

During 1961 and 1962, I had the honor of being a delegate to the Michigan Constitutional Convention, serving on the Financial and Taxation and Public Information Committees.

Gentlemen, first of all, I wish to thank you for the honor you do me by your invitation to me to comment on proposals relative to the direction of a future Federal-aid highway program.

I appreciate the magnitude and complexity of the task confronting the Congress in developing a program which will provide for the highway needs of the Nation.

While there are many areas in which I have concern, I will confine my remarks to those items which I feel are of significant importance not only to Michigan but to all of the other States.

Probably the single most important aspect of any future national highway program would be the continuation of the highway trust fund, thus insuring to the States a continuing viable program.

The American Association of State Highway Officials, in their excellent presentation 1 year ago to the House and Senate Public Works Committees, commented at length on this point and I am fully in accord with AASHO's stated position.

It is also my firm conviction that the present level of taxation be considered as the absolute minimum necessary to support a national program capable of coping with the highway needs of the Nation.

Since 1956 the highway industry's attention has been focused upon the planning, design, and construction of the national system of interstate and defense highways. The results have been impressive, to say the least—spectacular would be a better word.

In building this system, Michigan, with 832 miles of its allotted 1,081 miles open to traffic and another 78 miles nearing completion, has established itself as one of the national leaders in this effort.

As you are well aware, interstate highways have become the arterial network of our national highway transportation system. Without them we could not begin to accommodate the almost incredible increase in the number of vehicles that are traveling our highways.

I do, however, wish to point out that these great interstate highways have not been constructed without a serious impact on the total State highway system.

With the time, attention, and money concentrated on the Interstate System, we have not been able to cope with the needs of the total System—as a matter of fact, we have, in the case of a few of our highways, actually lost ground—and all this in the face of increasing needs and vehicle registrations.

Michigan has always taken pride in its highway system, but it is clearly evident that we cannot rest on our oars. As our affluence grows, as we become a people whose driving needs grow, we are becoming more than ever before a country that moves and works on rubber-tired vehicles. We know, by conservative estimates, that the number of vehicles registered in Michigan—now about 4 million—will increase to 6.4 million by 1985. This tells us that we are faced with a gigantic task of planning, design and construction. It also underscores my original point that continuation of the highway trust fund is absolutely vital.

The foregoing statements also bring into focus the fact that I am strongly recommending that there be no—I repeat no—expansion of the Interstate System. I have come to this conclusion after a great