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To reach this motel I'm writing from, you have to be able to get into San Antonio. To get into San Antonio, you have to fend off traffic that would have made the defenders of the Alamo special-order a white flag.

Volkswagens are so thick you keep expecting to see their hive. Traffic officers here should be carrying riot guns instead of whistles. I left an exit awhile Monte Noelke ago so fendershy that a parking attendant had to blindfold me to lead me through his lot.

For the time being, just staying here is the biggest problem. The room clerk says that the motel is on neutral air.

In case you are like I was and don't know what neutral air is, I'd better explain. Neutral air is the same kind of air that whips under your jacket to meet the air that comes down your collar in the winter-time. Motel hands are the only people I've ever run across that didn't call it cold air. But herders aren't as creative as these key-keepers are. I suppose neutral air is just as handy a phrase as any when your ear lobes are freezing below the zero mark.

The last time I called the desk, the room clerk suggested that I go outside and build a campfire.

He wouldn't have dared tell a bigshot Dallas shoe salesman to go outside and build a campfire. City folks take that attitude toward us outlanders. Several times when I've been in town, I've wished for a sign to hang around my neck saying, "I'm from Mertzon, Texas; stay off my corns."

As I told this updated boardinghouse keeper, I'm 167 years ahead on standing around campfires. Just because a man doesn't want to live in the misery of a metropolitan area doesn't mean he wants to copy the Eskimos. If this mousehead clerk is going to run a luxury motel, he should provide a heater for the afternoon trade. Oldtime Fort Worth rooming houses weren't this stingy.

I've had trouble ever since checking in. After this clerk had stamped my credit card, he had the gall to ask for my driver's license.

I wasn't about to go for that idea. He could see my pickup sitting right in his driveway. I wasn't going to drive off with his. motel when I had transportation parked outside. Crooks have fallen to skyjacking and highjacking anything that'll fly or roll, but nobody is going to steal a motel, especially one that is on neutral air. What I'd been looking for was gasoline soaked rags.

He sure did get huffy, but it didn't change my policy at all. When the law says that you have to show a room clerk your driver's license, then I'll start wearing mine stuck in my

hatband. Until then, the motel association is just going to have to assume that I'm licensed to drive a motor vehicle.

Citizens' rights have already disintegrated to the point that everybody who can find a billed cap that fits thinks he has the license to order us around. Cab starters and porters act like they founded the air terminals; volunteer corpsmen take over the rodeo grounds as if Booger Red never would have been able to ride his first bronc without their permission.

Putting on a bright jacket and standing behind a motel desk does not ordain a man to demand your driver's license. They can take that sort of tinplated idea and stick it with their highpriced rates as far as I'm concerned. People who want to see a driver's license ought to sign up with the police force.

The room temperature is close to the 40 degree mark. I've got the hot water running to warm the bathroom. The best thing to do is to hope that neutral water doesn't start running down the lines. It sure doesn't take much to make you homesick in this age of luxury.