

PACKARD ELECTRIC

Cablegram

Volume 43, Number 5

May, 1981

Thompson speaks on competition

Packard honors 25-year employees

Packard Electric honored its 25-year employees May 16 at the W. D. Packard Music Hall in Warren during the annual 25 Year Service Awards Banquet which also featured an address by W. Blair Thompson, Packard Electric general manager.

The "Class of 1955," the year the employees began their careers at Packard, had 231 people eligible to receive awards. A total of 431 recipients, spouses and Packard officials attended, according to Jackie Tolen of Public Relations who coordinated arrangements for the event.

Entertainment was provided by Youngstown State University's Dana Chorale singing show tunes from the Broadway stage. Also on the program were Mary Jane Taylor, manager of Public Relations, who spoke on the

history of Packard Electric, and Richard L. Huber, director of Personnel and Public Relations, who reminisced about the way things were in 1955, "when mambo lessons were the rage, 65 cents got you into the Robins Theatre where you could see Judy Garland in 'A Star is Born' and money savers were rewarded with two percent interest on savings accounts at local banks."

In his remarks, Thompson spoke about the difficult times the auto industry and Packard Electric are undergoing at present.

"The American automobile industry is on the brink of a major shakeout and no one can predict what we might see on the other side. . . General Motors, which lost \$763 million last year, has been termed the healthiest company in

the American automobile industry. It's kind of scary to think that you can lose three-quarters-of-a-billion dollars and still be termed 'healthy,'" Thompson said. He emphasized that the loss did not mean simply that GM had made less profit. "To put it in easy terms, our checkbook in 1980 was overdrawn by more than three-quarters-of-a-billion dollars, and if it weren't for tax credits, we would have reported losses of \$1.2 billion. When you consider that General Motors has committed to spending \$40 billion through 1985, losses like that are frightening. But the decision to go forward and invest the \$40 billion is the type of commitment we all expect from General Motors management." He noted that the investment would play the major part in GM's recovery and expressed no

doubt that GM would recover.

"Our road back to success will not be easy. We are trying to modernize our plants and equipment, but the market for our products is extremely soft and is not generating the profits that we need to invest in this new technology. It almost seems like an impossible situation on the surface, but I'm sure that none of you expects us to throw up our hands and give up," the general manager said.

"Our enemy is not the Japanese, but ourselves. The Japanese did see where we were weak; they did act on our weakness, but they should not be considered to be our problem. Our problem is our human tendency to assume that we can continue to do things tomorrow the same way that we do them today. All the Japanese have done is to show us the fallacy of that assumption.

"Those of you who have worked on the new J-Car are aware of the difference in this program, and these efforts to change and improve are just beginning to balloon.

"Packard Electric has always had a reputation for quality. Along with that, we have had a reputation for being more expensive than other companies in our same business. Traditionally, our customers were willing to pay a premium because we produced a better quality part. But if we continue to assume our customers will continue to pay our present prices, no matter how high, we may not be around for that 100th anniversary in 1990. We may instead be a footnote in Mary Jane's history book. Make no mistake, Packard Electric's success in the past makes no impression on the future. The future is an impartial judge."

Thompson said the sophistication of
(Continued on page 2)



CENTER STAGE — The "Class of '55" receives 25-year service awards from General Manager Blair Thompson during banquet at Packard Music Hall.

Wire Association tours Clinton

The Wire Association International held its Nonferrous and Electrical Division meeting in Jackson, Miss., April 27 through 29. One highlight of the event was a tour of Packard Electric's wire and cable making facilities in Plant 22.

Donald Strub, Packard senior engineer in Clinton, served as general chairman of the spring meeting, and with a number of other Clinton and Warren employees, played a role in assuring the success of the meeting.

Some 400 representatives of wire and cable manufacturers from around the world, were based at the Downtown Holiday Inn where Plant 22 Manager James Crouse delivered the welcoming remarks and provided a brief history of

Packard's manufacturing operations from the formation of the Packard Electric Company in 1890 through the development of the Mississippi Operations.

Gerald Dechant, a Warren-based production engineer, presented a technical paper on April 28 on the topic "The Application of a Programmable Controller to a CV Line." Other Packard employees on the program committee for the wire show included Robert Franks, vice-chairman; David Niskala, registration and publicity; and George Gibbons, hotel and hospitality.

On April 29, nearly 300 of those attending the wire show toured Plant 22 and viewed displays of Packard wiring systems and concepts.



PACKARD'S Don Strub and Dick Acker assist members of the Wire Association International and municipal officials in opening the association's Nonferrous and Electrical Division meeting in Jackson, Mississippi.

News- -briefs

Competition fighters

Chevrolet, Pontiac and Cadillac announced prices for their 1982 J-cars, the Cavalier, J2000 and Cimarron, which went on sale May 21. The base price on the Cavalier coupe is \$6,966, while the top-of-the-line "CL" four-door station wagon lists for \$8452. J2000 prices range from \$6,999 for the coupe to \$7,654 for the "SE" two-door hatchback. Suggested retail price for Cadillac's Cimarron is \$12,131. Included in the cars' prices, as standard equipment, are many of the items most often ordered by customers.

Absenteeism costs \$1 billion plus

In North America alone, absenteeism cost General Motors more than \$1 billion last year, and that's a conservative figure, according to former GM Chairman Thomas A. Murphy. Speaking to the Niagara Falls (NY) County Medical Society, Murphy said, "In 1979, GM employees were absent an average of 18 days for illness or injury, in addition to vacation days and holidays. 'Fifteen years ago, only 11 days were lost per employee because of illness or injury, which means absenteeism has jumped nearly 65 percent over this 15-year period.'"

Economy improves

The United States economy, as measured by the Gross National Product, grew at an 8.4 percent annual rate in the first quarter of this year. The commerce department, in reporting the quarter's GNP — the country's total output of goods and services — noted the economy registered the strongest quarterly growth since the spring of 1978, a period of economic expansion.

Import sales up

Imports took 29 percent of U.S. car sales last month, with Japanese car shipments up nearly 7 percent from a year ago. Import dealers last month delivered 217,518 cars, the second-highest for April in history, according to **Ward's Auto World**. Japanese imports were said to be up because the Japanese government had not yet decided on a formula to allocate car shipments.

Packard Electric Cablegram

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Results in reduced solder use

Suggestion earns millwright \$10,000

A Plant 44, Austintown millwright is the latest winner of the maximum \$10,000 suggestion award.

Floyd Stickel, of Dept. 4451, earned the award for an idea to modify solder pots in all engine control-producing branch plants. The idea resulted in reduced solder use and less downtime, with the side benefit of reduced electrical consumption.

Stickel accepted the award from General Manager Blair Thompson during a special award ceremony in which all the plant's employees participated.

Stickel said, "a major portion of the pot did not change, but what I was able to do was increase the flow of the solder. Instead of bringing the solder down to the wire, I brought it up to the wire."

He explained that before the modification, the average solder pot used approximately eight bars of solder per day and needed to be shut down for cleaning nearly every 15 minutes, due to oxidation of the solder. He noted that with the modification, a solder pot might use about 1½ bars of solder per day.

In addition, he said the idea results in less downtime because the new pot is not a closed loop and does not clog up.

A side benefit to Stickel's solder pot modifications is that it results in reduced electrical consumption.

"Before," Stickel said, "the solder had to be heated to about 700 degrees Fahrenheit, because of heat loss." He



MAXIMUM AWARD winner Floyd Stickel of Dept. 4451, explains his solder pot modifications to General Manager Blair Thompson.

pointed out "with the column of solder and less exposure to air and heat loss, the solder needs to be heated to only 500 degrees Fahrenheit."

"Solder melts at somewhere around 300 degrees," he noted. "The higher the temperature, the more separation you get. The closer you can keep the solder to its melting point, the less separation you get," he said. He also mentioned that the lower temperature results in a better solder job than before.

Stickel said he began working on the suggestion about 1½ years ago and built all the prototypes for the new

program himself. He noted that there are currently 80 such solder pots in use in Austintown, and that all engine control branch plants are using the idea.

"They are forced to. The other won't do the job," he said. "I'm sure if they are running engine controls, they're using it."

Stickel said he wasn't surprised that he won the award. "I knew it was going because they installed the pots. It is much simpler and much cheaper to make the new pots than the old ones," he said.

"I wasn't that much surprised because I had a pretty good idea. It was worth it."

Smith cautions of 'cost handicap'

Chairman of General Motors Roger B. Smith warned that General Motors cannot continue to pay \$8-an-hour more than Japanese automakers without losing more jobs to them.

"Together with the pay for time not worked in the U.S., this is too great a differential to overcome even with our new plants and new products," Smith

told GM's 73rd Annual Meeting of Stockholders. "All our great technology and even the magic of robots cannot make up this difference."

Smith said GM is moving aggressively to introduce new products, cut costs, improve both quality and productivity with a \$40 billion capital investment

program, and to work with its unions to reduce absenteeism.

"But that is not enough. We must reduce this huge labor cost handicap we have in America if we are to avoid losing more jobs to the Japanese. Some basic changes in our wage structure must occur," he emphasized.

General manager offers thoughts on productivity, competition, future

(Continued from page 1)
the automotive wiring industry is growing and that the quality of Packard's competitors' products is also improving. "We are finding that they can sell comparable products well below our cost. On a few occasions, we have had the unpleasant experience of quoting prices on new business and have found that our competitors have quoted prices that were one-half of the Packard Electric price," he related.

The general manager said the division has to have a double-edged plan for the future which includes continued innovation in the design and manufacturing of Packard products. The second part of the plan is to do the innovation and manufacturing at less cost than it is done today.

"It requires the commitment of every employee to look at the job that he or she is doing and ask, 'can I be doing this better? Can the job be done in a simpler manner? Can the job be done for less cost?'"

The changes that have come about in Packard Electric's recent past are one portion of preparing for the future as some operations are shifted to high-technology manufacturing.

"What was formerly a plant on Dana Street in Warren, Ohio that made wires, is now a major world producer of automotive electrical systems. Let me emphasize the part about being a world producer. We are responsible for 12 plants in the local area, four in Mississippi and two GM subsidiaries in Mexico. In a couple of weeks, we will have operating responsibility in Europe as the acquisition of Reinshagen in Germany will be complete. That package also includes facilities in Spain and Portugal. Each move we have



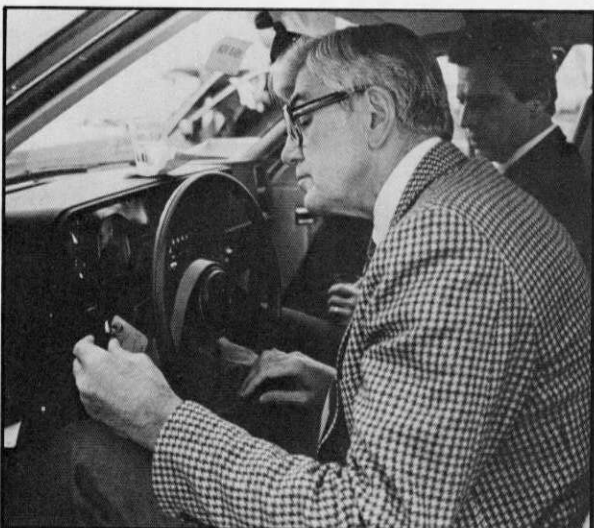
Thompson

made in our growth pattern has made us a stronger force in our industry. We are not only able to be more competitive in the marketplace, but we can be competitive within our own division. We can place portions of our business where our specific products can be produced most effectively.

"Every wiring harness, no matter where it is produced, needs the components that we build here. Every dollar that we take out of our cost without sacrificing quality makes our products more attractive to the world's automobile manufacturers and enables us to invest in better tools and equipment to work with.

"You, the people in this room, who have been with us for a quarter-century, have seen one era pass and are experiencing the beginning of another. We finally made it to the big leagues. You are part of an operation that extends to six countries on two continents, and it's not over yet. You can take pride in what Packard Electric has been in the past. And let me assure you, you will be able to take even more pride in being a part of what will become our company in the future," the general manager concluded.

Hey look me over . . .



Packard employees and their families, and local dignitaries had the opportunity to take a close look at the new Chevrolet and Pontiac J-cars during a special preview held May 18, 19 and 20. (Above) Robert C. Shape, president, Warren Steel Specialties Corporation, scrutinizes the J-2000's finer points while Tom Tomko, manager Plts. 3, 8, 43, looks on.

New I.D. labels offer traceability

A new terminal identification program is being piloted in Plant 11 according to Andy Razzano, supervisor, Industrial Engineering.

The program, being tested in Depts. 1102, 1139 and 1146, makes use of gummed labels which remain on the terminal reels until the terminals are used by Packard or the customer, Razzano said. He noted that the new labels include individual serial numbers in addition to information identifying the die, press and department, and the production date.

Advantages of the new I.D. labels to Packard and the customer are improved traceability of defective

terminals, positive identification of terminals throughout their use and ease of removal after the terminals are used, Razzano noted.

Razzano emphasized that the program will help Packard "zero in on quality" by lessening reaction time to problems. He noted that this was not possible previously.

Gary Dakolios, an industrial engineer involved in the program, echoed Razzano and said, "The labels will help Packard avoid the cost of using the wrong terminals."

Jim Albrecht, superintendent, Plant 11, noted "If successful, the program

will have positive effects in our lead prep and cutting areas" where, under the old program, there was the potential for misidentification of terminals. "By the use of this new system, we hope we can eliminate the lack of material I.D. in lead prep and cutting areas," he said.

He said the trial run involves 20,000 reels of terminals in the three departments, and will last about a month. He explained that the three departments were chosen because the products they produce see widespread use throughout Packard's operations.

Tom Cunningham, general foreman, Quality Control, cited traceability and

serialization as two of the major advantages of the program.

He said the serial number on each tag will aid in locating reels in the terminal store and provide information about what customer received what stock. "As we become worldwide in scope the serialized I.D. program in conjunction with a proposed computer system will enable us to alert our customers of potential problem parts."

In addition, he said the serialized labels will help distinguish old stock from new stock.

Razzano noted that if successful the program will be implemented in Mississippi in the fall.

Five-speed T-body has guts

by Michael Hissam

Diesel engines now power the smallest of General Motors subcompact cars—the Chevette.

Although the diesel-powered Chevettes are being sold this model year primarily on the east coast and portions of the west coast, Packard obtained one of these vehicles for its engineering fleet.

Bill Clupper, supervisor, Product Engineering Vehicle Testing Group, said this is the first instance of GM using a smaller diesel engine to power an automobile available for public sale. "This is the first time we have built a small car specifically for high-mileage diesel fuel driving."

"We are looking at mileage in the 50 plus per gallon range in highway driving and about 40 or so per gallon in the city," he said.

Clupper added that "pickup" for the diesel Chevette is "very adequate for the small car. It is very favorable compared to other small cars I have driven. The engine for this vehicle is a 1.8 liter L4 diesel."

A five-speed standard transmission is the recommended transmission for the vehicle, he said. "The fifth-speed is an overdrive. The top gear is a highway cruising gear for the 50-55 mph range. That gear keeps the engine RPMs down at the speed. If one drives at a speed lower than 40 mph in the highest gear, the engine will 'tell' the driver very quickly to drop down into a lower gear."

Of engine noise, Clupper noted, "Once you're moving, it's just as quiet as a gasoline engine car. From the inside, at idle, the driver will find the

turn signal making far more noise than what is heard from the engine!"

Clupper stated that addition of the car to the Packard engineering fleet has sparked much interest around the Warren Operations, especially among engineers. "Many people have stopped by the Engineering Building to take a look at the car. I suspect a lot of people would buy this car if they could."

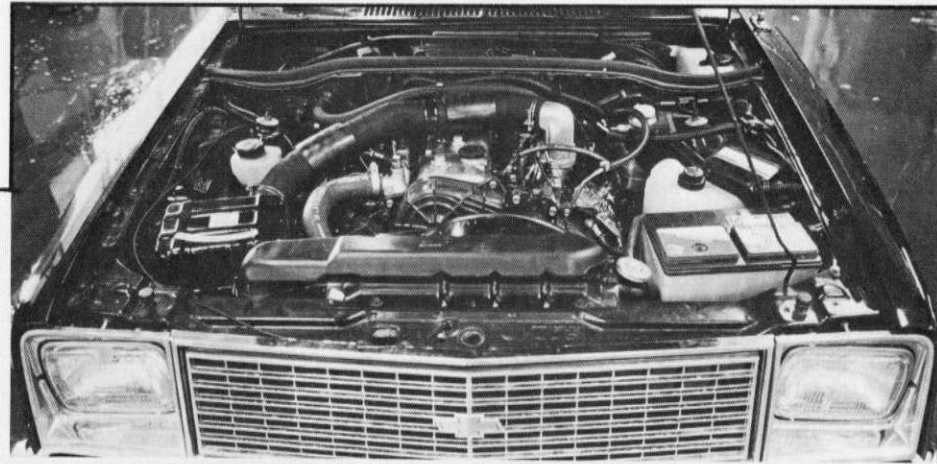
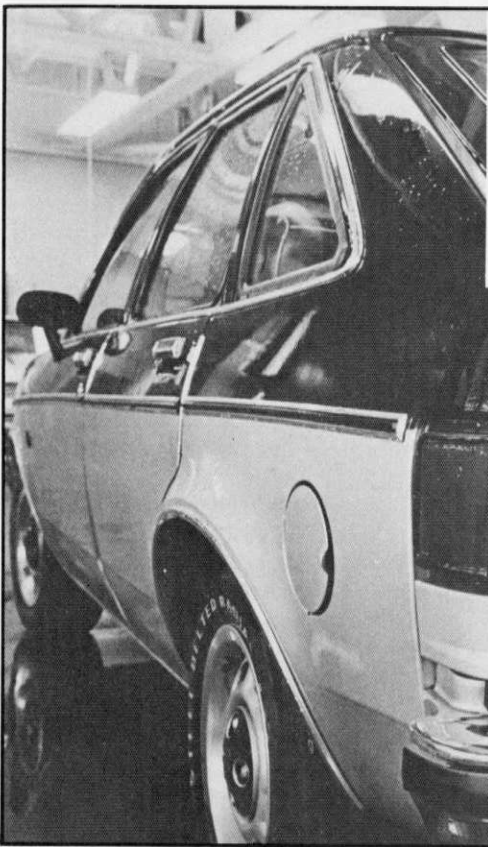
Test ride

This reporter accompanied Clupper

for a test ride along the Route 5 and 82 bypass from the Larchmont interchange to the "hill" in Howland and back.

In fifth-gear on the hill in Howland, the car did not lose speed, but

maintained 55 mph with no apparent balking by the engine. An optional sport suspension package and oversize steel-belted radial tires seemed to add a sense of "solidness" to the vehicle. No doubt about it, the car had "guts."



SPORTY new diesel Chevette shows its colors. (inset) A topside view of the 1.8 liter diesel engine that powers the car.

25-year honor roll

Alexander, Robert L.	Guscar, Stephania P.	Pillow, Nellie M.
Allen, Ernestine C.	Hall, Caroline E.	Podralski, Florence M.
Ambrosy, Frances M.	Harris, Robert K.	Prindle, Anna C.
Ansell, Helen H.	Harris, Twila W.	Quiggle, Emery L.
Arnold, Raymond R.	Harvey, Nita F.	Reebel, John M.
Aston, Evelyn G.	Heatherly, William D.	Reed, Arnell W.
Babcock, David G.	Hegarty, Roberta	Reed, Claudine T.
Bailes, Betty L.	Hidasy, Frances	Reilly, Mary B.
Bettura, Stella G.	Hineman, George E.	Repa, John T.
Bilovesky, Steven J. Jr.	Hohenberger, Gloria I.	Retort, Victoria G.
Boyce, Mildred M.	Holbrook, Lillian L.	Rhinehart, Frederick W.
Brant, Anna J.	Hope, Clarence A.	Richburg, Florence L.
Brant, Donna L.	Hosterman, Louise B.	Richetto, Henry
Brown, Jacqueline M.	Jenkins, Maxine B.	Richman, Jack M.
Brown, Ruth C.	Johnson, Joann	Ritenour, Paul W.
Brown, Wilbert W.	Jones, Katherine L.	Rocci, Helen B.
Brozman, Albert J.	Joseph, Frank E.	Rongone, Bruna L.
Burr, Homer H.	Joseph, Valerie K.	Rose, Kathleen
Butch, Kathryn M.	Kelly, Glenna R.	Rowe, Marie P.
Calabria, Josephine S.	Kistler, Thomas H.	Rowland, Charles E.
Callahan, Charles A.	Knox, Donald D.	Rufener, Theresa Q.
Caroselli, Frank J. Jr.	Kochera, Steve	Ruth, Edward H.
Carver, Ruth J.	Kondzich, John	Sabo, Elmer T.
Casagrande, Emilio R.	Koziel, Edward L.	Sankey, Thomas A.
Cebriak, Kathryn R.	Krok, Doris G.	Scanlon, Helen G.
Chaky, Irene	Kromer, Tony	Sears, Bernard A.
Chalker, William R.	Laguardia, Sam R.	Seeman, William L.
Chandler, Helen J.	Lane, Emory R.	Senich, Ann B.
Chick, Mary O.	Lang, Gloria H.	Shannon, Norman E.
Chovan, Joseph A.	Larsen, Carl O.	Singelis, Betty F.
Clarich, Dolores F.	Larson, Clyde E.	Singletary, Peggy M.
Cline, James R.	Lauth, Charles F.	Siracki, Sandra H.
Cobb, Millard N.	Lauth, Harold E.	Skaggs, Delmer R.
Collins, Carl E. Jr.	Laycock, Helen W.	Spirko, Joe
Comer, James W.	Leonhard, Richard M.	Stancher, Norman L.
Corbin, Marjorie L.	Lepola, Aatos H.	Steele, Nyla D.
Cowger, Frances S.	MacLaren, James C.	Stevenson, Eunice P.
Crawford, Edward W.	Malys, Rudolph	Stiles, Geneva M.
Crawford, Walter C.	Mancinelli, Giovina C.	Stuler, Virginia H.
Criss, Thelma P.	Mancini, Jean S.	Taillon, Ann O.
Croston, Rose G.	Maroseceovich, Anton L.	Tarr, Roseline Z.
Cwynar, Bernice	Martin, Eunice C.	Thiry, Donald E.
Cybak, Johanna F.	Martindale, Elaine B.	Thompson, Dwight G.
Dalrymple, Carl J.	Martino, Genevieve M.	Thompson, Richard A.
Davis, Patricia A.	Masciangelo, Alfred P.	Thompson, Ralph S.
Demski, Edna S.	Mathews, Virginia M.	Timko, Robert C.
Derr, Mary G.	McCreary, Verenelda C.	Tomerlin, John J.
Dietelbach, Barbara B.	Melago, Marion C.	Urda, Thomas A.
Digman, Keith L.	Mendenhall, Richard	Valarik, Ann B.
Dillon, Daniel	Mickey, Magdalene Y.	Vance, Ralph E.
Dillon, Mary L.	Miller, Beverly M.	Van Slyke, Shirley H.
Dionisio, Concetta	Milligan, Jean B.	Varga, Margaret D.
Dougherty, Onard F.	Mittal, Paul M.	Vianello, Albert J.
Doyle, Eleanore G.	Mitulinsky, Michael J.	Victor, Betty J.
Eakins, Alice T.	Mizer, Dale F.	Voelker, Rosemary V.
Eckstrom, Harry B.	Mizicko, Michael R.	Walker, Richard T.
Ellis, Lena R.	Molek, Alma D.	Wasiuta, Anna P.
Engstrom, Euna B.	Molnar, Isabel B.	Weeks, Sannie M.
Fess, Betty W.	Montellese, Vido	Westmoreland, Spellmyra
Flynn, Nancy N.	Moore, Cecelia O.	Westover, Robert B.
Franklin, Mary Y.	Morgan, David L.	Whitehouse, Lula N.
Frano, Catherine S.	Morgan, Martha T.	Whiteside, Grace P.
Furnish, Helen D.	Mozingo, Hobart A.	Williams, Bernard J.
Garvin, Susan J.	Nadzan, Bridget B.	Williams, Dorothy J.
Genetta, Rita R.	Nash, George A.	Williams, Jack
Gertz, Walter	Nezdoba, Esther S.	Williams, Verna W.
Gentile, Eugene P.	Nicholas, Ruth B.	Wingard, Mary L.
Gillam, Floyd J.	Nochta, Jack E.	Winkle, Nellie C.
Gnat, Margaret S.	Norman, Rose M.	Workman, James W.
Gober, Victor A.	Odvar, Mildred M.	Yannucci, Nicholas J.
Gorby, Rosa C.	O'Neal, Alfred L.	Yannucci, Nina M.
Gorgel, Barbara N.	Pappas, Jean P.	York, Ann G.
Gray, Ann O.	Pavalko, Rose M.	Young, William V.
Green, Kathleen B.	Perich, Ann N.	Young, Thelma D.
Grooms, Judith K.	Perry, Charles E.	Zadrozny, Chester
Grzeszczak, Gertrude E.	Phelps, Robert L.	Zervas, Christ J.
Gunther, Dora E.	Pike, Janet M.	Zumerling, Grace B.

Packard probe

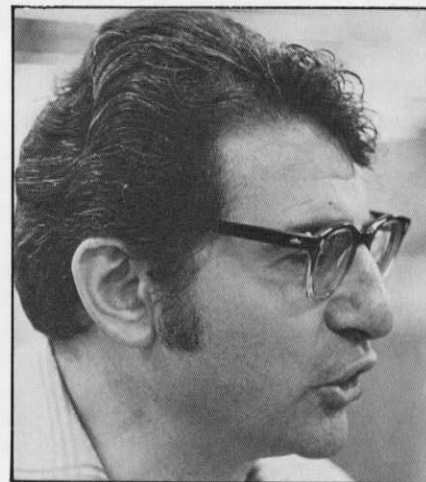
QUESTION: To what extent do you feel the J-cars will be successful in competing with imports in the marketplace?

Anna Marie Gearheart
Dept. 1413

"I feel it will be successful against the imports, because it's about time General Motors made something comparable to the foreign cars. And, I think we'll have a good chance of selling them . . . I think we'll have a good chance to make them successful."



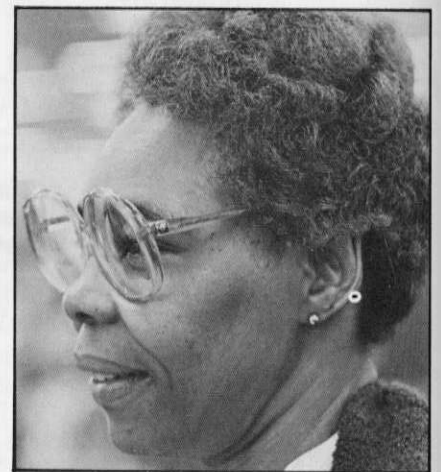
Gearheart



Mancuso

Ann Gray
Dept. 1174

"I really think they will. The quality looks good and so does the performance of the car from what I've seen."



Gray



Linclon

Ron Whitmore
Dept. 1474

"I think the J-car has got the foreign imports beat all hollow, and I've gone over that car completely. To the best of my knowledge, I've never seen any better workmanship body-wise. And we all know that Packard quality wiring doesn't need any double inspection . . . it gets plenty as it is."



Whitmore