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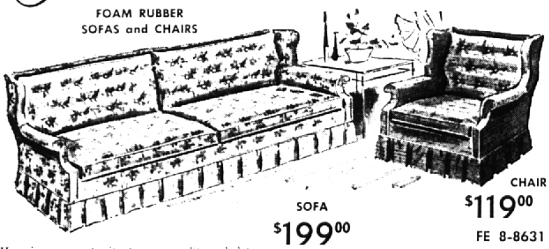

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This & That

(Continued from Page 1-A)

boy! how Mexico City maintains an even flow of traffic without a million daily tie-ups is a my-stery. Yet it is done, and without very much on-the-spot traffic police help. Each driver is keenly alert at safe (sometimes it appears not too safe) openings into which he may point his car.

And so, especially during heaviest traffic hours, Mexico City's automobiles move about with a fluidity akin to the Mississippi River overflowing its banks at floodtime, yet without damage to the automotive craft afloat on its surface.

And yet there is little horn-tooting. However, many visiting tourists do engage the services of a native driver, not only to outwit the traffic congestion, but really to get around the entire area to see the variety of ancient and modern points of interest.

. . .

YOU MAY RECALL that Mexico City is located on the bottomlands of what, in Aztec days of the early 16th century, was a great lake. When Cortez and his Spanish conquerors overcame Montezuma, they decided to re-build the city and so they drained off most of the lake.

Result: even today certain of the larger buildings gradually sink into the former lake bottom. Mexico City's Opera House and Fine Arts Bldg. has sunk 6½ feet, even though concrete has been pumped beneath its foundation.

Six months ago an earthquake shook Mexico City, resulting in the demolition of some buildings. A few of the larger structural steel buildings have suffered severe cracks in their masonry—the new Hilton Hotel is one.

Speaking of hotels, this great city has numerous large, modern ones. The food is good and, by comparison with U. S. prices, very, very reasonable. For the natives, dinner is served from nine o'clock on, and is a leisurely performed routine with plenty of vigorous, gesture-supported conversation by both men and women.

. . .

MOST MEXICANS are polite, courteous, especially those with whom average tourists come in contact. The countenances of the business and professional men are in constant movement, with eyes flashing, as they talk. They are the men who will lead their nation to greater prosperity.

Having studied some of Mexico's long history, I again take off my hat to its spirit of progressivism, and I'm grateful that its national policies are friendly to the U. S.

For in Mexico, centuries before the white man ever stepped upon New England shores, the ancient Mexican Indians, especially the Aztecs, Toltecs and Mayans, had developed a high pattern of civilization, and were aware of many of the natural phenomena of this earth and its solar system.

Even today, in the Yucatan area, new archaeological discoveries are being made, proving that human beings lived in the area thousands of years ago.

. . .

MEXICAN PEOPLE for centuries endured the rule of despotism; 300 years were required before they threw off the controls of Spain. They also suffered a veritable dictatorship when Porfirio Diaz served as president for 33 years. When they amended their Constitution they limited the President to one six-year term.

The forthcoming July election for this office no doubt will inaugurate Lopez Mateos, whose name and picture one can see everywhere.

Government - operated lotteries are held thrice weekly. Everywhere one meets vendors of the tickets . . . from old men and women to six-year-old boys and girls.

Too, there is less and less evidence of human poverty in the downtown areas of Mexico City . . . fewer sights of men and women (some real old) carrying heavy burdens on their backs, and less evidence of the torn and tattered clothes of youngsters. Mexico City is mindful of its revered past, and the people who have made its history.

So one sees many monuments in prominent places, some of them very large, costly and beautiful. They include some of the ancient Indian leaders, plus more recent ones, from Juarez, Hidalgo, Morelos, Madero, to lesser figures.

. . .

MEXICO CITY'S altitude is about 7,500 feet. This means that days may be warm, but nights generally are cool enough for blankets.

Mexico possesses much natural wealth. It has produced most of the world's silver, much gold and in recent years oil and gasoline. Its climate is conducive to semi-tropic vegetation, a few places at sea level actually are tropical.

And, of course, the tourists play a considerable part in supporting its economic stability.

Mexican roads, those on the regular tourist routes, are very good, even by American standards.

By the way, a profitable investment for tourists who park their cars in business areas is to pay the chap in a given block to watch your car. He may wear a suit of khaki uniform, and sport a badge; but he is dependent entirely upon tips from owners of cars he watches. Otherwise you might lose something from your car, even though locked.

. . .

. . . . but to get back to Acapulco for a couple of paragraphs: if you plan to go there, be sure your hotel is located high on the surrounding hills, or on a beach where the breezes can keep you cool. Acapulco is at sea level, and many of its hostelries are affected by the sultry heat. Air conditioners may be available . . . but who want to occupy a room where artificial coolness pours upon him day and night?

Acapulco also boasts of a rare and adventurous sight as its Quebrada high divers do their several-times-a-day stunts of diving from a dangerous precipitous cliff-shelf 125 feet downward into the narrow, surging waters of the Pacific.

Exact timing is required as these young, Apollo-like Mexicans leap outward, arms outstretched like a flying squirrel's forepaws, then a quick downward turn and almost before you know it, the diver is beneath the water's surface. A monetary charge is exacted from the onlookers, of course.

I talked with a 23-year-old diver who revealed that he started on this hazardous career when he was only 12 years old. These divers, by the way, are supervised by an older man, responsible to the authorities for seeing that the divers maintain good health, and do not try any new and dangerous thrill-tricks.

. . .

THUS ENDETH this altogether too brief series on Mexico. If you've never been there, and yet would like to see a foreign nation at work and at play, you should like Mexico.

Because Mexico City is 2,500 miles from Birmingham. By air, it's an hour to Chicago and five and a half hours from there to Mexico City.

Buena Suerte, Senor, Senorita!

(Last week I erroneously stated that Senor Enrique Avilio Rull is head of General Motors Overseas Service in Mexico. I should have stated that Senor Walter De Shriver is managing director of General Motors De Mexico. Senor Rull is an assistant to Senor Shriver.)

Leader Dog Pays Visit

Luncheon guest at the Community House recently was Timmy, leader dog who had been training for four weeks with his new owner, Don Oliver, 29, (left), of Louisville, Ky. Oliver was the guest of the Birmingham Lions club. Here he talks with Lions President Don Cummings. Six other blind persons currently being trained to use guide dogs were guests at the luncheon last week, along with their training staff. Oliver has been sightless for a number of years. He came all the way from Louisville to become the owner of his new "eyes", belonging to the dog affectionately known as "Timmy O'Hoolihan." Michigan Lions founded and support the training center, Leader Dogs for the Blind, in Rochester.

Contempt

(Continued from Page 1-A)

for its failure to recognize existing" facts, recognizing only those facts that tend to support their legalistic position, and for not cooperating on the problem as much as it could have.

Beier, who represents Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills and Bloomfield township in the case, predicted to city commissioners in January that the contempt of court charge would be forthcoming.

He suggested the court be given a progress report on the communities' action to date to construct the North Evergreen interceptor sewer. This report was made.

Progress on the sewer's construction is held up pending a court decision on the legality of plans to have the newly created Oakland county DPW construct the sewer.

Bus Bill

(Continued from Page 1-A)

He introduced an amendment to the Senate-approved bill requiring all children within 1½ miles of a school to be transported to school.

. . .

WHEN IT was pointed out his suggestion was not a vehicle code amendment but a school bus law change, he was given the legislative courtesy of a two-day delay "for further consideration" of his proposal.

In the past ten years, 17 school children have been killed by traffic while getting on or off school buses. Ten deaths involved oncoming traffic, which presently can pass school buses without slowing down. Only traffic approaching from the rear must halt.

. . .

TWO OF THE deaths involved Bloomfield Hills school district pupils.

Local Rep. Farrell E. Roberts said the Michigan farm bureau and citizens safety committee are the two most recent groups to endorse the bus bill.

He said many out-state PTA organizations have telegraphed their representatives to vote for the bill.

So—so, perhaps today is the day we'll see if the Michigan legislature is in a death-dealing or life-saving mood.

Completes Training

Army 2nd Lt. Patrick Longe, whose wife, Janet lives at 3930 Devon Gables court, Bloomfield Hills, recently completed the field artillery officer basic course at the artillery and missile school, Fort Sill, Okla.

Trains in Germany

Pvt. Glenn Sorter, son of the L. N. Sorters of Wattles road, Birmingham, recently participated in a field training exercise with the 11th airborne division in Germany. He is a truck driver in the division's 296th transportation Co.

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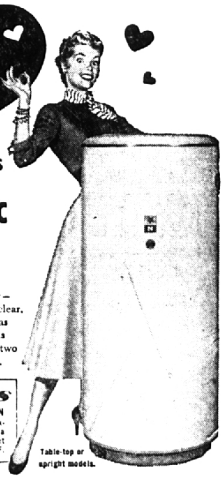

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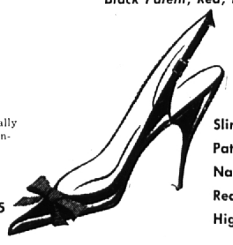

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