

The People's Voice

This column for the use of our readers who wish to make suggestions for the general good or discuss questions of interest. Please sign your name to show authenticity. It will not be used if you prefer that it not be.

Opposes Merger

In answer to Mr. Stoneburner's article in the Democrat of Friday, April 29, I am afraid it is a little misleading to the taxpayers in Washington township. True, Washington township paid out \$8,393.33 for transfers to other schools last year, but isn't it true it would have cost us more to have hired high school teachers and try to educate our children in our own township even if we had our own school?

It was shown from your financial report that the per capita cost was less for those transferred out than those educated within Washington township.

Now, the \$8,393.33 you mentioned, we would still have that expense. Not one cent could we apply on a new building, as that goes for operating expense within the building such as light, heat, janitor, etc., and not for building a building.

Why is our township not receiving one cent next year for transportation? Answer: Because of the state school finance act of 1949—which says before a township is entitled to transportation it must first have a local transportation levy and rate equivalent to 10 cents on each \$100 of assessed valuation.

We in Washington township, because of our high valuation, have enjoyed a low tax rate and in order to qualify must first create more expense in transportation and just why should we create more expense to get the one-cent state aid as you call it, is far beyond me to imagine as being economy or good business.

Can we cut expenses by consolidating? I fear that is only wishful thinking. The new law is an equalization law, and because of our increased valuation what assurance have we that we will ever receive any of this new support from the state?

Now as to the assets we would gain in the proposed merger, we would lose their value many times over in valuation.—These assets are all old hard-used equipment and the value to us is not sufficient to



CARL L. HIBBERD of South Bend, grand master of Masons in Indiana, will preside at the annual meeting of the grand lodge Free and Accepted Masons to be held May 17, in the Masonic Temple at Indianapolis. The annual meeting will be attended by the worshipful masters of the 533 chartered Masonic lodges in Indiana.

crow about.

People who make a study of the times say farmers' income goes up first during war times and comes down faster before other things. In three years time, where will we be rated as far as income is concerned?

Washington Twp. Taxpayer

Opposes Plan

The author wants it understood he is in favor of consolidation, but views the present plan to be voted on May 5 with much scepticism.

Let us analyze the seven man board. Who controls the election of Monroe and Washington township trustees and advisory boards but Berne and Decatur? Decatur has approximately 3,400 votes, Washington township 642 votes, Monroe township 519 votes, and Berne 1,241 votes. Under the present regime Berne is controlling Monroe township. The township trustee lives in Berne and the advisory board is giving him its solid support. In Washington township the three advisory board members live in the city of Decatur. Under the present officers the vote would be Berne and Decatur 3 and the three townships 4, providing the

United Council Of Church Women To Meet Here Friday

The May fellowship luncheon of the united council of church women will be held at 12:30 p.m. Friday at the Zion Evangelical and Reformed church. Theme for the day will be "Freedom's Foundation—the Christian Home," and a colored film, "Boundary Lines," will be shown.

New officers will be elected and all church women of Decatur are invited. Those planning to attend are asked to notify Mrs. Dwight R. McCurdy, phone 1361.

Purpose of the united council of church women, as outlined in the organization's constitution, is: "The purpose shall be to unite church women in their allegiance to their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through a program looking to their integration in the total life and work of the church and to the building of a world Christian community."

Inspector Visits Schools Of County

Charles Lehner, inspector of schools for the Indiana department of education, visited county rural schools last week, accompanied by Lyman L. Hann, county superintendent.

member at large would be from a township. Under the former Washington township officers the trustee and majority of advisory board lived in Decatur, therefore this would give Berne and Decatur 4 votes to 3. We talk about rural schools for rural pupils, which is ideal, but what of city control of rural schools? Is this desirable? Decatur and Berne would have the control of approximately \$7,000,000 of rural taxable property of which they have no personal interest. Can you imagine the General Electric Corporation giving the Westinghouse Corporation control of her stock as is done in this proposed school merger?

Mr. Stoneburner's article of April 29 lists the physical assets of Monroe and Kirkland townships. What is the value of these assets for insurance purposes? Since Washington township's assets are not listed, I would assume it is without assets. Mr. Stoneburner further states the economy of the merger by cutting expenses one-third. What economy is there in transporting approximately 80 Washington township pupils who live across the St. Mary's river through Decatur to the proposed location of the consolidated building? This would mean two additional busses each running approximately 25 miles each day. Does the Indiana study council bring overwhelming pressure through the state department of education upon the Township Trustee to do this? Parents of these pupils, watch your vote!

Originally a new school was to be built, now you list Kirkland and Monroe buildings we are to inherit. Kirkland township has been trying to get out of these buildings for years. The same may be true of Monroe Township. Isn't it true when the merger was proposed a new building was in the light and now there is no adequate method of financing the project? If school bonds have been selling for 2 to 2½% interest, why should the additional funds be raised through a holding company in which the interest may be up to 5%. It is said Washington township levied \$9,000 for transfer bills. This \$9,000 would scarcely pay Washington township interest per year on the proposed project, let alone payment toward the principal. Mr. Stoneburner further states "We (Washington township) will gain \$25,000 in the merger." H. H. High in his ad in the Decatur Democrat on April 30 said "And there is about \$25,000 in the sinking funds of Kirkland and Monroe townships. Of course this is only a fair start compared to the amount necessary but it would buy the land and put in the drain and drill the well." If it takes \$25,000 for the well, drain and land, just judge for yourself the cost of the entire project!

Let us analyze Mr. High's unique, unusual and suave ad of April 30. In the Berne-French township merger you were reliably quoted as opposed to it, in fact, worked in French township against the merger. Why are you flirting or feather-bedding in this merger? Check your valuations, taxpayers. The combined valuation of these three townships including Monroe amounts to approximately \$7,093,310. The valuation of Kirkland township is only \$1,635,948. Kirkland township would only be paying roughly 23% of the cost and operation of the building and Monroe and Washington townships 77%.

We talk of "international manipulations," but this merger has all the appearances of an inter-township poker game. Are the cards stacked?

Isn't it true that we are voting on a merger which may not prove desirable for a long term plan? Think it over thoroughly before you vote!

WASHINGTON TAXPAYERS



IN IMPRESSIVE ceremonies in Moscow's Red Square millions of Soviet citizens watch as Marshall A. Vasilevsky, (left) minister of the armed forces of the U.S.S.R., rides to the reviewing stand to receive the salute of Russia's armies. Marshall of the Soviet Union K. Meretskov, commander of the parade, rides at the right.

CHURCH NEWS

The regular mid-week prayer meeting will be held at the Church of God, Cleveland street, Wednesday evening at 7:30 o'clock. "Home builders are world builders" will be the theme of the meeting, since this is national family week for every Protestant church. The public is invited.

Berne C. of C. To Hear Harry Lintz

Berne, May 3 — Harry Lintz, a representative of the United States Chamber of Commerce, will address the Berne Chamber of Commerce Monday evening, May 16, at the Berne auditorium. Mr. Lintz will speak on the proposed federal aid to the nation's schools.

Aged Berne Woman Suffers Broken Leg

Berne, May 3 — Mrs. Elizabeth Lehman, 85, widow of J. F. Lehman of this place, suffered a severe fracture of her left leg, just below the hip, when she fell Sunday in the home of Mrs. Cora Bentz here, where she has been residing. She is at the Adams county memorial hospital.

Berne Lads Chosen For Boys' State

Berne, May 3 — Ronald Townsend and Judson Lehman, both juniors in the Berne-French high school, have been chosen to represent Berne at the Hoosier boys' state at Indianapolis June 11 to 18. Townsend is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Townsend, Lehman the son of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Lehman. The trips of the local boys will be sponsored by Berne Legion Post 468 and the Berne Rotary club.

Finds Toy Balloon From Wisconsin

Berne, May 3 — Steven Stucky of Berne, recently found a toy balloon filled with gas which had been released by a boy at Madison, Wisconsin. Young Stucky found it near here the day after it was released. The balloon had travelled 400 miles in 24 hours.

Weekend Tornadoes Death Toll Now 11

Prague, Okla., May 3 — (UP) — The death total in the weekend tornadoes that ripped Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas rose today to 11. Mrs. Jesse True, 35, Tulsa, Okla., died in a hospital here. Her daughter, Anita, was killed Saturday night when the motor car in which they were riding was thrown three-quarters of a mile by the strong winds.

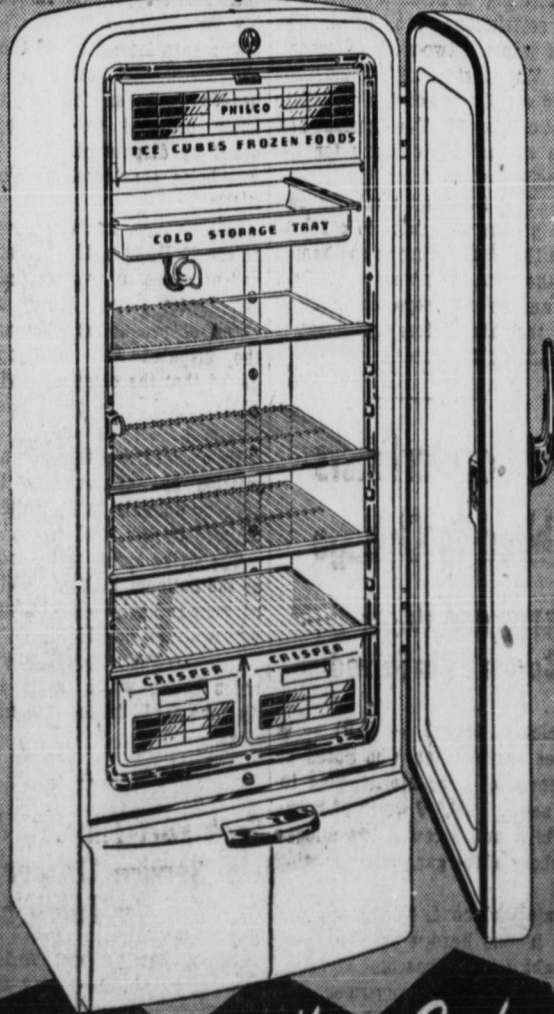
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I hope you'll weigh this carefully

● Railroad costs are on the heavy side of the scale. You can see what's happened to them. Coal, fuel oil, rails, wages, etc.—up an average of 100% since 1939.

But freight rates in that time have been increased only 52% on the average, with passenger rates up only a mere 25%.

Yet railroad service today is better than it was in 1939—faster, more economical, more efficient all over!

How can the railroads give better service when costs have out-distanced rates?

Here's the answer: most of the money earned

Good earnings TODAY mean better service TOMORROW!

by the roads in past years was put back into new and more efficient equipment. For every dollar paid out in dividends, two dollars were spent to buy improvements that resulted in better, more economical service.

If the railroads are to continue to provide the world's best, lowest-cost transportation, that same process of plowing back dollars out of earnings must go on today and in the future.

That's why we say the railroads need a fair return for the job they do! Only in that way can they further increase the efficiency of their service and keep costs low!

Mark of PROGRESS
Erie Railroad
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SERVING THE HEART OF INDUSTRIAL AMERICA
We invite you to listen to "The Railroad Hour" Monday nights over A.B.C. See your local newspaper for time.