

Tim Richard writes

# Small Cars Are A Must These Days

An apologist for the auto industry, writing in one of the metropolitan dailies, warns that governmental pressure to build smaller cars that burn less gasoline "could affect the jobs of thousands of auto workers."

Just how many thousands, in an industry that employs perhaps a million American workers, is never spelled out. But the scare effect on the public is obvious.

Auto executives, when they're candid, will admit they hate small cars. Small cars bring in less revenue and earn smaller profits, and executive bonuses are based on revenues and profits. The fellows in the industry sneer at and badmouth small cars every chance they get.

We car buyers are shifting to small cars at an astounding pace, and for good reasons.

First, cars burn irreplaceable fossil fuel, and we can cut fuel consumption by half with a car that gets 34 mpg instead of 12 mpg. Second, gasoline prices are soaring; when you subtract taxes, the raw gasoline price has jumped 75 or 80 per cent this year, which means someone is ripping us off good. Third, we're no longer falling for the Madison Avenue line that equates the luxury car with success, status and sexual prowess.

About a year ago, while visiting the Chevy spark and bumper plant in Livonia, I saw a GM firm aimed at employees, viewing with alarm the increasing number of imported autos on American roads. Again, there were subtle sneers at small cars combined with the overt theme of "Buy American."

The GM firm warned, as I recall, that every one per cent increase of foreign car sales meant a loss of 20,000 jobs in American auto plants.

So what has happened since then? Let us go back to the auto industry apologist writing in the

metropolitan daily. At the bottom of his long, grey article is the fact that in the first seven months of 1973, foreign cars captured 16.1 per cent of the American market compared to 14.9 per cent in the same period last year. The increase is 1.2 per cent.

In terms of jobs, that's 24,000 paychecks being written to Toyota, Volkswagen and Volvo workers instead of to American workers.

On the other hand, the unnamed sources quoted by Bob Irvin, automotive writer for the Detroit News, simply say vaguely that "thousands" of jobs will be lost if government pressures the sacred auto industry into producing more small cars.

The truth of the matter is that the American worker will be worse off if the Big Four DON'T compete successfully with the Bugs produced by foreign car manufacturers. Even though American manufacturers will produce small cars when government and the consumers demand them, the auto executives can't stop sneering at the one-ton, 25 mpg car.

Meanwhile, imported cars continue to worsen the U.S. balance of payments and contribute to our ruinous inflation.

There's no use appealing to the auto executives' concern for the environment in persuading them to produce small cars, because they don't instinctively care about the environment.

There's no use appealing to their patriotism to correct the balance of payments by getting them truly to compete with VW instead of bad-mouthing it.

There's no sense appealing to the auto executives to worry about American workers' jobs, and to create more jobs by selling more small cars. The auto execs' bonuses, again, are based on rev-

enues and profits, not the number of persons employed.

The solution is to make it economically worthwhile for auto industry management to produce small cars. How? The boards of directors could do it by (a) making bonuses largely dependent on

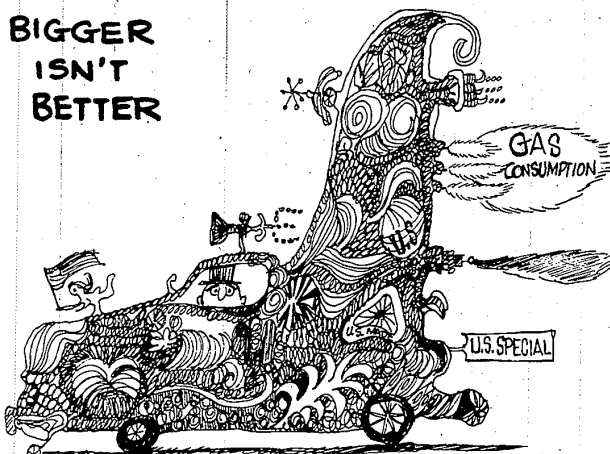
reducing foreign companies' shares of the American market and (b) making bonuses partially dependent on sheer numbers of cars sold rather than dollar revenues or dollar profits.

We no longer live on the cowboy's open range, where we can burn up unlimited supplies of iron

and petroleum driving gas-guzzling dinosaurs.

Rather, we live on a space ship with limited resources. It is our patriotic duty, as well as our sacred duty to generations unborn, to cut in half the size of the car we buy and the amount of fossil fuel we burn.

## BIGGER ISN'T BETTER



R. T. Thompson writes

## Don't Become A Casualty Of Holiday Weekend Traffic

Battle lines are forming for the start of the largest traffic fight of the year. This is the one between those who follow the safety rules and those speed demons who always appear during the traditional three-day Labor Day holiday.

It's the annual duel between those who want to get to their summer homes, to resorts and to play spots for the final time of the season and those reckless drivers who can't wait to get to their destination and then delay until the latest possible moment to start home. That means speeding like demons without regard to safety or fellow drivers and usually results in the year's largest highway toll in the 72-hour period.

Annually warnings of all kinds are issued prior to the start of the Labor Day holiday. Motorists are told where the detours are; they are told to follow all rules of safety, told to drive carefully and get to the destination, not in a hospital or funeral home, but there are always those who won't heed advice. The result a year ago was a death toll of 33.

It could be even higher this year since the weatherman has promised humid but perfect weather. That means more and more will throw caution to the winds and drive faster and faster to get to the summer resort as quickly as possible to relax for the final time of the season.

It makes no difference whether the AAA and the Michigan State Police tell of the dangers of fast driving or not. Some listen but a good many don't.

There are those who keep well within the speed limits, take their time and have a safe trip. But there are others who whip around curves with tires squealing, zip in and out of traffic, scaring their passengers as well as those in every car they pass. They are the ones the State Police will be looking for, hopeful they can get the car off the road before one of those horrendous, life-taking accidents.

says Col. John H. Plants, head of the Michigan State Police. "We urge all Michigan residents and visitors to use extra care in all their holiday activities to lessen the rash of accidents."

"Normal precautions should include using safety belts in cars and life preservers in boats."

Col. Plants warned against drinking while driving, stressing that a majority of the holiday accidents are caused by such motorists.

"If you have to drink because it's the last big holiday of the year, then turn the wheel over to someone else. It's much better to arrive and enjoy yourself than to overdo and wind up in a hospital bed or a casket."

The State Police will begin operations at noon Friday and continue through midnight Monday. Maximum coverage will be provided from 3 to 9 p.m. daily during the weekend. Special attention will be devoted to highway sections having had bad accident experiences.

The State Highway Commission is doing its part to make the highways safer during the three days by ordering suspension of all road and bridge construction work.

The order, effective Friday at 5 p.m. until 8 a.m. Tuesday, halts all but emergency or specially authorized work that does not affect traffic.

In addition, all construction sites will be put in condition to handle anticipated heavy volume of weekend traffic, and a check of all signs on detours and construction areas will be made for conformance with signing and safety precautions.

Preliminary predictions for the weekend show motorists will drive an estimated 651 million miles between noon Friday and noon Tuesday. That's two per cent more than the 638 million vehicle miles logged by drivers over the 1972 holiday.

Northbound traffic is expected to be heavy Friday from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Southbound return traffic is expected to be heaviest on Monday from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.

There's some good news for the weekend. Motorists should have no serious trouble obtaining gasoline. Should a Service Station

Dealers Association of Michigan rumored strike materialize, 20 per cent of the state's service stations could close.

However, closures would be primarily concentrated in southern Michigan urban centers if a boycott is in fact called.

The following advice comes from the Auto Club:

To minimize problems purchasing gasoline at night and all day Sunday and Monday, motorists should travel on the top half of their tanks.

If seeking hotel and motel accommodations in popular resort areas, travelers should make advance reservations. Most roadside facilities should have vacancies.

Campers seeking space in state park campgrounds should start their Labor Day trips early since many facilities fill the night before a holiday weekend begins. Campers should select alternate destinations in case the first choice is filled upon arrival.

Motorists should expect some traffic slowdowns on I-75 around Flint due to a 21 mile long road widening project. It runs from the merging point of I-75 and US-23 to Birch Run.

Don't become a member of the battalion of "get there faster" fighters. Drive carefully, follow all traffic rules, and get home safely. It's better to be able to read about the road fatalities than to be listed among them.

## 2 Years Have Passed

It hardly seems possible that it happened two years ago, a Livonia high school senior only two weeks away from graduation at Bentley High run down and killed in the bright late afternoon sun and by a hit and run driver.

As of today police are no nearer to a solution than they were the afternoon it happened. The afternoon an ambulance rushed pretty Chris Beattie to St. Mary hospital where she died within a matter of minutes.

She was enroute home from a nearby Livonia junior high where she worked as a vocational training secretary. Then, according to the meager reports police were

## DISSENT

View points expressed in DISSENT do not necessarily reflect those of Observer Newspapers Inc., but are presented in the belief that publication of all segments of thought on a public issue is a prerequisite to understanding and progress.

By GERALD L. COX  
Garden City

Yes, time passes slowly in the mountains. But in Observerland territory, I for one am acutely aware 1976 is only three years away; 1984, only 11. More than a movie, 2001 brings the stark realization that today's newly born will have their 28th birthday then. Man, the time-binder is ever seeking perspective on his own history.

I wish to differ with those who opined that the Watergate hearings have no place in the American system of jurisprudence. Eagerly listening to the Senate's proceedings at every opportunity, I felt I was part of my own government searching for the truth.

More than once I thought of my experiences last summer as a Wayne County Circuit Court juror and reflected upon Watergate as giving opportunity to my fellow Americans to directly participate as "a member of the jury." A free and open press at a public hearing is, indeed, the best guarantee that government leaders who have lost their way will not go undetected.

But beyond the polarization of Americans into two groups of those for court proceedings and those for open hearings on TV I feel a need to inquire into my own ethics, values, and philosophy.

With the summer fading into fall, I become aware my life can only be led one day at a time; and the problem is still effective living and growth of my self. How to get myself together is a task uniquely my own. Watergate or no.

Since July 27, 1971 I've been studying a little book, American Government (available from: The Center for Health Education, 4421 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, 48201), in which John M. Dorsey, a great man of our area and our time, provides clear thinking for every citizen who would see his health in direct relationship to his government.

As I have done, readers of the Observer papers may find consciousness of their own self sovereignty in reading (authoring) Dorsey's Declaration of Conscious Independence.

"I, including my every fellow-man, am born, live all of my life, and die, one only but entirely self-contained individual. All I can ever really be 'onesome for' is my appreciation for my united wholeness. I can never really be at a loss except for my recognition of my complete and intact fullness."

"My life provides my only possible reality. My inability to see my personal identity in any of my world is traceable to my need to sleep through it. My acknowledging my personal identity in any of my living is traceable to my arousing myself to be wide awake to it. I can never 'have' anything; I must always be everything."

"My only possible consciousness is self consciousness; my only possible unconsciousness is self unconsciousness. My vicissitudes is the condition of my self love create controls directing my being. My only possible governing power is acknowledgeable or unacknowledgeable self sovereignty."

"My insight regarding my absolute autonomy is the consequence of my willingly waking up sufficiently to be able to call my soul my own and my all my soul."

And so I (we) see that the government is mine (ours).

Edward Wendover writes

## 75 Watch Murder, None Offers Aid

Why didn't somebody stop them?

That question has been raised a hundred times since a 19-year-old man was literally kicked and beaten to death in a Plymouth Township restaurant as some 75 persons watched.

While three persons have been arrested in connection with the death, the question of why it was allowed to happen still remains.

An employee of the restaurant who was working at the time said it happened so quickly, no one was able to aid the man.

In light of the sheriff's report that deputies were arriving as one of the alleged assailants was fleeing, this seems highly unlikely.

What seems more plausible is the all-too-common attitude in such situations:

Nobody wanted to get involved. This was not an instance

where the assailants displayed dangerous weapons, but rather they stomped the man and hit him with a ketchup bottle.

Why couldn't any one - or several - of the diners and employees have distracted the assailants' attention either by directly interfering or by throwing something at them?

Certainly any dozen people in the restaurant could have subdued the assailants.

Editorials decrying the "I don't want to get involved" attitude have become all too common in today's world, but perhaps no one thinks that could happen here. It did.

While the assailants are not blameless, neither are the 75 persons who watched when even a slight action on their part may well have saved a man's life.

## Editorial & Opinion

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