmingham, I proposed in this space a few weeks back that a public rally be arranged for an explanation of these concepts and ideals.

There is a concentrated effort right now to inform various clubs and other organizations of these proposals. And I understand there is something of a house-to-house program in the offing.

The biggest problem in staging a public assembly is allowing for questions to be asked and answered.

TO BE SURE, this does pose a difficulty. But I don't think it should negate this proposition. Surely, an arrangement could be made along these lines.

After a presentation of the details of the development proposals, the audience could break up into small groups in pre-arranged areas. Then there could be one or two people available in each group to answer questions and to offer explanations.

It can be done if there is a will to do it.

The Birmingham Eccentric

Published Every Thursday

Established 1878

PUBLISHER: PAUL N. AVERILL

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER: HENRY M. HOGAN, JR.

MANAGING EDITOR: KENNETH R. WEAVER

ADVERTISING MANAGER: ARTHUR SHAFER

George R. Averill, Editor Emeritus

