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We reserve the right to edit letters. Please keep them short and to the point. We do not print anonymous letters, but will withhold addresses in certain circumstances.

Opinions EXTRA

Rising cost of petrol

SIR - Ever since we changed from buying petrol in gallons to litres, I still do the conversion and buy by the gallon.

In 1994 a gallon of petrol cost me £2.55.

By April 1997, petrol cost me £2.88 - a rise of 33p in three years under Prime Minister Major.

Now, in September 2000, I pay £4.09 a gallon - a rise in three years four months under Prime Minister Blair of £1.21.

New (improved?) Labour tell us it is the 'Tories' fault that Chancellor Brown used 'Tory spending plans! Would you trust a politician with a second-hand banana? You would! Then vote for him!

David Fyson, Dunstable Road, Luton.

Translink

SIR - Throughout the world, many towns and cities are investigating the best means of urban mass transportation in order to alleviate road congestion.

Various methods such as light rail, heavy commuter rail, monorails, trolleybuses, centre rail guided buses and side-guided buses are all considered.

In the UK, the Manchester Metrolink, Sheffield Supertram, Croydon Tramlink and Birmingham Metro have all succeeded in getting many thousands of car drivers onto their light rail lines, the modern equivalent of the old-fashioned tramcar.

In France, where many tramways closed in the 1950s and '60s, there are now 11 new light rail lines, including two in Paris, famous for its Metro.

CCTV, on the other hand, scans public places, where what anyone does is in view anyway, as it always was long before cameras were invented. Under the rule of law, civil liberties have to be subject to a compromise to prevent one person's individual freedom from damaging another's.

Surely common sense should tell anybody who wishes to do anything lawful, without being seen, to do it somewhere private, such as at home or in the traditional back row of the cinema (discussed in 'Feed-back' on the same date), where we nonagenarians camouflaged back in the 1920s, and where CCTV must never scan!

Iolo Watkin, Douglas Crescent, Houghton Regis.

Police greed

SIR - Police must know what they will see in the course of their duties. The truth is they are riddled with greed.

E Field, Staveley Road, Luton.

Modern morals

SIR - Once again I witnessed a parent eating a sweet from a picnic mixer counter while the child grinned up into her face and said: "Did you nick that, mum?"

Well, the answer is yes, she did. I can imagine such people saying, well, it is only a sweet, no harm, but they are stealing. I would definitely prosecute such people.

Stealing is stealing, no matter how small the item.

E Faith, Dunstable Road, Luton.

Buses

SIR - I read Iolo Watkin's letter

Hospital. I was admitted to hospital unexpectedly recently. All the staff were excellent.

Joan Richards, Wolston Close, Luton.

Travellers' marriages

SIR - With reference to your piece on travellers, "where marriage is for life", I was pleasantly surprised by their reported attitudes to marriage. There is much criticism of travellers, but this aspect of their life-style has much to recommend it. It may seem 40 years out of date to some, but I'd prefer to be old fashioned in this respect. It is also the way God ordained.

Mrs E Creason, Ashcroft Road, Luton.

Playscheme

SIR - My husband and I are grandparents who are responsible for the upbringing of our 11-year-old grandson. I would like to express sincere gratitude to the Mitalae Youth Association, who organised four weeks of fun and games for the children.

Mrs Barbara Dimech, Warwick Road, West, Luton.

Crime in Sundon Park

SIR - It is bitterly disappointing to hear accusations made against the police for not responding to crime.

Unfortunately in recent weeks in Sundon Park this appears to be true. Residents have complained about fires at the back of garages, robbery from shops, robbery from taxi drivers, threatening behaviour and assaults.

Indeed, police admitted earlier



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