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Item Type	Article
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Publisher	Commercial Appeal
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Download date	2026-03-16 14:32:58
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/10267/29954

Assignment: Memphis— *CA April 24, 1975*

Overton Carping Could Drive Us Buggy

By LYDEL SIMS

The ink is scarcely dry on the proposal by Transportation Secretary William T. Coleman for completing Interstate 40, but carpers are carping already.

"Has anybody inquired," asks J.P.C. irately, "about what is to hold in place the ventilation shafts for the proposed cut-and-cover roadway under Overton Park?"

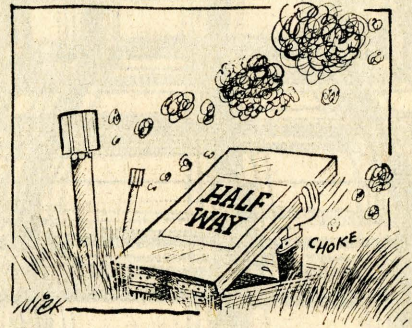
"Are the bureaucrats in fact selling us a slurry with a flange on top?"

THAT MAY WELL be one possibility. But we shouldn't be hasty. As I get it, there are other options.

One of them, I understand, involves increasing the speed limit through the park portion and installing a trap door for emergency use at the midway point.

That plan is known, of course, as the scurry with the hinge on top. I have no doubt informed citizens will report other alternatives.

BUT NOT EVERYONE is concen-



trating on the expressway. Richard Deutsch has a different bee in his bonnet.

"Your past successes in improving the quality of life in our beloved city cause me to seek your assistance," he says.

"Please help us honor a deserving private enterprise by changing the name of Poplar Avenue between Holmes and the city limits to Southern Bell Avenue.

"This proposal is made in gratitude

for the company's self-denial in permitting us still to use one lane in some places while they dig in the other two as they have been doing for years without interruption."

It is a praiseworthy suggestion, of course, but unfortunately it contains what we authorities call a fatal flaw.

The Memphis street-wrecking franchise formerly held by Southern Bell now belongs to South Central Bell. There is nothing for the sponsors of this splendid gesture to do but go back, tear up all their previous work, and start over again. I do hope they won't find it necessary to wreck any remaining lanes in the process.

A FEW HOSTILE comments were made here recently about drivers whose fierce competitive zeal is fired by the sight of a blinking turn light ahead of them.

Now George Ingram has noted that some of the turn-light people aren't all that innocent themselves.

For many of them, he says, "the

mere thought of using the signal is justification for any sort of extemporaneous performance, weird or otherwise." Indeed, he adds, the turning action is often underway before the turn signal begins to blink.

"One will find a driver on his right or left signalling for a turn into his own lane when the car is actually almost abreast and the signal itself is behind his field of vision," he notes.

"And then there is the jolly fellow who stops for a traffic signal, waits for the light to become green, and then announces with his turn signal that he is going left.

"And he may very well be in the right traffic lane."

TRUE, TRUE. It's a jungle out there. Every car for itself and the junkyard take the hindmost. Times, like surreys, have changed. Nowadays everybody's out in a hurry, and the fringe on top is a different kind. Lunatic, that is.