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few wrenches. Maintenance is comparable to most other American cars.

The Excalibur warranty is twelve months, or 12,000 miles. Under the warranty, any repair up to \$100 is automatically covered. Over that amount,

DRIVING AN EXCALIBUR MAKES SCENES FROM OLD MOVIES FLIT AROUND THE EDGE OF YOUR MIND.

the company requires notification first. The reason for the notification requirement is so an Excalibur technician can advise whomever is doing the work, and possibly save the owner some on repair costs.

For all its beauty and mechanical convenience, the

Excalibur is under pressure. The government is clearly not happy with a car that weighs 4300 pounds and gets about 11 miles to the gallon. The options open to Excalibur Automobile Corporation are to either re-design to comply with federal regulations or apply for an exemption. The company has chosen to go with re-designing.

The 1980 Excalibur will probably have a smaller engine and lighter body weight, but Excalibur executives say the visual and mechanical integrity of the car will not be compromised; the price, however, will increase. At present, an Excalibur costs \$28,800, with the only option being wire wheels at \$1,500.

That's a lot of money to spend on a car, but the Excalibur is a lot of car; as Sam Spade said, "It's the stuff dreams are made of." ■

that taking a car to a dealership for maintenance work in the Detroit area means being assured the work will be done honestly.

Ed Schmid, of Ed Schmid Ford in Farmdale, Michigan says, "Any new car franchise dealer has too much at stake. 98 percent of all problems associated with maintenance of automobiles can be attributed to human error." Schmid also called the D.O.T. report "so insignificant as to be ridiculous" when only 17 of 32,000 dealerships in the

country were surveyed.

Nobody is questioning possible abuses in the nation's auto-repair industry; there are no perfect methods for dealing with maintenance problems that occur in something as complex as today's automobile. To harpoon an entire industry, however, on the basis of such a small sampling is not fair. It appears, from the D.O.T.'s projections that the auto-repair industry is a "silent economic inflation factor", that the Department of Transporta-

tion is seeing only what it wants to see, and is not being honest with the American people, the auto-repair industry, or itself. ■

Do you agree or disagree? Write Car Biz your opinion on Viewpoint, or any article we present. We may publish your letter.
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from oil companies, for the privilege of drilling on selected areas. Wells drilled in the 400+ ft. depth of water encountered don't come cheap.

Yet, of the 13 wells already drilled in the most promising areas, only one has found any significant quantity of oil or gas. This is where the "enormous" profits go. Who can afford this risk, and who can't? There is no guarantee of success in any business, including the petroleum business.

The cost of doing business goes up relentlessly. Today's cost of refinery construction is over \$400. per barrel per stream day. That is, a new 100,000 bbl/day plant will cost over \$400 million. Now, try to build one, even if you have the money, and the crude oil. There are two proposed refineries on the East Coast which have been 7 and 8 years in the process of getting all the State and Fed-

eral permits to build these plants. Sohio has spent 5 years and \$50 million trying to build a crude oil terminal on the West Coast to move Alaskan crude to the Gulf Coast refineries, and have finally given up. The American consumer will continue to pay the higher cost of moving this crude in small tankers through the Panama Canal.

I can't understand your "second contradiction" that oil companies are "forcing drivers to use more gasoline". How can that be? Oil companies have no control over what individual drivers do. On the contrary, most oil companies are spending money hoping to create a conservation ethic.

Your third "contradiction" has a ring of truth to it, except that new cars are getting more mpg than older cars. This is due to the herculean efforts of the car manufacturers. I'm sure they could produce even better mpg, if the Federal laws on exhaust emissions were made realistic.

Your last comments on the politics of gasoline or the oil shortage don't strike me as adding any light to the story. Today, there is a lot of oil in the ground. Unfortunately, most of it is in someone else's ground. The bungling of our U.S.

Government over the years—the political end—has removed that oil from the control of the large international companies, and raised the price. If you want to point a finger of blame, aim it at Washington, D.C. This extends to other parts of the energy picture, such as coal. We have the largest reserves in the world, except our laws are such that you can't do much more about mining it. And if you can mine it, you can't burn it. We are our own worst enemies.

P. Kalil
Area Manager
Texaco, Inc.