

the Commission heard one plea—give us adequate highways and build them fast. The scheduling under the old twelve-year program was too slow to satisfy the bumper-to-bumper situation in the urban areas of Maryland.

In the Baltimore region, the prime need was for a completed Beltway. And the need was immediate, not ten or fifteen years from now. The State Roads Commission pulled out all the stops and by Christmas of last year had every remaining section of the Beltway under contract, a truly remarkable achievement in administration and engineering.

The State Roads Commission and this Administration devoted itself to the policy of build them fast. There is, however, another standard which was necessary to be met. That was—build them right.

These great expressways taking shape throughout Maryland must give years of service to the motoring public if the large investment we are making in them is to be justified. One way to protect our investment is to carefully check the materials which go into our new roads.

The State Roads Commission, after consultation with the office of the Governor, had introduced in last year's General Assembly legislation to permit the improvement and enlargement of its laboratory facilities. A new central laboratory is now under design and will be constructed next year near the intersection of the Jones Falls Expressway and the Beltway. It will permit more thorough and more rapid testing of materials, plus increased research activities, aimed at finding better materials for highway use and better methods of construction. Regional laboratories are being set up throughout the State to carry out routine tests of materials actually being used in highway construction. These programs not only help build the road fast, it helps to build the road right. I commend the Commission on its broadened testing and research activities. I am certain they will result in tax savings over the long haul. These roads are being built fast and they are being built right.

The Commission has a further responsibility—to keep these new roads in first class working order. This is called maintenance. The maintenance of a two-lane road is fairly simple. But, let's take a look to the east down this great highway. What about maintenance here? How much does it cost? What has to be done?

The motoring public which has invested its gasoline tax dollars in this highway and others like it has a right to expect that it will be usable 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The motoring public has a right to expect that the riding surface shall be smooth and fit to carry great volumes of traffic at the high speeds of today.