

take, since the principal reasons for these increases is the extremely high wage settlements that unions extracted from hundreds of contractor organizations last year. Federal mediators repeatedly were asked to intervene in these negotiations—and unfailingly sat on their hands.

IS A SLOWDOWN IN THE HIGHWAY PROGRAM IN THE BEST INTEREST
OF THE PUBLIC?

“The gravest problem before this Nation, next to the war in Vietnam, is the death and destruction, the shocking and senseless carnage that strikes daily on our highways,” President Johnson said in 1966. “In this century, more than 11½ million of our fellow citizens have died on our streets and highways—nearly three times as many Americans as we have lost in all our wars. We are going to cut down this senseless loss of lives.”

The final bit of inflated irony is that the “modest but essential” \$600 million in highway-user taxes apparently isn’t going to be taken out of circulation at all. Shortly before announcing the reduction, Boyd told a group of State highway officials:

The \$600 million that would become a (Highway) Trust Fund balance would go to the General Fund, on interest, and would obviate the need for the Federal Government going to the private money market—to help satisfy the budget deficit, created largely by Vietnam.

This is the same Secretary Boyd who, a few weeks earlier, said, “I think we should make our position very clear regarding the use of highway trust fund moneys for nonhighway purposes. This cannot be done—the law clearly prohibits it.”

One can wonder if 106 million motorists aren’t getting a little fed up with being the No. 1 sitting duck in Washington’s political shooting gallery. Highways aren’t built with “Federal aid,” they are built with the billions of dollars the motorists have paid, in good faith, into the highway trust fund matched with billions of dollars collected by the State for highways, nothing else.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and the committee for the privilege of appearing before you this morning to present our views.

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. Thank you, Mr. Seitz.

Mr. Cramer.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Seitz, I thank you for a very excellent statement and it certainly states my point of view. Apparently, referring to Mr. Boyd’s statement, the fund cannot be used for other than highway purposes. Apparently what he meant was, it is all right to do it temporarily.

Mr. SEITZ. We presume that is what he might have meant.

Mr. CRAMER. From what has happened since, I presume so, too.

I think you have been very helpful in highlighting what I think is not often enough discussed, and that is just exactly what highways mean in the economy of our Nation as it relates to the employment problem of our country and, incidentally, as it relates to the defense of the country. We might add that.

I think you have made a very fine statement.

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. Mr. Clausen.