

longer permitted to drive on our highways. Also, the Legislature enacted the so-called "drunkometer" bill. This provides that the results of a chemical test given a driver charged with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol be admissible as evidence in our courts. The test is voluntary and it protects the innocent as well as helps the police discover the guilty. I felt that this legislation was necessary because, among other things, statistics show that excessive use of alcohol has been found, in many states, to be a factor in up to 50 per cent of all fatal accidents. I believe that these additions to Maryland's safety code go hand in hand with any program to improve our highway system.

For the actual physical work of designing better roads and coordinating them with the economic and civic development of the areas through which they pass, I felt that a reorganization of the State Roads Commission was a step in the right direction. The General Assembly this year accepted my proposal for a change. Instead of a three-member Commission, Maryland now has a State Roads Commission of seven members. The Chairman of the Commission also has the title of Director of Highways. He has exclusive jurisdiction over the location, construction, geometrics and design of the primary system of highways—the 2,023 miles made up of the interstate system and the main roads of our State. I believe you all will agree that I appointed the best man available for that job—John B. Funk, who will talk with you later and in more detail about the future of our highway system.

The secondary system of roads—more than 3,000 miles of feeder roads—is under the jurisdiction of the full membership of the Commission. The Chairman, of course, represents the State at large, while the other members represent the several geographic regions of the State. I envisioned that the members of the Commission would discuss their local problems, bearing in mind that the member of the Commission from the area of the highway under discussion will acquaint the rest of the Commission with local conditions as they actually exist. Being responsible only for the secondary system of local roads, I feel that the regional commissioners will be better able to give intelligent study to such matters than would a State-wide three-member Commission with the added responsibility of the primary and interstate systems.

It is interesting to watch this plan starting to function. Just last week I read an account in the press that the Commission had met with the Montgomery County Council to discuss local problems there. I also read that future meetings of this kind are planned, eventually enabling the Commission to see and hear at first hand what our citizens are thinking about their highways. I have a firm conviction that the plan will work—