

OPINION

Editorial Opinion

Erie's Economic Savior?

On January 8, General Motors announced their plans to create Saturn, a new, small-car subsidiary that would enable the automaker to remain competitive with foreign rivalry in the car manufacturing business. Since then, hundreds of cities and municipalities have proposed to GM that the soon to be constructed Saturn plant localize in their areas.

The City of Erie was not one to be left behind. When news broke that GM would soon be searching for a home for the plant, the Erie Area Saturn Task Force was created. With information gathered by the Economic Research Institute of Erie (ERIE), the task force was able to campaign to GM and state officials.

The results of the ERIE research reveal something--not only does Erie want the plant, but it needs some heavy industry to lift it out of its post-recession stagnancy.

The study showed that employment in the machinery, metals, rubber, and plastics industries is lagging. These industries, all essential to the production of automobiles, have dropped by an average of 17.8 percent in the past five years. 23.4 percent of all workers in Erie County are involved in these industries, while the national average is just 9.4 percent.

Geographically, Erie is perfect for the plant site. Erie is located in the center of an area that stretches from Indiana to Boston, where the majority of automotive suppliers are located. It is at the intersection of two heavily-traveled interstate highways. It borders one of the Great Lakes. It has two significant railroad networks, one running north-south, and the other east-west. These are the kinds of things that GM is looking for. What more could they need to efficiently distribute their product?

The Erie area is a strong candidate for the Saturn plant. Many other cities are developing extremely lenient tax breaks in what may be fruitless efforts to bring GM to their hometowns. Erie, too, is developing tax incentives for the car manufacturer. But the built-in economic factors that Erie already owns are by far more important to GM.

Rod Luery
Collegian Editor

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Commentary

Is Vigilantism Acceptable in Our Society?

by Kurt E. Freeman

On December 22, 1984, *Bernard H. Goetz* was accosted by four young men on a New York city subway. Believing that they meant him harm, Goetz pulled out a .38-calibre pistol and emptied it into their bodies. Two of the men were shot in the back as they fled on

sense? Does this mean that our only alternative is to take the law into our own hands? Let us hope not.

Frankly, the notion of a gun-toting citizenry is unsettling, to say the least. The mark of a civilized society is the ability to solve problems on a symbolic level, rather than on

a real level. Symbolic problem-solving involves such things as legislation, negotiation and so forth; whereas, solving problems on a real encompasses activities like war and vigilantism.

Granted, Goetz's actions dealt immediately with the problems at hand; but they failed to provide any long term solutions. It is a distinct possibility that criminals, when faced with the prospect of an armed populous, will begin to shoot first rather than take the chance of being shot themselves. Rather than investing their money in handguns, perhaps people should concentrate their efforts in alleviating the social conditions which are conducive to criminal behavior.



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foot. Dubbed the "subway vigilante," Goetz went before a Manhattan grand jury and was indicted for carrying a weapon and possession of two unregistered guns. However, this same grand jury declined to prosecute Goetz on four counts of attempted murder because, according to Manhattan D.A. *Robert Morgenthau* "This grand jury decided that he used reasonable force when he had reason to believe that he was going to be robbed."

Reports by the news media seem to indicate that many Americans support this 'shoot'em up at the O.K. Corral' approach to dealing with urban crime. Why? People are frightened by rising incidences of violent crime and the alleged lack of police protection. Yet there seems to be a double standard; people complain that there is a lack of police support, but they do not want to pay for it. Does this make

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