nelight

motorways is now well-rehearsed and you do wonder at times if he ever wakes up in a cold sweat fearing the prospect of saying something moderate?

Tirade

But it does something like this Motorways—
- cost to much,
- deprive other services (like hospitals and railways) of cash,
- destroy too many homes,
- cause horrific accidents,
- generate traffic rather than relieve it since all lorries and cars return eventually to normal roads.

It's even a lie, he says, that they bring prosperity. The North-East and North-West with more motorway per head than any other area in Europe, is the best example.

So no more motorways, says John Tyme. "I would like to see a complete reversal of our traffic priorities, not a single more yard of motorway, link-road or by-pass should now be built because with the disappearance of cheap energy, it simply won't be used."

His special venom is reserved for his opponents. The road lobby, he says, "are a brutalised, unprincipled organisation."

He makes this remarkable claim. "I have been warned by one of their leading executives about being out—in his phrase—in a Peter Hain situation.

"I asked him to define that. He replied: "Well if YOU don't know Peter Hain was framed. I DO. That's what happens to people like you who oppose the Establishment."

When this happens, says John Tyme, you move into a very ugly world indeed.

If he were Minister of Transport, all cars would cost £6,000, road licences £1,000 a year, petrol £3 a gallon. That's the true cost of motoring he believes, when you take into account environmental damage, air pollution, and the true cost of "blackmooded" roads.

Which must send a shudder down the spine of the man who's just bought Mr Tyme's old van for £20.

"I gave it up because it was too expensive to run. It needed a new battery and I used it only minimally," he said.

He doesn't miss it, his mother lives three miles from his cottage on the edge of Sheffield, and he walks it. "And I've never felt fitter," says John Tyme.

"But one has to live in the real world. There are occasions when I have to ride in cars. Inevitably I am polluting."

And the polemic begins again. "In 10 years time you'll be able to hold chess tournaments on the fast lanes of motorways."

But wasn't it three years, an hour ago?

"Did I say three?" he asks. "Well in 10 years they'll be international tournaments."

Fortunately he plays chess.

Angela this is your...

Angela Rippon.

DO YOU find it all fascinating" I do.

I had no idea, But watching Angela Rippon read the news, there it was.

I'd seen all the previous bulletins read by Angela Rippon—who hasn't? So I was well up on the news of Angela Rippon, booked to play Lady Macbeth opposite Red Adair, also how she is expected to partner Peter Jay in this year's mixed doubles at Wimbledon.

I've been absorbed these past 10 weeks — and who hasn't? — by the television BBC serial "The History of Angela Rippon's Basket Weaving" but hey look, while we're on that did you read last Sunday's papers? Seems like some of that basket weaving wasn't her own, at least according to David Attenborough who has traced it back to a tribe of three-foot giants in the Andes foothills. There again, Magnus Pike has a different theory).

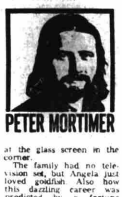
As a film critic, I've also seen a preview of the new Britian sex comedy "Confessions of Angela Rippon's Horse," co-starring Robin Askwith as the feed bag. You'll know about that though the "Tonight" team spending three days on location with the film crew and everything. Interesting to discover the horse's favourite television programme is "Six Billion Dollar Rippon." — never misses an episode.

I'm not talking either about the present Year Economist competition guest Angela Rippon's inside leg measurement — first prize a guest spot on the Angela Rippon Christmas television spectacular. Remember last year? Those two funny little guys Morecambe and Wise made a quick appearance. Unless you do.

No, this is something else. Angela Rippon to fight Mohammed Ali for the World Heavyweight Championship: It could be quite a hoot, and I'm still not sure where to lay my bets.

The fortunate coincidence is, that the day after the fight, there's a new 10,000-page biography of Angela Rippon from Kwik and Mindless Ltd., the well-known publishing house.

Rumours filtering through suggest have will be the real story. Childhood it seems was already suggesting the youngster's future, endless hours spent staring



PETER MORTIMER

at the glass screen in the corner.

The family had no television set, but Angela just loved goodfist. Also how this dazzling career was predicted by a fortune teller in Margate, who said to the eight year-old "Happen you'll grow a bit taller yet."

"Cherchez la femme" — indeed. It should all dovetail nicely with the new 168-part interview series by David Frost. Rippon — Angela or Angel" to be beamed direct to 86 countries.

Frosties' closely detailed analyses include such probings as her views on blood sports, capital punishment, and oh yes, has she ever fantasised over big black men smeared with dripping? He's the right man for the job, and has specially taken time out from his recent negotiations to buy China.

It's the kind of excitement we deserve in Jubilee Year (though did you realise Angela Rippon had been married that long?)

Back to the book — and I hear 10,000 advance copies have already been ordered by the RSPCA (Rippon Society for Protecting the Charisma of Angels). I hear also that the colour supplements are interested in serialising the book — that another well-known publishing house are looking at the concept of a book based on the series.

All of which may lead nicely to a film, with the back rights secured.

Here I'd put my — on Mecca Television — especially considering the motto, "Art for Art's sake" the letters fitting the phrase "Angels Rippon's Thighs."

Anything else? That seems about it for now. I feel thought I'd bring you up to date. I know how you'd simply loathe to miss one teeny-weeny item.

Court told of man's winter in wood

A MAN slept rough in woods for seven winter months because a friend did not know housing regulations.

During a snowstorm, cold, frost and rain 43-year-old Thomas Glease huddled in Chopwell Woods, near Consett, trying to stay warm.

A couple of times a week he would go to his friend's one-bedroomed council house in Chopwell to have a wash and a meal before going back to his woodland hideaway.

His pal, 35-year-old bachelor Robert Glasper, did not let Glease stay at the house in Coquet Street, Chopwell, as a lodger because he thought if the council found out he, too, would be homeless.

But last night, a spokesman for Gateshead council's housing department, said: "We would not have objected as long as there was no overcrowding.

Friends

"We would have allowed it if the tenant was willing. If people want to share their home with friends or relatives they can."

The plight of the two men was outlined to Derwentside magistrates yesterday when they admitted a joint charge of burglary.

They had been caught by police inside an empty house at Chopwell as they collected copper piping, said Mr. Norman Sandfield, prosecuting.

Mr. Bryan Stephens, for Glease, of no fixed address, said he had nowhere to stay, so from November last year to May when he was caught he had been living in the woods.

The two men had struck up a friendship and Glasper let Glease wash at his house. He would have something to eat before going back to hide in the woods, said Mr Stephens.

He added that Glease planned to squat in the empty house in preference to living in the woods. But he had succumbed to temptation and began taking piping.

The case was adjourned for three weeks for reports.

Dying for a smoke?

A 26-year-old French salesman, Daniel Robrobacher, who blew up his flat with a careless "last" cigarette when trying to gas himself to death has been charged with arson in Metz, police said yesterday.

They said he sealed the doors and windows, and then turned on the gas. He then went out to buy cigarettes. On his return he forgot the gas, lit up, and the place exploded. He escaped serious injury.

Anglers on boat trip 'risked their lives'

Skipper's appeal will be a test case

THE chance taken by a party of anglers on a night-time fishing trip could have cost them their lives, it was alleged at Newcastle Crown Court yesterday.

For the skipper who took them out free of charge in his mid-sea trawler—The Chance—was said to have only three life-jackets on board and a pump that did not work.

Lawrence Prewitt (34), of The Grange, Shilbottle, was also accused of carrying 23 passengers without having the proper Department of Trade certificate to carry more than 12.

And yesterday his appeal against conviction by Alnwick magistrates on the three counts turned into a major test case.

The skipper found himself at the centre of a legal struggle the outcome of which could affect boat-owners throughout the country.

The Recorder, Mr. J. Harvey Robson, decided to reserve judgment on the appeal until mid-July.

If Blewitt wins, the Department of Trade have pledged to take the case to London to a higher court.

His barrister, Mr. Maurice Carr, told the court: "This case is not just a question of a Northumberland fisherman causing difficulties. It is one of some importance to the respondents."

He explained afterwards: "The decision will be one which must be of importance to ordinary people who have large enough boats to take more than 12 people.

"A decision in favour of Mr. Blewitt will mean that any chap with a boat not made up for passengers can take them out on the very odd occasion and he won't have to have the boat tested."

The court heard earlier that Blewitt had taken the party of anglers from the Newton Aycliffe Angling Club to fish over the wreck of the "Somali" in Beadnell Bay.

On his return, a member of H.M. Coastguard and a Customs and Excise officer were waiting to inspect his 60ft. boat.

Blewitt claimed they had not properly inspected the pump which he said was in working order and he had never been told he needed a certificate to carry over a dozen passengers.

After the case he commented: "I didn't expect anything like this. I thought it would all be over in a couple of hours."

One of the anglers, 31-year-old Mr. Raymond Sparks, of Ashfield Road, Morpeth, told the court that at least seven of the passengers had taken their own life-jackets.

MAGGIE as she looked before make-up (left) and (above), 42 years on . . .

It's a first and last curtain for Maggie

IT WILL all have come to nothing when dance-band singer Maggie Hesketh ages 42 years for the stage performance of her life.

When she plays an elderly woman in a Sunderland Polytechnic play—which requires one-and-a-half hours in front of a make-up mirror—it will be a kind of final exam at the end of her studies to become a drama teacher.

But whatever the decision of the external examiner seated anonymously in the audience, it won't make much difference to Maggie—she is destined to continue singing at Newcastle's Mayfair Ballroom.

For like the other two members of the cast under the examiner's eye, she has found that since the Government's controversial education cuts, finding a drama teaching vacancy seems an impossibility.

Maggie the 25-year-old singer with the Wilf Ray Band, explained she had been hoping to give up the dance-hall life altogether when she started her studies three years ago.

"I enjoy singing, but I wanted to do something that would give me more satisfaction, and also I have my eight-year-old daughter Melanie to think about," she said.

"But now I have almost completed my course I can't find a job, so the result is I am back to square one," added Maggie, of Harrogate Street, Sunderland. "I will carry on singing. I can make a good living from it, but I am obviously disappointed."

The situation is more or less the same with the other two cast members at the end of their course. Ali Jim Clark, aged 21, has managed is a job as an electrician, while 22-year-old Sharon McKay is having to fall back on her former training as a nursery nurse.

The production in which they are appearing is a Tennessee Williams drama, running from tomorrow to Friday at Bede Hall, Sunderland.

Punk rockers' £100 clash with the law

A CLASH with the law cost two leading punk rock musicians £100 after they admitted stealing from an exclusive North-East hotel.

But yesterday lead singer John Mellor, alias Joe Strummer and Nirk Headon the drummer in the punk rock band, The Clash, said their experiences in police cells would lead to a new song.

Their brush with the law started when eight pillows, a towel and a hotel key disappeared from the Commonwealth Holiday Inn at Seaton Burn on May 21. The band were staying there after their concert at Newcastle University.

Police investigations took detectives down to Hertfordshire where the group were interviewed.

Two group members were put on police bail but failed to appear at Morpeth on June 3 because they could not afford to miss part of their nationwide concert tour.

But when Strummer was arrested for criminal damage in London, Headon gave himself up and they returned to Morpeth under police escort.

Morpeth magistrates fined Strummer (24), of Forest Hill, London, £60 for taking the pillows and the towel worth £26.

Headon (22) who admitted theft of a hotel key and key ring, was fined £40.

Strummer told police the pillows were taken to make the group's return in a van to London more comfortable. Headon asked for four other offences involving hotel keys to be considered.

Plea for police

A double plea will be made today to get police back on the beat on Tyneside's problem housing estates.

The move comes just 24 hours after a group of tenants in Kidlingworth New Town threatened to form vigilante bands to combat teenage "aggro."

Plea No. 1 will come from Tyne Wear councillor Dan McCormack at a meeting of the Northumbria Police Authority at Gateshead Town Hall.

A few hours later, Coun. McCormack, agent for Wallsend's Labour M.P. Ted Garrett, will make a similar plea to the town's crime prevention panel.

Coun. McCormack said last night: "We should have a police presence that is seen to be one."

North Today

Youngsters' art to go on show

THE WORK of several hundred young artists in the region goes on show on Tyneside later this week — and if many of the pieces sell at £1 a time, their creators and the organisers will be more than pleased.

For the artists are children and a few adults who attend schools and training centres for the mentally handicapped.

The exhibition opens in Shipley Gallery, Gateshead, on Friday and will have about 300 works.

It has been organised by the Northern Regional Office of the National Society for the Mentally Handicapped.

All the money raised will go to the youngsters concerned.

Durham Folk Day

Durham's National Folk Day will be launched with dancing in the city Market Place on Saturday morning.

Musicians, singers and dancers from all over the country will take part in an open air concert at the DLI Museum and Arts Centre at Aykley Heads in the afternoon.

Bid to help Abbey appeal

Part of Hexham Abbey is to become an art gallery from next week to help raise funds for the £75,000 Abbey Appeal Fund.

Artists from all over the country will be exhibiting their works and 20 per cent. of the money from sales will go towards restoring the abbey's bells and belfry and crumbling outside walls.

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PUBLISHED JUNE 21st/JUNE 28th/JULY 5th IN THE JOURNAL

Quick, follow that jet . . .

By PIERS MERCHANT
Municipal Correspondent

POLICE are searching for a mystery low-flying plane which hit and damaged one of their radio masts in Northumberland.

The top of the 100ft. aerial was snapped off and the legs bent and badly twisted about 20ft. up, making it dangerous. It will cost the Northumbria Police Authority more than £1,000 to put right.

The mast is on Ottercops Moss, near Otterburn, and yesterday both the police and Tyne Wear officials said a military plane might have been responsible.

A police spokesman added "There certainly are a number of military planes flying over that area—some of them come very low—and very fast.

"But we have been unable to find who is responsible. We have made full inquiries to the Ministry of Defence and also to all local civil air traffic controls.

"There is no record of any plane, military or civil, in that area at the time the damage was done. We have no firm proof that a plane was responsible. But we can find no other explanation."

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said: "We know nothing about this. We have had no complaints of inquiries and have made no investigations."

In a report for tomorrow's police authority meeting Tyne Wear's engineering director, Mr. Peter Morris, says: "Although inquiries are proceeding to identify the aircraft and present the owner with an account, the police doubt whether a positive identification can be made."

Church tuned in

A church has come to the aid of the police who have been plagued by poor radio reception in a North new town.

It has allowed Northumbria Police to fit a UHF aerial inside a nine-foot tall Cross perched on top of the church tower.

The work has been carried out in time for the Queen's visit to Cramlington next month.

"Communications in this area were rather poor. This new aerial should mean a marked improvement," explained a police spokesman.

Fitting the aerial on St Nicholas's Church, in Cramlington Village meant replacing the existing Cross.

The £600 contract was awarded to a local firm, Ivanhoe Forge of Seaton Delaval.

"It meant taking down the Cross which must have been as old as the church itself, making a cast of it and from this making a new one," said Mr. Ivan Turner, the company's managing director.

"Then we had to bore a hole down the centre of the new Cross for the aerial and replace the whole lot, including the original weather vane."

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