

System-Bound III

Nobody asked but ...

“U SUCK” So read one of those Interstate electronic bulletin boards that have been popping up as a result of 9/11. This is another example of our infrastructure causing unforeseen consequences.

I was thinking, a few weeks ago, as I was approaching Chicago from Northern Indiana, a jumble of converging and diverging routes, that the last thing I needed was some electronic message carrying ironic propaganda — it was all I could do to keep from making the wrong turn. I needed focus, not entertainment.

These boards are the outcome of bundles of Homeland Security cash that was splashed about when all government agencies were taking advantage of a crisis. But almost 17 years later — 1/6th of a century — far outliving that color-coded terrorist alert scam, our various bureaucrats are now vying to see who can come up with the most cleverly worded messages.

The messages of late have begun to take on the density of modern poetry. A quick reading is not enough, but we have to ponder what the real message may be.

“EYES ON THE ROAD AND YOUR HEAD OUT OF YOUR APPS,” “TURN SIGNALS, THE ORIGINAL INSTANT MESSAGE,” or “AIR QUALITY ALERT / WHAT CAN YOU DO? / LIMIT DRIVING” How about this one, “WHO NEEDS RIDDLES?”

Which would cost less, tearing these dinosaurs down at a short term taxpayer cost, or making a long term tax commitment to the continuation of the bombardment with puerile statist humor (and I use the word, “humor,” advisedly).

— Kilgore Forelle