

Mr. BLATNIK. You are not even pleading to make the highway safer—you just say, please leave them alone, do not clutter them up with these deadly obstacles—

Mr. LINKO. Even if it cost a few dollars more. The first time it is hit and it has to be repaired—the few dollars you save is wiped out.

Mr. BLATNIK. Many sign structures costing thousands of dollars apiece could have been eliminated entirely, by placing the signs on existing bridge structures. In addition to the dollars saved, greater safety would have resulted, obviously.

Overdesigned supports, concrete bridge ends which have no function, cluttered gore areas and roadside areas that look like military tank traps, all have been shown to be lethal in nature. The fact that they are costly and often unnecessary merely aggravates the situation.

Somewhere, the people responsible for design have subordinated safety to other considerations. It is incredible, but true.

The emphasis of these hearings, at further sessions, will be upon those things which can and absolutely must be done to correct the conditions shown by today's testimony and pictorial presentation.

Mr. Linko, I know that I speak for all members of the committee and for the staff and for those who have been in the audience, participating in this morning's presentation, in expressing our appreciation and our commendation for a very skillful presentation before a committee of Congress.

You have been most helpful, and we thank you.

Mr. CRAMER. I would like to join in expressing my appreciation to Mr. Linko who, as the chairman has suggested, as Mr. John Q. Citizen, has seen fit on his own to study some of these matters. He has shown a very fine analysis of the problem.

I think it will help alert this committee and the Congress and perhaps many other people to the safety hazards that exist. I congratulate you and thank you for the fine service that you have rendered.

It seems to me that in a number of instances—for what reason I don't know, there does not seem to be any valid reason—they are in effect designing death traps, despite the fact that the law requires the safety aspect of highway design be given equal consideration to other aspects. From what we have seen so far, it would appear that safety design standards have been downgraded, second rated, to esthetics, to planting trees, to beautification and what-have-you.

BLATNIK. Would the gentleman yield at this point? It is a good point.

Mr. CRAMER. Yes, I yield.

Mr. BLATNIK. What really aggravates me and frightens me, I think in some instances it seems more than just downgrading the safety aspects of highway design, but it is the complete unawareness of the need for safety or that this is a dangerous situation, and that maintenance work by State, Federal, municipal highway departments and other people should be most conscious of hazard conditions.

Mr. CRAMER. I agree with the chairman. It appears that those who are responsible, State and Federal, have been oblivious to the safety hazards that are being built into the highways. I gather from the staff, this New York information is symbolic of what is being done throughout the Nation. Isn't that true, Mr. Prisk? Are these not ex-