

I am happy though to talk with a group such as this, consisting, as it does, of men who are experts in the field of highway construction, and those who supply the materials and the equipment, a most important adjunct to the construction of any project. Our entire nation has become road conscious. Never before in our history have we experienced such an expanded highway construction program as that now under way in the several states. I am pleased that Maryland has a head start in this modernization movement.

Because of the impetus given to highway construction by my predecessors, Governor Lane and Governor McKeldin, our State was well on its way in rebuilding our roads system prior to the enactment of federal legislation which created, and provided a means of financing, the interstate system of highways: multiple bands of flexible and concrete construction which will stretch across our nation and which will link together practically all our major cities, and, will provide adequate travel arteries through and around our great metropolitan centers.

Here in Maryland we have approximately 4,700 miles of roads which are the direct responsibility of the State. Modernization has already taken place on a large part of this mileage. Many more projects must be built before the goal of our twelve-year construction plan, now a fifteen-year program, can be realized. Of this 4,700 miles, the so-called primary system embraces 1,670 miles, and the remainder, a total of approximately 3,130 miles, represents what has been called the State secondary system. Included in the primary system are 353 miles of highway which constitutes the interstate system of highways in Maryland. These major highways, both on and off the interstate system, constitute the blood stream for the free and orderly flow of traffic. If these main arteries are not built to proper standards, they soon will become clogged and our entire roads system will become inadequate and obsolete.

These are the highways on which the cost per mile is high. These are the roads of multiple land construction where, in many instances, control of access is demanded so that marginal friction will not destroy their usage and their carrying capacities over the years ahead. Money-wise these highways rate high in our construction program. In mileage they do not approach that of the secondary system.

The fact that the secondary roads carry a much lower volume of traffic does not minimize their importance. They are a vital part of a properly coordinated system of highways. They are of the utmost value to those who reside adjacent thereto and to those who use them to get to the main highways. It is of the utmost importance that these