

Straightest Road Usually the Best

A WHILE back a news item told about General Pershing Boulevard, a four-lane paved road from Main and Pennsylvania in Oklahoma City to busy May Avenue. It was described as a shortcut that motorists either don't know about or avoid for unknown reasons.

Perhaps drivers are reluctant to venture onto strange roads because they have been disappointed trying to find shortcuts. They often turn out to be rougher, longer or more time-consuming than routes people were trying to circumvent.

It is sometimes that way in the affairs of life off the highways, too. We might find a useful shortcut now and then but most of us seem to do better if we stay in established lanes.

The holiday season just ended is a good example of how we swerve from one side to the other, overdoing, underdoing, and then trying to rectify effects of our indulgences.

Widespread publicity was given to efforts of a generous public to see that unfortunate people had plenty

to eat. Less attention was given to the broad majority who overate. Many of the latter will look for shortcuts to take off the additional pounds. Having overeaten, they will now undereat and overexercise.

We do much the same thing with entertainment, hobbies and fads. Sports is a successful type of program for TV, as happened with westerns and soap operas, sports are being overdone.

With professional football playoffs, a couple of dozen collegiate bowl games and basketball games too numerous to count, even the most ardent sports fans may be ready to cry "Hold it!"

As planned by computer manufacturers years ago, electronic devices have been introduced to young people as games. Now large numbers of people who have bought home computers may be expecting accounting and other work to be fun, too. They may be looking for shortcuts that do not exist.

In financial emergencies, people and politicians are apt to look for

any way out; not just shortcuts. Fifty years ago the New Deal discovered that it could borrow and spend liberally in an apparent shortcut to prosperity.

The result is that we have created a system of economics without a sense of economy. The federal government is paying \$1 million every four minutes as interest on a national debt that is so large it is beyond the comprehension of most taxpayers.

In their zeal to travel a shortcut to political power state politicians have created a mammoth financial detour.

We tend to go too far or too fast when we are winning. We have done this trying to find shortcuts to conservation through environmentalism, to industrial safety through OSHA, to racial tranquility through enforced neighborliness, and to individual freedom through permissiveness and irresponsibility.

For some there may be more detours in life than shortcuts. For most the best route is the straightest road.