IN THIS SECTION:
Editorial
Church News
General News

The Birmingham Eccentric

BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN

Thursday, September 24, 1964

EDITORIAL
SECTION B

More Responsive Government

I&R will be on the ballot in the city of Birmingham next April. What is it? Is it good for Birmingham? Why hasn't a city the size of Birmingham had it previously?

Questions like these are running through the minds of the citizenry, with the end result that the subject produces a confusion that threatens good citizen understanding.

I&R stands for initiative and referendum.

Initiative is the power of the citizens to enact ordinances by circulating petitions and then having the voters accept or reject them at the polls.

IF A MAJORITY of voters approve the ordinance, it becomes law just as an ordinance adopted by the city commission. The only difference is that when it is done by vote of the people the city commission can't amend or repeal it for a year.

Referendum comes in when the commission has enacted an ordinance and the citizens don't agree with it.

If enough signatures are gathered on petitions within the time allotted, the ordinance is held in abeyance until the people of the community can vote on it.

If they approve it, it becomes law. If they disapprove it, the proposed law is a nullity.

I&R IS CONSIDERED a basic part of American government. It gives the people the right to petition their peers to decide what is right for the majority.

Members of the original charter commission in Birmingham say it was left out of the charter because Birmingham was a small town and everyone knew what was going on.

If something was passed by the commission that the people didn't want, they were in a position to turn out the commission at the next election.

But Birmingham has changed. And so has the need for initiative and referendum.

IF WE ACCEPT the premise that the time has come for Birmingham to amend its charter to include this, then we must also consider what might be pitfalls.

The first problem entails how many people should be allowed to propose new laws or set old ones aside; that is, what percentage of registered voters should be required before a petition should be submitted to the electorate.

Since this should be used only in matters of grave concern where apparently the city fathers have failed to do the bidding of the community, the percentage should be high.

IF A SMALL PERCENTAGE is allowed, then every disgruntled group regardless of size could force a city-wide election.

This is why we think the commission's decision to make the requirement 15 per cent rather than 10 per cent is a good one.

The second problem is what, if anything, should be excluded from the citizenry's right to I&R.

Traditionally, how a municipality spends its money is usually excluded because of the time element. A city can't wait a couple of months to see if it can buy a police car.

Emergency legislation is usually excluded for the same reason. Anything the commission feels is a matter of immediate health, safety or welfare is freed from the threat of delay by referendum.

SOMETIMES TAXES are excluded because there is a philosophy that when the people elect a commission, they are empowering them to raise money as they see fit.

Other exclusions are attempts to limit the citizens' right of redress.

The proposed Birmingham ordinance does contain other exclusions. It excludes from I&R the questions of salaries, hours and retirement benefits for City employes.

And more important it excludes the subject matter of zoning.

This latter subject is one of great controversy.

We know that the reason a majority of the city fathers want to exclude it is that they want to avoid a city-wide election every time a few individuals object to a change in the zoning map.

This has merit.

We also know that attempts to exclude subject matter from public vote flies in the face of the intentions behind initiative and referendum.

Before the election we will go into this matter further editorially, and until such time we reserve our judgment.

Except for our few comments questioning certain exclusions, we feel the placing of the matter on the ballot in April is a step in the direction of more responsive government.

We must change our structure with changing times.

Come to Birmingham!

The success of Birmingham's first convention heralds a new activity for our community. It is now evident that we have the facilities to host capably such annual meetings.

Officials of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and the Associated Credit Bureau of Michigan called the credit-bureau convention last week "outstanding." A record for attendance was set at the group's meetings here.

This first convention points up the many advantages the Birmingham area has for such gatherings:

- All of the necessary facilities for small and large groups, complete with excellent food and fine catering service.
- Living quarters that are both ample in space and pleasant in appearance. Many luxuriously appointed suites are available.
- A shopping area that offers the latest in quality merchandise, in tastefully-decorated stores with the finest in customer service.
- Entertainment facilities, including movie theaters, golf courses, hundreds of lakes and other recreational areas.
- Educational institutions such as the world-renowned Cranbrook, the public schools and Oakland University.
- Art galleries, including the Birmingham Art Center which the Bloomfield Art Association created out of a former sewage disposal plant.

BESIDES SUPERB service and luxurious accommodations, conventioneers will find friendly hospitality in our city. There's always a warm welcome for visitors.

Yes, Birmingham has the facilities to make a convention a thoroughly enjoyable and profitable experience. The welcome sign is out for those seeking an exquisite setting for their convention.

Come to Birmingham!

A Capable Man Promoted

The circumstances that led to the need for a new fire chief in Birmingham were most unfortunate. However, it is satisfying that on its staff the fire department had someone capable enough to step up to take the job.

It seems as if Chief George Scott barely had time to assume his duties when he was killed in a plane crash.

In many communities to select a new chief so soon after one was selected would necessitate going outside the city to find one.

IT IS A CREDIT to our city that the administration has the depth to promote from within.

We salute new chief C. G. (Dick) Nunnelley on his appointment.

His 16 years as a Birmingham firefighter and his outstanding reputation in the field of civil defense and rescue work, we are sure, were factors in his selection.

If Nunnelley can keep his department up to the level of his predecessors, and we are sure he can, the residents of this community can sleep peacefully knowing the town is well protected in the event of a fire incident.

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

Time for a Refresher Course, Pop

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Young Tough Gets Lesson in Behavior

To the Editor:

Last Saturday I witnessed one of those unheralded episodes that I wish would take place more often under these conditions.

A young, obvious trouble-maker, about 20 years old, was driving behind a car driven by an older man—nearing his fifties. Although this gentleman was driving the prescribed speed, this youth's car was actually pushing him with his bumper.

As the older man started slowing for an approaching stoplight at Southfield and 13 Mile Road, this youth's car then dashed ahead and crept along in front of him at approximately five MPH.

WHEN THEY both stopped at the light, the elderly gent walked forward to admonish this nit-wit. The youth sprang out of his car, cursing loudly and swinging wildly at the older fellow.

The oldster warded off most of the blows and kept stepping back; suddenly he wound up and struck his adversary one kingly blow that took all the steam out of this bully.

While he was trying to determine if his eyes would ever again focus correctly, the older fellow casually got back in his car and calmly drove away, knowing that a graphic illustration is worth a thousand words.

I'M SURE that this is one bully who won't be so prone to pick on a "helpless" older square the next time.

To the gent who administered this lesson to one of our local "toughs"—a bouquet of roses—and I hope you travel our way often!

R. J. NEWTON
Southfield

Yesteryear Happenings

September 25, 1914
50 YEARS AGO

Hiram F. Daniels, 74, sustained a fractured hip and wrist and internal injuries in an accident last Friday evening. Daniels was crossing Maple avenue and attempted to escape a rapidly driven auto. In doing so, the aged veteran stepped in front of a horse driven by the young daughter of Stephen Chatfield. It is said that the horse was walking. Daniels was thrown to the ground and painfully injured. He was picked up by Dr. N. T. Shaw who took him home in his machine. He was attended by Drs. Shaw and George P. Raynale.

Our streets and avenues twinkle at nights like Christmas trees. Red lights show that mains for gas have been laid south to Maple avenue from Pontiac, west on Maple avenue, south on Pierce from Maple, east on Brown street from Pierce and south on Woodward avenue. The gas for heating and lighting purposes is being brought from Pontiac by the Pontiac Gas Company and will be one of the greatest boons to beautiful Birmingham.

Who is the low-down cuss that stole the lamp from C. P. Price's sign? Price claims that the man who hired his children to go to bed without supper, then took the money from them while they slept, and even the fellow who stole the teeter board from the school chil-

(See HAPPENINGS, 8-B)

Finds Book Informative On News Media in U. S.

To the Editor:

Three weeks ago a friend suggested my reading a book entitled "None Dare Call It Treason" by John Stormer. Not only did I find it informative, but also I realized that much of this information had not been publicized fully in the local newspapers.

The book describes decisions made by each administration that has been in office since 1932, including Kennedy's and Johnson's. It is completely documented. The bibliography is arranged by chapters in the back of the book next to its index.

THERE IS an excellent chapter

(See MEDIA, 2-B)

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Here's an Indian's Views On Goldwater, Minorities

To the Editor:

Am enclosing a copy of an article sent to me by a former Birminghamite who is now living in Phoenix. It covers an interesting facet of Barry Goldwater and I think it would be worthwhile reprinting in your paper.

MRS. CARRIE PROCTOR
592 Madison
Birmingham

The letter, which appeared in the Phoenix Gazette on July 28, follows:

To the Editor:

" I am an Indian, and maybe nothing I would have to say would make any difference, but my people know Barry Goldwater, and know, too, that he does not deserve the terrible, personal attacks on his reputation and life.

It is amazing that a civilized country like this one would allow those of the press and those with influence over others to spew out such vindictive tripe. But it does, and I am thinking that my home, primitive though it may be, is much more suited to the development of intelligent thinking than anything any other race has to offer.

IT SEEMS to me that people are letting themselves be led like sheep to the slaughter. They actually believe the things that have been said about Senator Goldwater on all subjects from extremism to civil rights—I mean, of course, the bad things.

I don't have to make a list of these things, but I would like to come out strongly against those who are trying their best to tear this man down.

I will tell you what I know about Barry Goldwater, and perhaps this will cool down some of the cruel, destructive remarks that have been made by Negroes, whites and others about him.

BARRY GOLDWATER has helped my own people in their worst time of need. He has made emergency flights with blood, food, clothes and other supplies, without which my people would have died.

One of these flights the senator made saved my life, although he does not know it; the blood he brought in was given to me while I lay bleeding at death's door.

Barry Goldwater has encouraged the Indian to fight for his rights—with words and deeds of kindness and firmness, not with violence, criminal acts, or anything of that sort.

The senator has always said he feels strongly about the Indian, believing that Indian people have as much right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" as any other race in this country.

BARRY GOLDWATER set up voting districts for the Indian people. If it were not for him, I would not be able to vote in my first presidential election—or any other election. He has encouraged Indian people in that respect, too, telling them that to be true citizens they must exercise their right to vote, and use it wisely.

Barry Goldwater desegregated the National Guard, making it equal for all races—Negro, Indian, white. He also desegregated many public facilities such as airports, movie houses and so on. He could not do it all himself, of course—but he did that much on his own!

Barry Goldwater has encouraged all minority races to stand forth and campaign for what they feel is rightfully theirs, always stressing peaceful means to accomplish this.

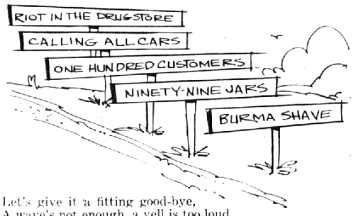
(See VIEWS, 3-B)

Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

THE PASSING PARADE

When I was a boy the world was pretty well set,
The need for change was quite unnecessary;
But now daily we see in the press or TV
That someone feels quite to the contrary.
I noticed last week in a national mag
That a product American would switch,
Instead of many signs by the side of the road
The boob tube would carry their pitch.
We'll miss: Riot in the drugstore
Calling all cars,
One Hundred Customers
Ninety-nine jars,
Burma Shave
Spread across the country side,
Particularly if it is replaced by a face,
Staring in a mirror all covered with suds
Belonging to a baseball ace.
We'll even miss the bawdy ones,
That we children use to save,
Like: Fire, Fire, All be brave,
Grab your pants, and Burma Shave.
Since This American tradition will pass from the scene,



Let's give it a fitting good-bye,
A wave's not enough, a yell is too loud,
Let's in verse give it a try,
"Signs are educational,
They teach our kids to read,
On long distance driving
They solve an entertainment need,
But kids aren't shavers,
And their fathers watch TV;
So another era passes,
And our youth may never see,
Burma Shave."

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

"Some of our other important features include: A new gas tank with increased fuel capacity to 26½ gallons . . ."

E. M. Estes is a man who meets issues head-on. When asked questions that might put him on the spot, he comes forth with a direct answer—with no hesitation.

At least, this conclusion could be reached from watching the GM vice president-Pontiac general manager in action at a news conference during the recent Pontiac car showing for the nation's newsmen.

When Estes made the above-quoted statement in a speech to reporters prior to the news conference, the observation immediately popped into mind:

"Sure, bigger cars and more power; that means less mileage—and a bigger gas tank."

THE INEVITABLE question was asked: "Why the increase in fuel capacity?"

"Oh, I'll make headlines with this one," said the smiling executive.

Whereupon he explained that motorists are inclined to think of mileage in terms of how far they travel on a tank of gas. People used to be satisfied with 200 miles.

"Now, with turnpike driving, we're up to 300 and trying for 350," said Estes.

Perhaps last year a man could drive to Lansing and back on a tank of gas. So, this year he proudly tells a fellow worker:

"I drove to Lansing and back and to work all week on one tank of gas."

And there's another satisfied customer.

ESTES

IN A PREVIEW talk of the 1965 models, the Pontiac Division general manager emphasized the intention to hang onto third place in the auto sales market.

Again the inevitable question: "Why are you content with third place? Why not, like a football or baseball team, try for second or first?"

Unhesitatingly came the reply:

"Because we're closer to fourth."

Estes' mastery in handling the newsmen's probing questions prompted one reporter to credit him with a fielding average of 97.7 per cent.

THE PONTIAC chief displayed a talent for answering those questions he wanted to and turning aside those he wished to avoid without ruffling feathers. Everybody got a response, with a particularly disarming smile when it wasn't exactly what the reporter had in mind in asking the question.

Incidentally, Estes pointed out that from 30 to 35 per cent of the cars sold by Pontiac this year contained air-conditioners. We Americans do want comfort in our cars, don't we?

TWO LOCAL executives circulated among the officials and newsmen attending the event at the Hillcrest Country Club in Mt. Clemens: Ernest A. Jones, president, and Charles F. Adams, executive vice president of the MacManus, John & Adams ad agency in Bloomfield Hills.

Of course, they should have been there. Their firm has both the Pontiac and Cadillac accounts.

Pontiac public relations executive Bob Emerick, a local resident, got things off with a bit of humor when he referred to the Hillcrest as the "wide track country club."

It's owned by a wide-track dealer, Woody's Pontiac of Detroit.