

## Enough of Promises; Let's Have Some Action!

The Birmingham Eccentric strongly recommends that the Michigan Highway Dept. end its dilly-dallying and take immediate steps to improve the Telegraph-Maple intersection.

We believe we have the right to make this demand on behalf of the people of Bloomfield Township and this entire area because human life has been—and is—endangered.

Furthermore, this newspaper believes the state should either install a cloverleaf type of intersection or build an overpass to carry Telegraph traffic over Maple.

The maiming of human life along Telegraph must come to an end!

**WE VIEW WITH** indignation the highway department's failure to uphold a promise made last month to install a metal barrier on Telegraph and to widen the northbound lane from 24 feet to 28 feet. This was a compromise agreement which in itself was barely acceptable.

And the state's latest decision—to paint yellow lines on each side of the concrete median and to prohibit left turns—is a weak and futile attempt to appease township officials.

Long has the Telegraph-Maple intersection, and indeed the entire length of this highway (U.S. 24) in the township, been a major traffic problem. And it has become increasingly so in the past several months.

Yet, we still await positive, corrective measures by the state!

**IN 1963**, there were 66 accidents at the intersection. This year, there have been 54—with five months still to go! Of these 54, there were 19 personal injury mishaps with one person killed.

From the intersection to E. Quarton, one-half of a mile north, there have been 72 accidents this year—and three people have been killed!

Police reports show that the major cause of accidents at this point has been—and is—failure to yield the right-of-way to oncoming traffic. In other words, motorists are making left turns in front of vehicles traveling at speeds of 55 to 60 mph.

**BLOOMFIELD** Township police have recommended a reduction in the speed limit from 55 to 45. However, the state rejected this proposal after a radar survey earlier this year revealed that the average speed of motorists on Telegraph is from 55 to 58 mph.

Now ponder this: Instead of drivers being directed to adhere to speed limits that are deemed to be safe in respect to road

and traffic conditions, speed limits are being set according to motorists' preferences!

Accidents are on the increase on Telegraph even though enforcement throughout the township has been increased 148 per cent in the past year with the formation of a traffic safety division that consists of two full-time men and a radar car.

Population and a heavier volume of traffic have increased disproportionately and thus have negated the effectiveness of the increased enforcement.

**A FEW YEARS** ago, the state installed protected left turns at the Telegraph-Maple intersection and at all of the mile and half-mile roads.

A month ago, a delayed signal was installed by the state at this intersection.

Other proposals have been to build the cloverleaf loops, which would take traffic from Telegraph to Maple with right turns rather than left; an overpass to take Telegraph traffic over Maple; and to widen Maple west of Telegraph from two to four lanes.

Township officials estimate that Maple at peak hours carries almost as much traffic as does Telegraph. Maple, of course, is a county road; and Telegraph is a U.S. highway maintained by the state.

**IN THE PAST**, the state highway department has rejected the cloverleaf and overpass proposals as being too costly. We submit that this reasoning cannot be justified today.

The hazardous conditions of the road are exacting a greater cost in human life!

We note that high costs have not prevented the construction of freeways and overpasses at other locations. And we say again that cost cannot be used as an excuse to avoid an improvement of the Telegraph-Maple intersection.

**LOOKING AT** the entire situation—what has been happening and what is expected—we are firmly convinced that an overpass should be constructed. This is the best solution on a long-term basis.

Though cloverleaf loops would be less permanent of a solution, we believe they would be a definite improvement and constitute the only measure short of an overpass that could be accepted. We advocate, also, the suggested widening of Maple.

And we advise the state highway officials that the time has come for positive action to remove the hazards of Telegraph. Let us have no more renegeing on promises.

Rather, let us have action—and soon.

## There Must Be a Way!

There were more than 7,800,000 people in our state at the last official count. If each one of them dropped just one piece of paper on the highway or left one broken beer bottle on a beach you can see the magnitude of the clean-up job that would have to be done.

Fortunately, not all of these people are litter-bugs. Only a small minority is.

Still, the cost to the state, our county and our communities amounts to hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to pick up after this small group.

It's hard to get to the litter-bugs. Each year hundreds of words are written but our roads get worse and our beaches less desirable.

**IF OUR** law enforcement people could force someone caught littering to walk up and down our beaches in his bare feet among broken beer bottles or spend a whole day with a stick cleaning up the side of highways, we might make some progress.

But it's almost impossible to catch a litter-bug.

Until something is devised to electronically spot litterers, we must continue to

appeal to the consciences of this anti-social group.

Everytime someone throws something on the highway, or leaves something on the beach or drops something in the water, our recreational facilities are that much less beautiful and for that matter, usable.

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

Robert Welch, president of the John Birch Society, says the organization's purpose is "education and understanding." Anyone you don't understand you suspect.

The South's reaction to the civil rights law is mixed. The big thing to hope for is that the mixture won't explode.

Senators raise their pay by a cool \$7,500—doubtless figuring they need something cool after the heat they've taken the past few months.

The minute the U.N. forces pull out of the Congo, trouble starts. They shouldn't have kept the peace; they should have left it there.

It's summertime—but the livin' doesn't seem so darned easy after all.



Photo by Sid Cole

### PROBLEMATIC INTERSECTION

A cloverleaf to eliminate left turns or an overpass would alleviate the congestion and traffic hazards at the Telegraph-Maple intersection.

## YESTERYEAR HAPPENINGS

### 50 YEARS AGO

July 24, 1914

West Wilhits street is well on the road to becoming one of the prettiest streets in our city. With an excellent cement walk on the north side of the street and the

completion of an artificial lake on the Clizbe property, this street, containing a beautiful, natural cove, promises to be a most valuable residence section.

The D. U. R. is trying in a most

worthy fashion to beautify the grounds south of the station. A cement curbing has been placed in front of a row of shrubs at the southern end. Milkmen eager to get to the car in the morning eagerly drive over the grass. Each morning may be heard cries of the next urging drivers to keep off the grass. These are the things that keep companies and authorities from beautifying public places. Let us assist D.U.R. in not only keeping the interior of the station neat and clean, but the exterior as well.

### PEOPLE'S COLUMN

## Calls Birds World's Cheapest Insecticides

To the Editor:

We buried four birds again this morning. Someone in the neighborhood undoubtedly sprayed yesterday. The same thing happened last year.

Since birds are the world's cheapest insecticides, it's pretty stupid to double and treble and quadruple one's problems in this way. Birmingham is supposed to have a most unusual concentration of brains, but what we are doing is plainly ignorant and stupid.

A city forester of the city from which I came to Birmingham told me once of a friend of his who was an orchardist. As an experiment he sprayed one part of his orchard as usual and heavily fertilized the rest and did not spray this part at all.

A road happened to bisect his land which made this easy to do. The fertilized section produced better fruit than the sprayed section.

out, and top soil has been placed under to leave poor soil on top. We drench the leaves in motor fumes so they cannot breathe; we build the soil too high; we tear it down too low; we destroy the bank so insects come in and bore.

We build fires almost against trees and shrubs, and the heat rises and sears the leaves. Give green things the strength to fight their enemies. You will be surprised how well and how quickly they respond. I don't mean in one season always, but soon.

**AND STOP** putting DDT on lawns for mosquitoes. The child you kill may be your own. It's deadly poison with little known about cure. I had a friend who died of it.

Use your brains, Birmingham friends; use your brains before it's too late.

**DOROTHEA YORK**  
563 Watkins  
Birmingham

THE SOIL in towns is leached

Deputy Sheriff Webster Bray is very careful in seeing that none of our village ordinances are disobeyed. Last Thursday upon notification from residents in the far end of town that a peddler was dispensing brooms without a license, Deputy Sheriff Bray jumped into his racing car and captured the peddler. It was a lively chase, too, for the peddler was equipped with an auto.

### 30 YEARS AGO

July 26, 1934

Police are investigating an employer-labor controversy they believe was responsible for the throwing of a "synthetic stench bomb" some time late Monday night or early Tuesday morning through a window of the Sfire Brothers Market, 180 West Maple avenue. The "bomb" was in the form of a fruit jar nearly full of ammoniated valerian, a liquid compound with a highly offensive odor. The jar was thrown through a large

(See HAPPENINGS, 4-B)

## 'How Was the Old Vacation, Howie?'



## Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN



The car salesman said, "Step over here, Mr. Hogan, and see our new model that features a glass door."

"A glass door," I replied, "why on earth would I want a glass door?"  
"Well," he said, "I notice that your windshield is covered with various kinds of stickers. Now, we in the industry have been constantly trying to improve visibility, by making windows bigger and bigger, but the public just seems to put more and more in the way of vision."

**HE CONTINUED**, "I notice that your car has been safety checked, that you belong to at least two clubs that require parking stickers, you are both a member of a service club and a member of the press corps, and that you belong to some sort of flying club."  
"That last item," I interjected, "is a bug I picked up on the expressway, but it does make me look sort of sporty, doesn't it?"

He replied, "It's a good thing you are not a member of the horse set, what with horse show stickers and race track identification."

"I CAN SEE THAT things are pretty tough," I answered.

"Tough," he said, "I can see that you don't travel very much. When our company first came out with the ingenious idea of a glass door so that stickers could be removed from windshields, we found out we had to have a four-door model for those people who tour the nation and want to advertise the fact."

"By the time a person has seen 10 or 12 caves, a couple of waterfalls and a mountain or so, he can no longer drive a compact car. That's the reason the big cars are coming back."

"Well, I think you have some good points about the glass door and I might be interested," I said, "if I could try one out."

**THE SALESMAN SAID**, "I'm sorry, Mr. Hogan, you could try mine, but it's in the bump shop."

"That's too bad," I commiserated.  
"Yes," he replied, "I was pulling out of the dealership the other day and this woman came up, opened my back door and started climbing in."

"Why on earth would a woman open your door?" I interrupted.

"Well with all the stickers on the door, she thought I was a taxi-cab, and when she found out that I wasn't, she got so mad that she slammed the door and it shattered into a million pieces."

"What else is new this year?" I asked him as I was making my way toward the street.

## City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

Comes this letter from Virginia Fleck of 32328 Sheridan Drive, Birmingham:

"For several summers I have had the opportunity to help finance my college education by working in the Groves High School Library. During these summers I have become acquainted with many facets of the task of getting books to the reading public."

"I have also become acquainted with many facets of the students who 'borrow' these same books without bothering to check them out of the library."

"The library statistics on this probable theft of books are quite distressing."

"**STILL**, more distressing, though, is the attitude of these book 'borrowers.' Many Groves students—not realizing my position as a member of the library staff in the, laughingly, revealed to me the newest game at the high school.

"This game is rather a cops-n-robbers affair between the library staff and the students. In fact, many of these students told me that most of these stolen books are never even read."

"That this is a tremendous loss of the taxpayer's money never even occurs to these students. I find it still more disgusting, though, that these high school students have no regard for that traditional heritage found in these books which is the basis for our American public school system."

"Many people refuse to agree that there are 'slums' in Birmingham, as you well know. Yet, I believe that these slums do exist, if nowhere else than in the poverty-stricken minds of these young Birminghamites and their parents, to whom the American dream is only a lurid vision."

**PERHAPS**, VIRGINIA, these students you speak of are more to be pitied than censured. They are missing some of the inner satisfactions that make life so interesting for most of us.

They represent, I believe, a segment of our society that has no respect for authority or for the property of other people. And, obviously, they have no respect for learning. Their parents are partially to blame. But this is too easy and too ready of an excuse.

Actually, the problem runs much deeper than that. No one can really understand or pinpoint all of its ramifications.

**BUT I HAVE** long contended that the labor movement is at least partially responsible.  
(See CITY BEAT, 2-B)



"Tom, Tom, the piper's son,  
stole a book and away he run."

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PUBLISHER: PAUL N. AVERILL.  
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MANAGING EDITOR: KENNETH R. WEAVER.  
ADVERTISING MANAGER: ARTHUR SHAFER.  
George R. Averill, Editor Emeritus

