

## OUR ROSTRUM

*These columns are open to brief letters commenting upon any article or subject that has appeared in THE FORUM. Because of space limitation, the Editor must reserve the right to publish letters only in part.*

### THE CITY OF CLEVELAND

To the Editor:

Replying to your letter of August 16th, requesting a statement about Cleveland for publication in your "Rostrum," I am glad to state that:

1. Cleveland is growing. In 1920 its population was 796,000. It is now 925,000. It ranks sixth in population in the Nation, fourth or fifth as a manufacturing center and it is often listed as third as a financial center. Cuyahoga County, which includes Cleveland's immediate suburbs, showed 943,000 in 1920. It now has 1,285,000.

2. Cleveland's industrial and commercial location is practically perfect. Midway between iron ore and coal, it is a natural site for producing steel and steel products. It distributes goods to one-half of the people of the United States by overnight rail shipment. Last year the Republic Steel Company erected here a Twenty Million Dollar New Steel Center. Lake Erie gives Cleveland a comfortable climate and a limitless supply of excellent water.

3. Cleveland has well established and diverse industries. Two-thirds of all types

of manufacturing in the Nation are found in our Cleveland industrial area. Cleveland leads the nation in the manufacture of chemicals, paints, hardware, nuts and bolts, building materials, wire goods, dry batteries and other important articles. It is the focal point for electrical equipment manufacturing. It is the world center of the incandescent lamp industry.

4. Cleveland is the natural center of a closely knit industrial area at least 75 miles in radius, including a population of 3,000,000. This area contains One and One-half Billion Dollars more wealth than the average population of that size. It spends \$100,000,000 more per year than the average such group. More than 60% of its homes are owned by their occupants, in contrast to 40% in the Nation.

5. Cleveland is rich in its diversity of people. They spring from over twenty nations. 65% of its people are foreign born or have one or both foreign born parents. The Cultural Gardens of Cleveland, representative of the cultural achievements of each nation, are sponsored by the several nationality groups and are unique in the world. This diverse population re-

sponds eagerly to music and literature. Cleveland holds the world's record for attendance during a week of Grand Opera. It leads the nation in per capita circulation of library books.

6. Cleveland's Safety Department has secured outstanding convictions of racketeers charged with extortion. It is installing the most modern two-way radio and motor vehicle equipment in the nation. In August Cleveland sold \$4,000,000 of its bonds at an average interest rate of less than 3%. Its per capita debt is the lowest of the Nation's six largest cities. Its relief problems have been due primarily to the lack of any state policy or legislation making it possible for the city to meet such needs. The existing state administration has now been eliminated at its own party primary and all candidates are pledged to seek adequate relief legislation.

7. Cleveland's harbor is an increasing asset. The 1937 harbor trade was the greatest in its history. 1938 is marked by the start of a \$5,000,000 river improvement program, the completion of an \$8,000,000 lakefront highway, the completion of a \$20,000,000 sewage disposal system, the start of a new high level bridge across the river and the aggressive prosecution of litigation to settle century old lakefront legal problems.

8. Cleveland is progressive and liberal. Its three federal housing projects are in successful operation and \$20,000,000 more are allotted for new housing projects. Cleveland is maintaining its well earned and established reputation for religious and political freedom and understanding. It recognizes fully all constitutional privileges and obligations.

9. Cleveland is known as the "Forest City" because of its residential areas and many shade trees. It is developing not only its city, but also its Metropolitan Parks to an unprecedented extent. In 1936 and 1937 it also operated the successful Great Lakes Exposition.

10. Cleveland is a center of aviation. It has the greatest commercial airport in the nation and on September 3rd-5th is holding there, the National Air Races. . . .

HAROLD H. BURTON, Mayor  
Cleveland, O.

*Other comment from Clevelanders on Walter Abbott's article, "Cleveland; a City Collapses," in the September FORUM: I am frankly amazed that any magazine would publish such an article without a more careful investigation of the facts. I will admit that there are some people who share his views, but they are people who have personal axes to grind. The majority*

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## Our Rostrum

of us are proud of our city despite its troubles. ✓ As ridiculous and unfounded indictment of an entire city as in my whole experience I have come across. ✓ What city of any consequence does not have a very recent history of one and all of these things? ✓ If Cleveland is on the verge of collapse, America is on the same verge. ✓ I do not wish to pretend that my home city has no faults. She has enough and is trying hard to rid herself of some of them at least; but she is not suffering from a hopeless disease. ✓ Truth immortalized! Only one who has been confined cruelly for nearly six years in this cesspit of morons could make Mr. Abbott look more like a passer-by—a casual observer! ✓ You may call it a city, but: to me—a slimy sump! ✓ You should hang your head in shame for allowing such an article to be printed. ✓ I do not recall ever having read a more inaccurate, misleading, and slanderous article. ✓ Walter Abbott is an unmitigated liar. ✓ What possible justification can you advance for permitting the article to be published? ✓ In spite of the ridiculously exaggerated statements made in the article, there is a tinge of truth in the story. But for some reason or other, it smothered in its own "stew." Cleveland, you must know, is a city unique unto itself; in that smugness, short-sightedness, coupled with extreme provincialism, has done more to deter its progress than any other factors grouped together.

### THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH

To the Editor:

... Publications ... have so accustomed Pa Pitt to the routine of investigation that at the mere sound of preparations for a social study anywhere within the United States he routinely and naively begins to disrobe. ...

Even when the picture is neither entirely true nor dated—as in Dwight Macdonald's article ["Pittsburgh: What a City Shouldn't Be"] in the August number of THE FORUM ... Pittsburghers are glad to learn what they can about their City. ...

Pittsburghers must exert some effort to subdue civic-conscious choler when they read Macdonald's dismissal of their culture. Is it totally unimportant that there is conducted every year in Pittsburgh the finest collection of the world's current paintings shown in the United States, The International Art Exhibition. ...? It might be if it were visited only by the "Big Business Community"; but steel workers, Hill District Negroes and "Hunkies" ... have worn thin the marble stair treads ... and lectures draw capacity audiences and sub-rosa we even harbor a few poets, sculptors, and dramatists.

It is true, Pittsburghers have wrestled long with the smoke problem. ...

Mr. Macdonald is right when he says Pittsburgh for long has bungled the flood control problem. This he attributes solely to the power policies of the millions. ... In that respect Pittsburgh capital has differed in no manner from private capital anywhere in the United States. ... Public demand has brought about all the necessary legislation and appropriations to complete the task.

Mr. Macdonald is entirely correct in condemning ... the chaotic jungle of local governmental units in Allegheny County. ...

As far as housing is concerned, which, together with municipal consolidation, Mr. Macdonald says Pittsburgh needs most, we can heartily echo Macdonald's point of view. But he fails to note that the Pittsburgh Housing Authority has made elaborate ... plans for a first attack on the slums. ...

When Mr. Macdonald describes Pittsburgh as a City in which religion reflects the dominance of great wealth he should, in all fairness, make comparison with other cities. ... Pittsburgh is not unique. ...

In discussing education in Pittsburgh, Mr. Macdonald confines himself entirely

to the University of Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh Board of Education ... has provided Pittsburgh with splendid buildings, has paid excellent salaries. ... Duquesne University (Catholic), The Carnegie Institute of Technology, and the Pennsylvania College for Women pursue progressive, enlightened educational policies. Many Pittsburghers wish the same could be said of the University of Pittsburgh. ...

... It is only fair to note also that a new generation has seized control in the "Business Community" ... one that has grown up with and has learned to respect organized labor. ...

Pittsburgh has its "two nations," the rich and the poor. ... But those "two nations" exist wherever capitalism exists. ... In some part the gap between them may be diminished, as is happening in Pittsburgh. ... The problems thereafter remaining are common to our civilization: the social mastery of the machine, the equitable distribution of production, and the development of an all-embracing culture. In this work Pittsburgh will do its full share.

B. J. HOVDE, *Director*  
*Department of Public Welfare*  
*Pittsburgh, Pa.*

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