

Mr. PRISK. It would.

Mr. CRAMER. What force and effect do these design and practices relating to highway safety, AASHO report, February 1967, have?

Mr. PRISK. These become the policy of the Bureau of Public Roads endorsed by the Secretary of Transportation as far as Federal-aid work is concerned. The implication of the statement which you read would be carried out in future design practice.

Mr. CRAMER. If that project came to you today, would you approve it?

Mr. PRISK. Our division engineers, who have that approval authority, would not approve that type of project, in my opinion.

Mr. CRAMER. Have they been so directed?

Mr. PRISK. Yes, they have.

Mr. CRAMER. They have been directed that the AASHO standards, and in this instance relating to this problem, are mandatory as a condition for approval by the Bureau of Public Roads regional offices?

Mr. PRISK. Yes, sir.

Mr. CRAMER. Then can we expect in the future not to see this kind of construction; do you think?

Mr. PRISK. I would expect so.

Mr. CRAMER. Why did it take us so long to get to this point?

Mr. PRISK. I think there probably has been a lack of appreciation or identification of the problem.

Mr. CRAMER. Well, now, what are you going to do about this situation?

Mr. PRISK. This situation would receive treatment in the priority it deserves, I would say, within the capacities of the State highway departments.

Mr. CRAMER. What priority does it deserve?

Mr. PRISK. Well, I would say it deserved rather urgent priority.

Mr. CRAMER. As high priority as possible?

Mr. PRISK. Not necessarily the highest.

Mr. CRAMER. I think, frankly, the Congress and the Bureau of Public Roads and the executive branch are trying to put their priorities down.

Mr. McCARTHY. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CRAMER. Just a minute. May I continue, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. GRAY. Yes, Mr. Cramer.

Mr. CRAMER. We have got all kinds of pressure, all kinds of demands. The President has asked the Congress to set up a separate trust fund, and authorize the appropriation of \$160 million for fiscal 1968, and \$220 million for fiscal 1969, for beautification, to plant some of these trees along the right-of-way which will become a safety hazard, too. But I do not see any pressure; I do not see any great demand; I do not see any high priority; I do not see any equal priority as it relates to safety.

Now, Mr. Prisk, that is not your responsibility; I am not suggesting it is your responsibility to settle policy questions relating to priority. I do think, however, it is the responsibility of the Congress.

What bothers me is I personally feel that safety is entitled to a very high priority, even as compared to aesthetics and beautification. And I would hope that there could be generated some substantial interest in financing constructional aspects of safety.