

### People's Column

The Eccentric welcomes letters for this column. All letters must be signed and addresses will be kept confidential upon request. Letters must be limited to 100 words.

To the Editor: Your editorial "Is Birmingham a 'Speed Trap'?" in the August 21st issue is timely, but far from strong enough to improve the situation as it exists at present, unless the citizens of this city take up the subject and do something about it.

For the past 12 years we have resided in the state of Wisconsin which has not seemed to grow in the suburban areas in comparison to Michigan. Having been former residents of the City of Detroit previous to our years in Wisconsin, we have had the opportunity to compare the traffic situation in both states. Noteworthy of this study is the radar control as used in Birmingham.

Radar control, in my opinion, makes me angry. It seems to me when driving through this area under control, that I am under the surveillance of an unknown body. I believe it is a sneaky way to catch drivers, and especially the way it's done here.

The cars we have observed operating on Maple, sometimes do not have any markings on them to identify them as being police cars.

There have not been any signs erected either on Maple or Eton St., notifying drivers that these streets are radar controlled. The only sign that I have noticed to this effect is the one on Eton, south of Maple.

If one is unlucky enough to not have observed the little box on the back of a car parked along the curb, he gets a ticket if he has exceeded the speed limit.

In my observation of these violations, it has been in the main, transient drivers and adults who, notwithstanding the extra speed, were driving within a reasonable degree of safety on a street that should have an allowance of a higher rate of speed for it is an arterial street.

I am aghast at the tactics and driving performance of the youth in this and surrounding territory. Any night in the week one can hear and see these performances which leave us frightened and alarmed.

BUT where are these radar cars then? Do they go on in hiding after dark? Or can't they be operated at night?

Maple, Woodward and Hunter any evening in the week is a mecca for these wild drivers. And we have as yet, to have the privilege of seeing one of these drivers ticketed for such practices.

The main topic of conversation these nights is to match experiences with each other after the evening's drive and one wonders at having survived the ordeal.

We understand that California in some cities, is making provision for the youth to expel this excessive desire for speed by pro-



LION'S CLUB MEMBERS FETED THE LADIES at their noon luncheon Wednesday, Aug. 20, at Devon Gables. Enjoying the outing, from left to right, are Mrs. Archie L. McNaughton, President Archie L. McNaughton, Rollie W. Reese, Mrs. Rollie Reese and Frances Pilot. (Eccentric Staff Photo)

viding roped off streets or roads, fair grounds with tracks, etc., and if they want to go there and drive their souped-up jalopies, at least they are not endangering the lives of other motorists, except perhaps those who frequent these places for the same purpose, to be killed and to kill.

But at that, it gets them off the street and removes to a degree, the threat and terror roaming the streets today behind the wheel of a broken down car.

I feel your newspaper can go far in correcting this situation of youth driving at excessive speeds, by starting a project such as California has provided. If the parents are able to provide these cars, they can and should be interested in such a project.

In the meantime, I earnestly feel that control is the answer. Certainly there is great need for it at the time of night when these

youngsters take over the highways. As a newcomer to Birmingham, I am impressed with the quality of your newspaper. I enjoy it from every aspect and know your advertisers are responsible merchants.

MARIE (MRS. WILLIAM C.) HAZER, 1971 Craefield Road.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Mrs. Hazer's letter raises a point which we believe should be explained; mainly, that the city's radar enforcement program is not intended for use only on the streets where the radar warning signs are posted.)

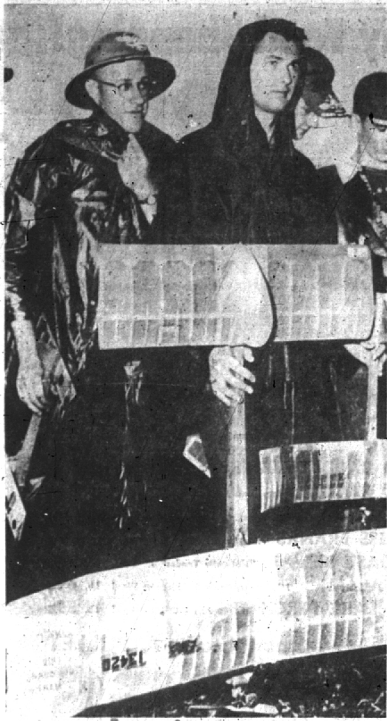
(These signs are erected at the main traffic entry points to Birmingham as a means of letting transient motorists know that radar is being used in the city's traffic control. All streets are subject to surveillance by "the little

black box", but naturally the heavier-travelled streets receive more attention than others.

We asked the police department why the unit wasn't being used at night. We were told that it would be quite hazardous to use during hours of darkness, plus the fact that the patrolmen using it would have extreme difficulty in accurately identifying the violating cars and obtaining dimly-lit license numbers.

(Concerning whether the use of radar is "sneaky", we only point out that law enforcement officers usually do not give law violators a "sporting chance" to get away with their law breaking. If a person observes the law, he has nothing to fear from the law.)

If you don't want it, someone else does—sell it thru an Eccentric Classified Ad.



ALTHOUGH FLYING WEATHER COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER, model plan enthusiasts wait anxiously for their turn in Plymouth Motor Corporation's Sixth International Model Plane contest in Detroit last week. Robert Adair of Erie, Pa., and Gerald W. Messenger, 18679 San Diego, Beverly Hills, stand bundled in rain coats in a processing line on the opening day of the meet, Aug. 20.

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