

OCT 23 1984

Remarks Often Self-Contradictory

SELF-CONTRADICTORY statements bob up so frequently that we tend to overlook them or accept them as logical declarations.

The other day Lucille Kurtz, retired church organist, told of a young woman who declined to do an errand that required crossing May Avenue. She told Mrs. Kurtz, "Nobody ever goes on May Avenue any more because there are so many cars there."

That's in a category with the remark of an unknown lady waiting in line for a restaurant table. "This place would do a lot more business if it wasn't so crowded," she said.

Then the latest statement from OG&E included this bit of advice: "If you can postpone calling us during these busiest times, we'll be able to serve you more quickly."

In trying to locate misplaced military service papers, Milton E. Sheid received a non-progress report from the U.S. General Services Administration which explained: "Okinawa is not listed as a World War II battle campaign."

That might not qualify strictly as a self-contradictory statement but thousands of soldiers, sailors and marines who were there had the impression that they were in a real battle campaign.

On the front page of this newspaper last week the early snowfall in the Panhandle was duly reported, with the notation that "motorists were advised not to travel if at all possible."

The U.S. Justice Department announced that although judges are sending thousands more criminals to state prisons each year, increases in prison population have slowed nationally because of early release programs like Oklahoma's.

Political news is filled with contradictory declarations along with mixed metaphors. As one campaign organizer told a reporter: "I've had 10 to 15 people working like cats and dogs."

Lawmakers frequently produce some handsome self-contradictory remarks, some of which become laws. A Washington writer compiled

a few several years ago, including these examples:

"There comes a time to put principle aside and do what's right." "This bill goes right to the heart of the moral fiber of the human anatomy." "From now on, I'm watching everything you do with a fine-toothed comb." And one senator orated: "Now, we've got them right where they want us!"

Sometimes our actions are self-contradictory. We kill time we save by flying by waiting at airports and, it is said, some people put up with the high cost of living just to avoid the high cost of dying.

Some years ago a Dallas real estate owner posted work rules for his employees. The edict said, in part: "Death (other than your own) is no excuse for absence. If the funeral can be held late in the afternoon, we will be glad to let you off for one hour, provided that your share of the work is ahead."

As one philosopher commented, "The trouble with our times is that the future is not what it used to be."