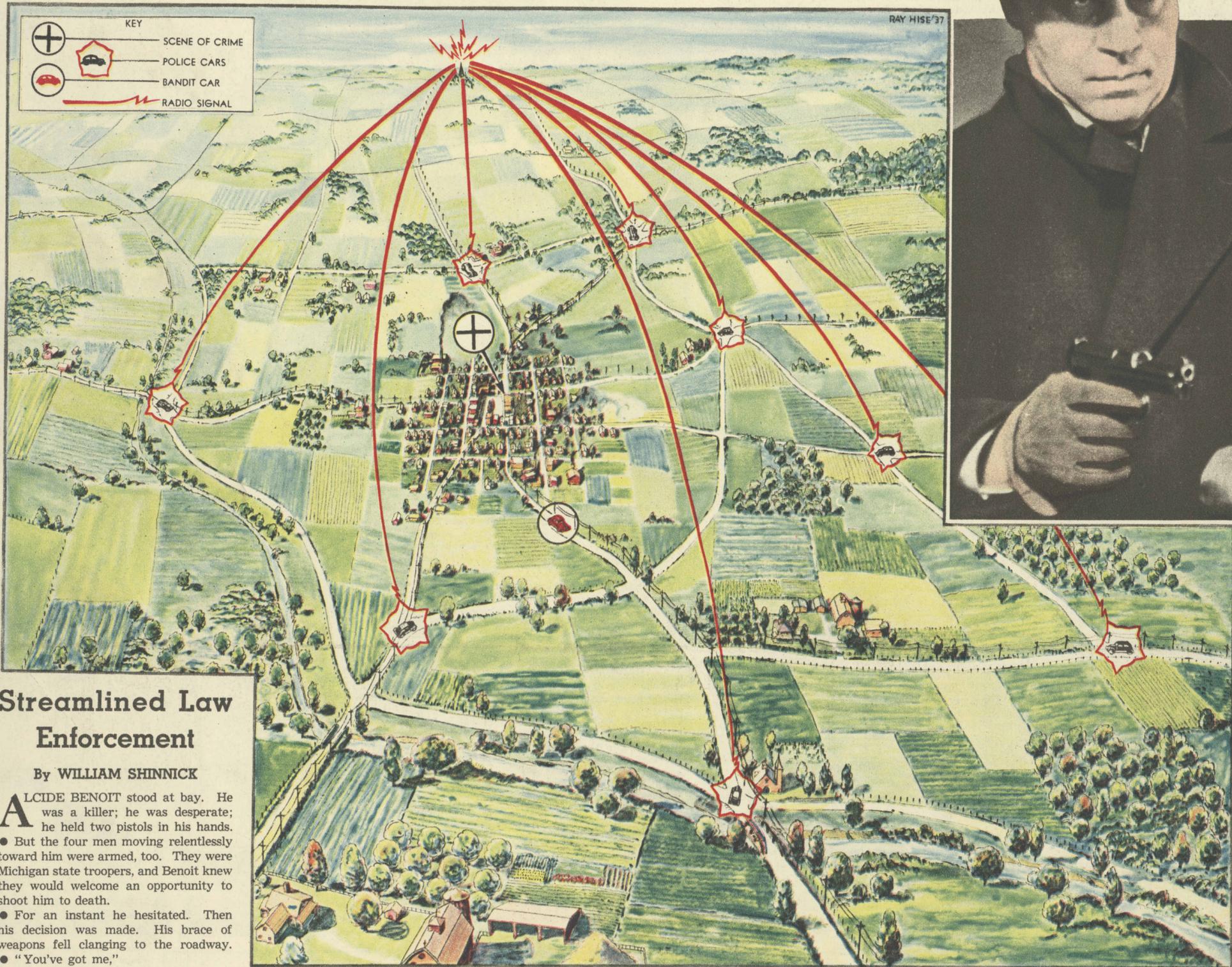


# A Ring Around the Killers



## Streamlined Law Enforcement

By WILLIAM SHINNICK

ALCIDE BENOIT stood at bay. He was a killer; he was desperate; he held two pistols in his hands. But the four men moving relentlessly toward him were armed, too. They were Michigan state troopers, and Benoit knew they would welcome an opportunity to shoot him to death.

For an instant he hesitated. Then his decision was made. His brace of weapons fell clanging to the roadway.

"You've got me," he said. "Don't shoot!"

So ended a 1937 man hunt typical of the road blockade system. Many crime authorities believe that its perfection and application on a broad scale will take away nearly all the advantages of surprise and mobility that criminals have enjoyed since the advent of the automobile.

Benoit's crime was atrocious. A paroled convict, he had overpowered Richard Hamilton, a state trooper, who had placed him under arrest. Then, tying the hands of the helpless policeman to a mail box post, he had shot him through the head. This merciless execution took place in Monroe county, near the southern border of Michigan. Benoit, familiar with the countryside, had reasoned it would be easy to elude pursuit by crossing into Ohio. It was an idea fostered by the past successes of criminals in flight. But he had reckoned without giving full weight to



The five central states that plan an interstate police blockade system.

the seldom-used blockading resources of the Michigan authorities.

Shortly after the body of Hamilton was discovered a series of commands were issued from the principal radio station of the state police at East Lansing. They went like this:

"Calling car 91. Trooper Richard Hamilton's

Simplified sketch showing how a police blockade operates. Note that the telephone conveys the first alarm of the crime to the radio broadcasting station, which in turn broadcasts signals to the police cars. The bandit car fleeing the scene (marked +) is shown within a circle. In the photograph at upper right the subject poses as a stickup man.



Re-enactment of the seizure of a gang of bank robbers by highway police. In regions where police blockade systems operate fugitives are captured in a manner that leaves little to chance. (Acme photo.)

body found near Erie. Killer headed northwest. Patrol U. S. 23 and stop all suspicious cars. Be careful; he's armed. . . . Calling the Monroe police car. Cover the Pleasant road and Bolles Harbor area. Block all roads in the district. . . . Calling scout car 38. Patrol U. S. 24 and block it at the Ohio border. . . . Calling Ohio police cars

that are cooperating. Close U. S. 23 and U. S. 25 at the border. Block U. S. 223 at Sylvania, O."

Over a period of more than twenty-four hours there were hundreds of similar messages. Each time a report of Benoit's movements was made it was forwarded to the central station and relayed to the men in the blockading (Continued on page four.)