

have focused the attention of all responsible highway officials on this national problem.

We do appreciate the time and attention that the members of this House committee have given to this subject, and I feel that you have made a major contribution to the advancement of highway safety by dispelling the apathy among highway organizations throughout the country on this national problem.

Mr. CONSTANDY. Thank you very much, Mr. Wilkes. Very fine statement. Mr. Ricker?

Mr. RICKER. It is of course difficult to be the last one to summarize after five summaries, such as you have just heard.

Perhaps I will be forgiven for going back and being a little more philosophical rather than repeating what has been said.

Our ordinary highways, the older ones in particular, are lined with hazards such as trees, rocks, utility poles, and so on, and in general we seem to drive them fairly safely without too many contacts.

Starting I guess with the construction of the Pennsylvania Turnpike we provided a new driving environment. It has been said that the Pennsylvania Turnpike was the first highway to be designed ahead of the vehicle that would operate on it. Certainly since that time the vehicles have been capable of higher speeds and seemingly the drivers are using higher speeds.

We are in the era now where we are building many new freeways, limited access highways, according to the knowledge available from the older roads. Apparently what is happening is that as we eliminate the hazards of crossroads, railroads, trees, and so on, near the right-of-way, near the pavement, we are moving into a new operating environment where the drivers are perhaps more relaxed, less alert if an animal runs out in front of them or a tire blows or something else. And because they are more relaxed, they are more apt to leave the pavement and go into the adjacent areas.

Therefore, these areas should be, as Mr. Wilson expresses it, more forgiving. I believe what we have seen in the slides these past several days indicate ways that we can improve this environment and make it more forgiving, and I certainly feel that we should all move toward that.

It must be a continuing program. We cannot design safety into the road and then go away and leave it. We have to make maximum use of observations as the traffic uses the road, talking to the police who patrol it, talking to maintenance men who repair the damaged guard rail, talking to the traffic engineers who are out observing the actual operation of the highway. And as Mr. Wilkes says, it will be fairly easy to incorporate these improvements in new products.

To go back and correct the others is quite a bit more difficult, particularly when right-of-way is limited, when the structures are already built.

It has been implied by some of the Congressmen at this series of hearings that maybe we can get some more money to correct the older deficiencies. I am sure that when I go back to Pennsylvania this will be the first question asked me: Are we going to get more money to do it?

Mr. CONSTANDY. Thank you, Mr. Ricker.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to personally thank the members of the panel. I think they have made an important contribution to the effort