

recriminations about what was neglected in the past, then maybe some Members of Congress who have been around here for a few years and on this committee might be subject to the same.

So I think if we approach it in this constructive manner and create consciousness of safety, we would be off on the right foot.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CRAMER. Now, Mr. Chairman——

Mr. GRAY. Mr. Cramer?

Mr. CRAMER. I trust no one implied from anything I said that I considered safety a frill. I do consider beauty a frill, and my position is that certainly safety ought to have higher priority than beauty. If anyone wants to challenge that, I would welcome them to do so.

Secondly, it has been my objective in these hearings to find out what we can do about financing safety needs.

Everyone knows Congress is interested in financing beauty. I want to create some interest in financing safety and, hopefully, maybe Congress will come up with a program to do so.

The other aspect of it is: I made a statement on the floor of the House and I repeat it here, that in my opinion the Bureau of Public Roads is being dismantled, dismembered, and disemboweled.

Now the gentleman from the Bureau has stated that he has lost 32 of his qualified, experienced, knowledgeable safety experts, in a division that has responsibility of overseeing and of making certain that safety is built into these highways. That is where the important phase of it comes. You can pass all the regulations you want to, but if the administrative agency that has to see that those safety regulations are carried out through construction does not have adequate personnel, is not given high enough priority, is dismembered, then this entire program of safety is being to that extent destroyed.

I, as a Member of Congress, cannot sit idly by with this evidence before us—we are now going into the third week of hearings—where deathtraps are built into the highways, and seeing the Bureau of Public Roads Safety Division dismantled, dismembered, and disemboweled, losing many of its knowledgeable personnel, where they are most needed, building safety in these highways.

If someone wants to take issue with me I would be delighted.

Mr. GRAY. Let me say I agree implicitly with the distinguished minority leader of the Public Works Committee, Mr. Cramer. But I think I might add one point, and that is that under the act itself, the States, starting with the division office or the district office in the State, going on up to the chief highway engineers, work up a recommendation, both for the alinement and the design of highways, prior to the time that the Bureau of Public Roads division engineer even looks at this.

So I think in addition to what the distinguished Member from Florida has said, we also need to have some better liaison with the States in order that when the idea for a design is advanced, that design in its initial stages should have safety features built in.

It is one thing to say, for example, here you have not done this right or done that right and go back and spend 300 percent to correct it, and it is another thing to work in the safety features at the inception of the planning stages of a highway.