



Life in the other
LANE

Since several of you took the time to contact me regarding last month's rather bland indictment of the shenanigans perpetrated on your humble scribe of late, let me assure you that the timing of said piece was on purpose. You see, it all boils down to this. Writing is a cathartic experience for me and occasionally one requiring a catheter for you, so we have this symbiosis thing going for us. The March column was, as they say in the psychoanalytic community, an act of displaced aggression, a transference if you will from fist to pen. As long as I can get the bulk of my hostility out via Word Perfect, I have little need to follow through on the mental games that take up the rest of my waking hours, plotting revenge.

My sister, the one with the second most perfect set of legs on this earth (Mom wins Numero Uno), who resides in the Land of the Bengal was very worried that the corporate giants who office at the Four-Letter F Word Motor Company in Dearborn, Michigan would march into the arbitration hearing armed with copies of my column and countersue. The mind reels with possibilities: Transmission corpus delicti? Felonious assault on the corporate image? Anyway, after assuring her that Donald Petersen and the other resident buck passers at "The American Road" are probably too busy making sure that the likes of Bill Elliot, Neil Bonnett and Alan Kulwhatchmacalit have "driven a Ford lately" to care much about my pesky transmission blues or attempts at legal remedy much less read this humble little missive.

After tallying up the unsolicited responses I have received thus far, the score board looks like this. 8 votes for "Burn 'em;" 5 votes for "Go for it, but for pete's sake get a lawyer." One call but no vote from the Ford Motor Credit Corporation asking if I was still seriously considering arbitration. Another call, no vote, from American Arbitration Association, the administrative body that deals with Lemon Law hearings, informing me that Ford Motor Credit had yet to comply with the request for financial details. Guess they didn't believe my answer! And, one call from an unidentified soul who stated flatly that they could care less if I sued or not but was dying to know what a TH was! Occasionally this symbiosis thing develops holes like that in the ozone.

By the time you receive this issue, the arbitration will have been heard. Representatives from the Four-Letter F Word Motor Company will state there is no case here since I did get a new tranny and it works. I will calmly, rationally and

unemotionally counter that the Four-Letter F Word Motor Company operated outside the law from day 31 to day 48 and they shouldn't be allowed to get away with that. The arbiter will occasionally interrupt to ask clarifying questions and eventually he will render an irreversible, non-appealable, carved-in-granite opinion that will some day land in an innocuous law journal. If I win "The Bull" gets returned to the dealership and I get my money back. If I lose, I'm out two hundred bucks and took a vacation day for nothing. I can think of far worse consequences. Transmission failure comes to mind for some reason!

Next month's column will be the final chapter in this melodrama. Place your bets now, the early line is Suzie by a gear.