

payers' money through research, experimentation and preventive medicine to safe-guard the lives and well-being of our citizens. All of these expenditures are eminently proper, but it is a most regrettable fact that many of the people for whose benefits these public funds are spent, will never enjoy the privileges of citizenship, unless more is done in the future than in the past to avoid traffic fatalities. It is a gruesome thought that we are laboring and spending and planning for the lives of future citizens, only to face the prospect of having them slaughtered in such great numbers through avoidable traffic accidents.

It is, of course, a waste of time to discuss such a problem without doing something about it. I refuse to believe that the Maryland people are willing to sit back and allow their State to be ranked with those of States in which traffic accidents are most frequent. Maryland, after showing a reduction in automobile fatalities in 1938 over the previous year, has had an increase during the nine months of the present year.

This is contrary to the situation throughout the country generally, where a reduction in fatal accidents is noted. Again, think of this: Among the eleven States of New England, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland, our State has the highest death rate based on definite measuring standards, during the first portion of this year, and it has a rate higher than the average for the entire United States.

When I completed a recent study of the figures dealing with Maryland accidents and compared them with the figures of other States, in which concerted efforts are being made to reduce this total, I was forced to one conclusion; namely, that those States in which the public officials, with the backing of private citizens, are engaged in plans to eliminate accidents, have the lowest accident death rate. From that, you will agree it is apparent that Maryland can do something about this distressing situation. We need not simply talk about it, but we can do something, and by doing it, we can improve the situation.

Tomorrow morning, October 1, the Maryland Traffic Safety Committee, organized some four weeks ago with representation from every section of our State, will launch October Safety Week, a concerted, State-wide effort to stem the rising tide of automobile traffic fatalities. As your Governor, and as the instigator of this campaign for increased safety on our streets and highways, I invite your serious attention to this movement, and to the aims it seeks to accomplish.

In order to insure the success of this movement, I invited seventy-five men and women from every section of the State to meet in the Senate Chamber at the State House and to form a permanent, self-perpetuating commission. The organization was formed on a non-partisan basis with representation given to Parent-Teachers' Association, Women's Clubs, patriotic organizations, civic groups, "key" officials and the general public. The response to my invitation was immediate and gratifying. These representative citizens have entered into the work with no ulterior purpose and with no motive other than to strive for the protection of human lives and the well-being of our people.

I have pledged them the whole-hearted support of the State administration and have guaranteed that no outside consideration, political or otherwise, will be allowed to interfere with the furtherance of our plans to make safer roads and streets within our State.