

SUPERCAR MOTORING

Rolling countryside, the road to oneself. To most of us this picture is Easter motoring at its most sublime—and unattainable. Others, less perturbed by endless traffic jams, find delight within the car itself. **LEN DEIGHTON**, author of last year's most swinging spy thriller, 'The Ipcress File,' has turned his Volkswagen into a fully-equipped office, incorporating enough gadgetry to run a major business from behind the wheel. In the second part of this nostalgic search for the pleasures of motoring **MAXWELL BOYD** road-tests a £5000 Facel Vega. There are only 15 of these magnificent vehicles in Britain. There can only be one like Len Deighton's . . .

THE TROUBLE with using your car as an office is that you can't pretend you're out. You can make a quick getaway if you keep on your toes—unless you are having elevenses, in which case you'll have boiling water and dry Nescafé over the turn-ups—and that's not very amusing.

Radio telephones are tax-deductible. Aircall Ltd. rent them out so that you can talk from your car to an office in Soho (code name Blue). They have offices in other cities; for example Birmingham is code name Red.

Operators are on duty 24 hours a day. They will connect you to any GPO number, send telegrams or cables, take, give or hold messages, send flowers, look up addresses, direct you by referring to a street map when you are lost, tell you train times, book theatre seats or warn you about big traffic jams so that you can return home by some other route. The service is so cheerful and efficient that it is strictly un-English. The cost is about £3 per week including insurance on the two-way short-wave radio that they fit into your car.

Of course you'll need to be equipped with more than just a short-wave radio telephone before you can claim to have a real mobile office. You'll need one of those plastic-covered magnets that hold papers on the dashboard. *(continued on page 26)*





Behind pilot taking part in land/air exercise with men of the R.A.F. Regiment

For the man who counts, work that matters!

Levels you could fly as an officer in the R.A.F.

This young man joined the Royal Air Force. Today he is the best trained for a host of duties including airlifting supplies, minelaying and missile- and gun-firing. In the last two days of his squadron have carried out operations in Germany, Somalia and Greece as well as all over Britain.

Aircrew officer is one of the most satisfying careers you could choose. The rewards come early. You could be an officer within six months. At 21 you could earn £1000 a year as a Flying Officer; at 25 as a Squadron Leader drawing full allowances you could earn over £1850. A pensionable career to 38 with good prospects of service to 55. You may choose to leave after 8 or 12 years with a tax-free gratuity.

Career for you?

As an aircrew officer you must have a strong sense of duty and a sound education. You must have passed—or be expecting to pass—the English (or equivalent) in English language and mathematics subjects, before applying for a Direct Entry Commission. You must be between 17 and 25 years of age. For more information write for booklet "Flying and

You", giving your date of birth and details of education to Group Captain J. A. Crockett, R.A.F., Air Ministry (TSS933), Adastral House, London, W.C.1.

**The Royal
Air Force**

Read the mucus paper St Christopher off it and you have an 'in' tray. The glove compartment is 'pending.' Anything else you can put through the sunshine roof while you are going along.

What about a regular site? Let me recommend one of these new office blocks. Drive around the back of the one you select and watch for a concrete slope with a notice saying "Private Property—Trespassers will be Prosecuted" or "Vehicles owned by Messrs Bloggs only." Drive down, and you will see hand-painted registration numbers suspended over huge shiny tax-deducted Bentleys. Park anywhere.

Upstairs there are trolleys full of hot coffee and the most delicious typists who will regard the odd florin and a pat on the bottom sufficient reward for doing all your typing. The foyer is where you meet all your contacts—it's all rubber plants to hide behind and the ashtrays are as big as handbasins. Pretend you have come from somewhere upstairs, and when your contacts try to trace you afterwards you don't exist.

Naturally some among you will feel that the life should be an outdoor one. I agree. On a fine spring day is there a man with red blood in his veins who doesn't hanker after a post-prandial back-seat snooze in the ozone? On these days take your office into the open air; and do the whole thing legit. at a meter. If one of them comes along you can always slap a one-franc piece into it. There's a man in Soho who keeps himself in marijuana fags by selling one-franc pieces at threepence each. Even if you are driven to using English money, sixpence an hour is good for a West End address, even calculating the Road Tax as ground rent.

Several offices in the bay next to mine have done away with typewriters completely. They have installed tape recorders and Dictaphones. There are very cheap transistorised ones now in pocket sizes. Go for the kind that makes a recording that will play back on other types of machines—some can only be played back on the same one.

Hi-fi fans will prefer to buy an adapter so that they can use their full-size tape recorders from the car battery. With a good microphone you can pick up speech at 250 feet. Can all those men with long overcoats and parabolic reflector microphones in Grosvenor Square be Ludwig Koch?

With all this flamboyant use of electricity you may need a spare battery. I have two and swap them around at the garage in order to have a fully charged battery all the time. In summer this is not so important.

It's useful to have a plug in the dashboard that feeds from the battery.

lighters, map-reading lights or a lead light with 20 feet of cable with which you can look for the thing that went tinkle somewhere back there.

If your work takes you to Istanbul you'll find that the taxis there often have gramophones in them. I hailed one the other day and said, "Follow that cab and play *Uskudar*." He looked through his collection with pedantic deliberation as we screamed through the Galata Bridge traffic with the right foot well down, and ended up playing Cliff Richard. If you want Turkish music in your car, a Philips record player will cost you 21 guineas. It will also play Cliff Richard records.

Or you can get a radio that is handy to remove at picnics—but remember that car thieves have picnics too: fasten it in with every bolt you can find. The Philips Model 390T at 24 guineas has a locking device. Real luxury car radios have a device called a self-seeker which is button-



L.D. in VW: "I'll just nip round to see you in my office"

operated by foot, or by hand on the steering wheel. It kills the Archers and sets the needle moving until it tunes itself in on the Stock Market Report (or vice versa). The Blaupunkt Köln TR de luxe will select either medium strength or only very powerful signals: quite a machine, but it will smack you in the pocket for 75 guineas, so you'll need some really great bolts for it. And you don't have to have a complicated radio to have a second speaker installed in the car. Some people have one that can be moved around on a long lead, but these are mostly people crazy about picnics.

So there it is: anyone with a highly paid proposition will find me with my tennis shoes peeping through the off-side window of the 1956 Volkswagen somewhere along the outer circle of Regent's Park listening to *Woman's Hour*—but phone first to say you are