

Dr. HUELKE. Not trees in the median.

Mr. CRAMER. Right. And also not trees how far from the highway itself on the right or left side of the highways, the traveled roadway?

Mr. Prisk has indicated their regulations are 30 feet—which, incidentally, are not being lived up to, according to the pictures we have seen.

Dr. HUELKE. Yes. Now, we have found in our study, as indicated in the reprint that was submitted as part of the testimony that many of our cars do not travel too far to hit trees.

One of the big problems, as I was indicating before, is that once the people leave the roadway there is this steep embankment, or something of the sort, that takes them on the track down to this tree. If these areas are flattened, the individual can more easily recover without becoming panicky and striking objects.

Studies have been done, and I will read here at the end of the paper about roadside clearances studies. It has been shown in one study that if the roadsides are cleared of obstacles for 33 feet from the road edge, probably 80 percent of the accidents would not have occurred.

Mr. CRAMER. How many feet?

Dr. HUELKE. Thirty-three. Cornell, in their ACIR program, analyzed data that indicated 80 percent of the vehicles struck an object within 12 feet of the roadway. Again, the trees and abutments, and what have you, are so close, you go off a little way and you are there. So we do have to have a lot of clearing. And I think 33 feet would be good. But we have to think of the approaches to those trees, as I say. Are we talking about a flat area or a downhill?

Mr. CRAMER. Yes. If it is a downgrade area, the automobile would be channeled into it; then they should be farther than 33 feet; is that right?

Dr. HUELKE. Yes.

Mr. CRAMER. Now, Mr. Prisk, I am sure you are aware the present law, section 319(a) of title 23, United States Code, provides that the Secretary may approve, as part of the construction of Federal-aid highways, the costs of landscape and roadside development, including acquisition and development of public owned and controlled rest and recreation areas, and sanitary and other facilities, necessary to accommodate the traveling public. Therefore, the States are permitted to plant trees or other beautification items on the right-of-way and on the median strips. Is that not correct?

Mr. PRISK. Yes.

Mr. CRAMER. And in fact, many States are doing it; right?

Mr. PRISK. Yes.

Mr. CRAMER. And, as a matter of fact, I understand that recently in Honolulu they planted coconut trees about 2 feet from the traveled roadway.

Mr. PRISK. I am not aware of that.

Mr. CRAMER. On an Interstate highway.

Mr. PRISK. I am not aware of that. I think there has been an evolution in the instructions as far as safety is concerned, and these perhaps could more recently affect the situation you are citing.

Mr. CRAMER. So, in those instances, maybe we are overbeautifying and "undersafetyfying."

Mr. PRISK. If they are 2 feet away, they are.