

**Behind The Furs**

in traps in one year alone. According to recent figures, 1,500,000 raccoons and 200,000 foxes met their death in leghold or similar traps in a single year. The death toll for animals who die yearly in traps in the United States alone is in excess of 25 million. These 25 million animals are trapped yearly for the fur industry, which is directly supported by the fashion industry — particularly the trends of women's fashion.

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REED LOWRANCE

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Letters to the editor must include the writer's telephone number, name and address. All letters are verified before publication. We do not print anonymous letters. Those 250 words or less are given preference. We reserve the right to edit.

**MATA: Here Is The Light**

To The Commercial Appeal:

On the evening of Aug. 6, the man in charge of the Memphis Area Transit Authority took valuable time away from the news broadcast to make a TV appeal to the citizens of Memphis to assist him in solving the MATA problems.

Is this man being paid a salary? If so, what for? Who hired him? Why? Will he financially reward any citizen of Memphis in an amount equal to his salary if a suggestion is beneficial, which he was supposedly hired to figure out in the first place?

It would seem to me that the problem is so elementary that anyone with the intelligence of a 6-year-old could determine that the frequency of buses is deplorable (particularly on weekends and holidays) and the fare is exorbitant.

Ergo: dispatch more buses per route and lower the fares.

This then would allow the city to proclaim that it provides public transportation service; as opposed to the

To The Commercial Appeal:

I have been following with great interest letters addressed to The Commercial Appeal concerning mandatory helmet laws for motorcyclists. I have been motorcycling for over 10 of my 24 years and will be the first to admit that crash helmets can reduce head injuries. But, I strongly resent being required by state law to wear one. To the motorcyclist, mandatory helmet laws are viewed with suspicion as another inroad on personal freedom by our government, a government that has steadily encroached on individual freedom.

**Well Said, Mike**

To The Commercial Appeal:

I hope everyone read the commentary by Mike Royko entitled "Free Speech Costs Plenty But The Price Can Get Too High." He has said so well things that need to be expressed.

Please convey my thanks to Mr. Royko for the article.

MRS. MORRIS BROOKS  
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current arrangement of forcing citizens to arrange their social and business lives in accordance with so-called over-priced Service Schedule that currently demands insulting inconvenience and incredible cost for the citizens of Memphis.

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Motorcyclists are a minority in this country, but are organizing for legislative clout. One such anti-helmet organization is known as ABATE. This structure has chapters across the United States to prevent unfair legislation against motorcyclists. An organization similar to ABATE arose in California and successfully fought against mandatory helmet legislation. According to the American Motorcyclist Association, nearly half of the motorcycles owned in America are registered in California. On a percentage basis the death rate for motorcycle riders in California does not seem to be any greater than that of any other state.

Until this past year the Department of Transportation had coercive powers

over state governments to force submission to mandatory helmet laws. If a state did not have a mandatory helmet law for persons over the age of 18 the DOT had the power to withhold federal highway funds. This was a perfect example of legislative arm twisting.

In a recent White House ceremony, President Ford signed the Federal Highway Act of 1975 into law. An important provision of this law removes the coercive power of the DOT over state helmet laws. Perhaps its time for a reassessment of Tennessee's helmet laws and motorcycle regulations in general to suit the wants and needs of the motorcycling community.

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**Overton As A 'Gift'**

To The Commercial Appeal:

On Aug. 1 you printed a letter from Mrs. Jerry C. McDonald of Roxie, Miss, who stated in reference to Overton Park, that she is a "great, great granddaughter of the Overtons who gave the land to the City of Memphis." And she continued by asking Mayor Chandler and City Councilman John Ford "Just what have either of your descendants left Memphis?"

Perhaps I'm a perfectionist when it comes to history and fact . . . and so I, too, would like to have a reply as to whether the following information is correct. It is recorded in "History of Memphis, Tennessee" edited by Judge J. P. Young, and published in Knoxville, in 1912.

This book refers to a park commission board which was formed in 1900,

naming chairman McFarland and Messrs. Godwin and Galloway. It says \$250,000 of 4 per cent bonds were issued to begin the acquisition of park land.

The purchase price was \$110,000 or about \$330 per acre. The purchase was made on Nov. 14, 1901.

Later the Evening Scimitar held a contest to select a name for this new park. The name selected was Overton in honor of Judge John Overton, one of the founders of Memphis.

If the preceding information is accurate it would indicate that not only was Overton Park purchased by the City of Memphis, it was purchased at what some consider a high price for that time — in simple language: it was no gift.

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**Take The Bus**

To The Commercial Appeal:

In your recent editorial about the Memphis traffic congestion predicted if I-40 isn't completed, I was pleased to find mass transit mentioned before I finished the article. Mass transit is such an obvious solution it probably will not be employed. The fuel crisis has not gone away, but rather will get worse despite the Alaska Pipeline fiasco. Mass transit will save fuel, giving us more time to develop alternate resources. It will save the cost of widening streets and prevent the mutilation of Overton Park. It will lessen pollution and save lives (surely a worthwhile goal).

You ask how people can be persuaded to take the bus. If enough people used the bus system so that it became profitable, then more and better service could be provided, attracting more riders and increasing revenue further for still better service in an upward spiral instead of the downward spiral we have now. But it is a fact that citizens will not take the first step if mass transit seems more inconvenient than their cars. What is needed is courageous city leadership, which we don't have.

What I propose is that a workable east-west express bus system first be set, with parking terminals. Then take a six-lane artery, such as Union or North Parkway, and barricade off one lane completely for two-way bicycle traffic. An all-weather canopy should be less expensive than street-widening. Of the five remaining lanes, the outer two would be reserved for buses only, leaving three for all other motorized vehicles.

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